

Integrated Communities English Language Programme

September 2018 Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government



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In March 2018, the Government published the Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper which highlighted the importance of English language skills in building stronger, more united communities.

This new Programme will be focused on helping to improve the English language skills of those people who may be isolated by their inability to speak the language. The Programme will be designed to help participants integrate into life in this country by making good use of local services, becoming part of community life and mixing and making friendships with people from different backgrounds.

We are seeking providers that will work with our target learners in those communities where we know there are significant numbers of people, in particular women, who speak little or no English. Those providers will be expected to support participants' integration into British society through building their confidence to engage outside their immediate community and mix with people from different backgrounds alongside improving proficiency in English.

Through the new Programme, we want to build learning pathways so that participants can progress into classes suitable for them as their proficiency grows. To enable this it will be essential for providers of the new Programme to build and develop strong links and partnerships with other local English language providers.

What we are looking for

The new Programme will replace and build on the learning from this Department's current Community-Based English Language Programme. This has helped over 73,000 people to improve their English over the last five years.

We want the new Programme, from April 2019, to follow broadly the same approach as our existing Programme because we know highly localised community-based tuition is the most effective means of engaging people who may be most in need of support to help them improve their English skills. These are often people who may have lived in this country for a number of years without taking successful steps to improve their skills.

Through the new Programme we are aiming to meet the needs of pre-entry to entry level one English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) learners. Our existing projects have enabled us to develop a firmer understanding of the factors that may help secure the enrolment of people, in particular women from segregated communities who have hitherto been unable or unwilling to access support to improve their English language proficiency. As the Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper highlights, opportunities to learn English need to be tailored to meet the different needs of a diverse group of learners, with different motivations, starting points and levels of confidence. There are particular challenges in engaging those who have lived in the UK for some time and have not taken steps, or have been unable to access suitable provision, to improve their English Language skills.

We know from providers of our existing Programme that more formal approaches to learning English are generally inaccessible by our target learners. This may be because of the need to travel, lack of childcare facilities and a reluctance or lack of confidence to make the first steps towards learning English in what can be initially an intimidating environment.

We want provision offered under the new Programme to enable people, in particular women from segregated communities, to learn in a local setting, with a strong focus on building confidence in using English to mix with people from different backgrounds. We want learning to focus on handling practical daily scenarios such as visiting the doctor, speaking to neighbours or teachers, helping their child with schoolwork, shopping or accessing services from the Council.

Aim

Through this Competition, we want to support provision that:

- will deliver pre-entry to entry level 1 community-based English language provision to our target learners through a network of local delivery hubs
- will build participants' confidence to interact more widely in their local communities and mix with people from different backgrounds
- is targeted using the best available national and local sources of evidence of need
- reaches and engages learners who may not have previously taken steps to learn English
- adopts approaches to tuition that are proven to build confidence, encourage integration and improve proficiency in English
- supports learners in their progression through partnerships with other providers in the local area
- exhibits good governance and the collection of robust data to enable measurement of their progress in achieving the Programme's aims
- delivers genuine value for money, with robust Programme management.

Funding available

Up to £6m is available in 2019/20 through this competition to support successful projects. We expect to fund a small number of national or regional providers who can develop a network of local delivery hubs in places with a high number of people from segregated communities with poor English skills. Successful providers are likely to operate across one or more regions. The Programme covers England only. We therefore require the organisations, consortia or collaborating organisations to which we award funding to be of sufficient size and experience to allow them to successfully handle a substantial public funding allocation.

Completed applications must be received no later than 23.45 on Wednesday 31 October

Section 2

Who we want to help

We want to make sure the tuition offered under the new Programme reaches those living in the segregated communities who are both most in need of support and least likely to take up support outside of local community-based provision. Key characteristics of our target learners will include:

- people with no or very little spoken English who would most benefit from pre-entry or entry level one support
- people who evidence suggests are more likely to have poor English skills, in particular women
- people who have been resident in the UK a minimum of 12 months
- people not in employment and not actively seeking employment at this stage (i.e. those not generally eligible for other types of fully funded support to learn English)
- adults this Programme is directed at those aged 19 and over.

2011 Census data illustrates that people meeting these characteristics are most likely to be women from Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities as they have the lowest self-reported levels of fluency in English. We therefore expect that women from these communities will form a significant majority of participants.

We will not set eligibility criteria that would exclude men or women from any ethnic group but we will expect providers to be able to demonstrate they have thought clearly about how the design and delivery of their projects will help reach our target learners and meet their learning needs.

The Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper highlights how in too many communities we see services organised in ways which lead them to serving people of a single ethnic or religious group. There are sometimes difficult decisions to be reached on creating a learning environment that seeks to overcome participants' fears about the unfamiliar and encouraging social mixing between people of different backgrounds.

We want providers under the new Programme to be mindful of reaching the right locally-led decisions, taking into account these factors.

For example, the Government favours a mixed adult learning environment rather than gender segregation. Providers of our current Programme have

successfully run mixed gender classes without deterring women from segregated communities and so where this is possible this is the approach we would like to see adopted. However, where there is strong evidence that a mixed gender class is acting as a strong deterrent to participation then running women-only classes may, on occasions, be justified. Where this is the case we would want to see providers taking steps to prepare participants for progression, where single gender provision is unlikely to be available.

This Programme is seeking to fund provision that will use language tuition as a means to integrate learners into British society. We do not intend to focus it on those who have been in the UK for a short period where it is not the person's intention to settle in the UK for the long term (for instance those who have come to the UK to work for a short time), or those who do not have permission to do so.

The Department cannot support projects which are aimed at those currently seeking asylum in the UK.

Where we are looking: our priority areas

We want to make sure tuition funded by the Programme is available in segregated areas where there is a high concentration of people, in particular women, who have no or low levels of English. Our objectives are to open up to learners new opportunities to learn that may previously not have been available, or to encourage people to overcome a reluctance or fear about participating in a course.

Organisations considering applying for an award of funding will need to think carefully about how they can best demonstrate their ability to operate in local learning hubs across a number of the local authority areas which have the highest populations of our target learners.

Experience gained from our previous Community–Based English Language Programme strongly suggests that projects will need to provide tuition in a large number of local community hubs in order to recruit and retain learners in an informal and relaxed setting (projects have used a diverse range of settings from cafes to places of worship). We also know that a requirement to travel a significant distance to access tuition acts as a barrier to participation for the people we wish to reach. As a result we expect and would welcome consortia or partnership applications from local or grass roots organisations.

While Census data gives us a detailed picture of where our target learners live, it is now seven years old, so we might expect some change since 2011. This data, therefore, is not a substitute for local understanding but should supplement it. We are keen to consider proposals that demonstrate knowledge of local demographics. We want to ensure that targeting is based on the best possible mix of national level data and local intelligence.

While we will be looking to ensure we fund projects that will operate in our priority areas we will consider funding projects that cover areas which, whilst not on this priority list, can be demonstrated to have a high level of need for our target learners (i.e. isolated women who speak little or no English).

Decisions on the location of projects receiving funding will be made at the sole discretion of the Department. Funding will be awarded on the basis of merit but we will be taking into account the location of each project to ensure we are satisfied it will address the needs of our target learners.

Section 3

The process

Interested organisations must submit an application using the application form attached to this prospectus that demonstrates precisely how their proposal meets the Department's aims, outcomes and criteria as set out in this prospectus. Applicants must also demonstrate their ability to deliver the proposal at the scale we are seeking.

Completed applications must be:

- sent to englishlanguage@communities.gsi.gov.uk
- sent with the subject line "Integrated Communities English Language Programme" and the name of your organisation
- received no later than 23.45 on Wednesday 31 October. Please note it is the responsibility of the applicant organisation to make sure that applications have been received by the Department in time.

Funding levels

Applicants are invited to <u>state the total amount of funding</u> they are requesting in 2019/20 to implement their project.

We have up to £6m of funding available between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2020. We are looking for a small number of projects led by organisations, consortiums or partnerships that are capable of delivering at scale.

Subject to the Department's future funding settlement we may wish to fund projects beyond 2019/20 where we are satisfied that they have achieved considerable success in achieving integration outcomes. However, this should not be assumed by applicants.

Learning from what works

The competition we ran for our previous Community–Based English Language Programme sought to promote innovation. For the new Programme we are keen to ensure the learning gained from our previous Programme is reflected.

Factors that may help secure the enrolment of learners from isolated communities who have hitherto been deterred from, unwilling to seek or unable to access support to improve their language skills include:

 Using respected and trusted local delivery partners (most often small voluntary and community groups who may already be known to potential participants)

- Delivering training in an easily accessible informal and relaxed community setting
- Making available a crèche or an offer to cover the costs of child care. The latter should be accompanied by a support mechanism and/or relationships with local childcare providers to ensure a smooth and accessible process for learners with emerging English Language Skills
- The right branding and messaging to avoid intimidating would-be learners
- A practical focus on everyday challenges building confidence matters as much as learning the language if people are to feel confident in mixing with people from different backgrounds. A number of projects have taken learners out into the community to shops, museums, public transport etc.
- A focus on progression rather than completion a flexible approach is needed to run with what works and to allow learners to develop at their own pace
- Building local credibility: many learners went on to recommend the Programme to their friends and family once they had got something positive out of it
- Mentors can give valuable support to learners complementing the classroom Programme and encouraging social mixing (with benefits on both sides).

Randomised Control Trial

In 2016, the Department ran a Randomised Controlled Trial to evaluate the impact of community-based English language classes on language proficiency and social integration outcomes. The trial involved over 500 participants, and was spread over five different areas in England. Participants were randomly assigned to a treatment and control group, with the treatment group receiving the 11-week language course from May 2016 and the control group receiving it from September 2016 (after the trial had ended). Participants were assessed on their language proficiency as well as attitudes and behaviours related to social integration such as social mixing behaviours and levels of trust and belonging.

The results of the trial¹ highlighted the effectiveness of community-based English language provision: individuals in the intervention group attained significantly higher test scores on all areas of English proficiency (speaking and listening, reading and writing) compared to the control group. Progress in English speaking and listening among individuals in the intervention group was double that achieved by the control group (across the 11 week intervention period).

The evaluation also found a strong positive impact of attending a communitybased English language intervention on some measures of social integration.

 $^{^{1}\} https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-based-english-language-programme-a-randomised-controlled-trial--2$

Individuals in the intervention group were significantly more likely to report an increase in the number of people spoken to in English and people spoken to from a different background (in the past week) and friends from a different country or religion (compared to the control group). People in the intervention group were also more likely to report an increase in going to the shops independently, more confidence in talking to doctors and other healthcare professionals and higher levels of trust in their local community (compared to the control group).

Partnership and collaboration

In developing our previous Community–Based English Language Programme, we recognised that there are a large number of voluntary organisations across our priority areas delivering valuable language and broader services to our target learner groups. However, we also noted that there was not a cohesive offer across different areas provided by this range of voluntary organisations, and the standard, scale and quality of their provision differed considerably.

Projects under our previous Programme have gone some way to strengthen the capacity of many voluntary and community groups through the formation of consortia of small organisations who alone might struggle to develop their subject knowledge and professionalism.

Through the new Programme we want to further sustain and extend this model where it already exists, as well as expanding this type of provision both in terms of depth of reach and geographic coverage. Effective delivery depends on the skills, knowledge, experience and cultural understanding of a range of different types of organisation working together. We are looking to support partnerships that strike the right balance between sufficient size and scale while having the ability to reach deeply into the segregated communities where our target learners often live.

Governance arrangements

Governance arrangements between partner and collaborating organisations will be the responsibility of the organisations concerned. The Department will seek assurance that appropriate arrangements are ready to be in place – for instance contracts or service level agreements setting out each organisation's responsibilities for project implementation and monitoring; the proportion of the overall funding they will receive and the timescales on which they will receive this money. The Department will take no responsibility for the implementation of, and adherence to, these agreements.

The Department's primary relationship will be with the organisation to which funding is being awarded, which is also the organisation the Department will hold responsible for the correct use of the funding, successful implementation of the project and achievement of outcomes. The Department will also hold the lead organisation responsible for ensuring both their own propriety and that of their partner organisations, making sure that they do not bring the project, competition or Department into any form of disrepute.

Partnering with other providers to develop pathways

The Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper acknowledges the important role that local co-ordination and referral services can play in assessing learners' needs, advising them on the types of courses (funded and otherwise) that are right for them and for which they may be eligible, and helping them to find the next suitable course when they are ready to progress.

We recognise, however, that the level of provision and infrastructure in place may vary within and between areas and across the country, making partnership working and progression more difficult. We will be launching a new Integrated Communities English Language Co-ordination Fund open to eligible local authorities to support a number of places to develop a better offer for English language learners.

Through this prospectus, we want to support projects that can demonstrate their capacity to plug into existing local infrastructure and work in partnership with other local providers and local authorities to build progression pathways for people who have benefited from courses funded under the Programme. We will expect successful projects to investigate and engage with existing ESOL providers and/or adult learning forums and partnerships. We will also expect community providers to work with local colleges to help learners overcome any fears they may have about moving to more formal provision in a college.

Where volunteers are utilised, strong proposals will include development pathways for them, for example, working towards qualifications in teaching English and other relevant professional development activities which improve the quality of support they offer to learners.

Section 4 – Outcomes and requirements

We consider four criteria to be particularly important in terms of the outcomes and requirements we want to see from winning proposals: Impact, Effective Targeting, Deliverability and Financial Viability. These outcomes are explained in more detail below.

We will weight our assessment of these outcomes to reflect their importance.

Impact

The new Programme will approach English language support from the perspective of integration. We want to support projects that are going to have a demonstrable positive impact on our target learners under the following themes:

- English proficiency (with a focus on oral communication)
- Confidence in using functional English in a variety of day-to-day settings (such as speaking to a child's teacher, or visiting a GP alone)
- Social mixing with and attitudes towards those from other backgrounds
- Participation in wider society (e.g. confidence to travel alone)
- Progression towards further learning, confidence, integration and longer term goals such as volunteering or employment

 Awareness of how to access other sources of advice and support on a range of issues that may directly or indirectly affect them (for example, employment, health and wellbeing, domestic violence and abuse, hate crime and support for victims or concerns regarding extremism and radicalisation).

The new Programme is not intended to supplement but rather complement English language provision available under the Adult Skills Budget which is targeted at people closer to the labour market and who may be less isolated. We would expect many participants in the new Programme to progress to more formal ESOL provision as their proficiency and confidence grows. Proposals should include clear plans for helping learners progress onto further English Language learning and accredited learning, where appropriate. This may be through supported sign-posting or referrals, or other work with existing ESOL providers to ensure learners can continue to learn and practise their English beyond the project.

We will assess a proposal's likely impact on learners by:

- the number of people forecast to benefit from the Programme in our priority areas
- the expected increase in English proficiency they will achieve, and
- the proposal's focus on both their integration into the local community through mixing with people from different backgrounds, and their progression after engaging with the project so as to maintain and develop their new skills.

Effective Targeting

As outlined at Section 2: 'Where we are looking: our priority areas', we want to make sure the Programme is available in those areas where we know women live who have no or low levels of English. A list of our priority areas based on Census 2011 data is at Annex A. We will assess a proposal's ability to effectively target using both national and local data, in particular:

- how national and local data will be used to build a strong understanding of local demographics
- how levels of demand will be identified with particular regard to our target learners
- the robustness of a strategy to encourage the enrolment, participation and retention of our target learners including marketing approaches aimed at attracting target learners and removing barriers to their engagement

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring information collected from our previous community-based English language providers has helped the Department conduct analysis of the number of participants and their characteristics. Under the new Programme we are keen to further strengthen providers' and our understanding of how outcomes are being achieved.

As part of the trial to evaluate community-based English language training we have developed standardised tools to assess learners' changing English proficiency. We have also developed a survey which measures integration

outcomes, including for example, diversity of friendship groups and independent activity. In the interests of rigour and consistency we will expect providers to make use of these materials to measure their progress and outcomes.

We will assess a proposal's capacity to undertake reliable and effective monitoring and quality assurance activities. Proposals should therefore address what steps will be taken to help ensure local projects are aware of the need for diligence in providing timely monitoring information and that the data produced is of sufficient quality. In addition, assessing the quality of teaching and learning will be expected.

We are keen to improve our understanding of the impact on learners. We understand from our Community-Based English Language Programme that the impact can take time to materialise. We would be interested in proposals that suggest innovative ways of collecting data on the longer term impact on participants.

Financial Viability: Best Use of Money

In assessing Best Use of Money, we will be looking for projects which demonstrate that:

- robust project management is in place
- costs, including costs per output (i.e. costs per learner), present the best use of money
- financial risks are identified and managed
- costs and any other funding are profiled in a sensible way.

We do not expect projects to be generating, or in receipt of, additional funding during the period of funding from the Department. Some projects, however, may be able to achieve this, in which case it should be set out in the finance proformas. We will consider part-funding projects where we are satisfied that sufficient funding has been secured to fund the remainder of the project and that this funding has been secured from a reliable source. Any part-funded proposal would need to demonstrate that it can meet the Department's outcomes and requirements in full.

The Department reserves the right not to award any or all of the £6 million, if the applications do not meet the required criteria to a sufficient level or if organisations do not meet the Department's due diligence requirements.

Criteria

All entries must demonstrate in the application form how they meet the criteria and outcomes set out below. We have indicated the weighting attached to each criterion in the description below.

Criteria	Weighting (%)
Impact of project	20%
The project's positive impact on our target learners including:	

 The expected change in English proficiency (with a focus on oral communication) Confidence in using functional English in a variety of day-to-day settings (such as speaking to a child's teacher, or visiting a GP alone) Social mixing with and attitudes to those from other backgrounds Participation in wider society (e.g. confidence to travel alone) Progression towards further learning, confidence, integration and longer term goals such as volunteering or employment Awareness of how to access other sources of advice and support on a range of issues that may directly or indirectly affect them (for example, employment, health and wellbeing, domestic violence and abuse, hate crime and support for victims or concerns regarding extremism and radicalisation) 	
Effective Targeting	
The project's ability to reach our target learners using both national and local data, in particular:	
• The extent to which the project will offer tuition to our target learners	
 In priority areas. The availability of strong supporting evidence if it is proposed to 	20%
operate outside of our priority areas	
targeting	
• The robustness of the project's strategy to encourage the enrolment, participation and retention of our target learners	
Monitoring and Evaluation	
The project's capacity to undertake regular, timely, reliable and effective monitoring, including:	
• The return of monthly output data (i.e. numbers and characteristics of	
 those engaged, enrolled and in receipt of tuition) Clear plans for the capture and return of outcome and longer term 	10%
 impact data The approach to quality control and consistency across all local 	
providers of tuition	
The degree of willingness and capacity to adopt standard monitoring and assessment tools as directed by the Department	

Deliverability	
 The strength of the project's partnership arrangements, including Has a viable consortium or delivery partnerships been formed? Are suitable and robust governance arrangements in place? The capacity to deliver at scale and pace Does the mix of organisations within the partnership provide the necessary skills/knowledge/experience required by the proposal? Experience of engaging and working with target learner groups Ability to build partnerships with other local providers to develop clear progression pathways, or engage with already existing networks of English language providers 	20%
 Financial Viability In assessing Best Use of Money, we will be looking for projects which demonstrate: That costs, and costs per output (i.e. costs per learner), present the best use of money That financial risks are identified and managed That costs and any other funding are profiled in a sensible way 	20%
 Project Management In assessing project's capacity we will be looking for projects which demonstrate: Robust arrangements for required staff to be in place, and necessary premises, materials, continuing professional development, etc. A clear course structure – e.g. length, intensiveness and adaptability A realistic understanding of risk and mitigations to address them A robust implementation plan (timings of project) 	10%

Assessment

All completed entries will be considered by a panel against the stated criteria. The evidence put forward by each entry in response to each criterion will be assessed against a five-point scale:

- 0 Absence of evidence / criterion not met
- 1 Meets some of the requirements of the criterion
- 2 Meets most of the requirements of the criterion
- 3 Meets all of the requirements of the criterion
- 4 Strongly meets all of the requirements of the criterion

Any application where a score of 1 or less is awarded for one or more of the stated criteria will not be considered further.

The Assessment Panel will make recommendations to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government as to which proposals to fund. The final decision as to which proposals receive funding will rest with the Secretary of State.

Scoring guide

Score	Rating	Description
0	absence of evidence / criterion not met	 A proposal at this rating: Builds very little or no confidence that the applicant can deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures; Builds very little or no confidence that the applicant's approach/solution will deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence or an inappropriate approach/solution.
1	meets some of the requirements of the criterion	 A proposal at this rating: Raises reservations that the applicant can deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures; Raises reservations that the applicant's approach/solution will deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence or an inappropriate approach/solution.
2	meets most of the requirements of the criterion	 A proposal at this rating: Suggests that the applicant can deliver the requirements through evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures; Provides an acceptable approach/solution to delivering the requirements utilising standard strategies, plans, tools, methods or technologies.
3	meets all of the requirements of the criterion	 A proposal at this rating: Builds confidence that the applicant can deliver the requirements through evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures; Provides a good approach/solution to delivering the requirements utilising appropriately tailored strategies, plans, tools, methods or technologies.
4	Strongly meets all of the requirements of the criterion	 A proposal at this rating: Builds a high level of confidence that the applicant can deliver the requirements through evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures; Provides an exceptional approach/solution to delivering the requirements utilising appropriately tailored and at times innovative strategies, plans, tools, methods or technologies.

Section 5

Working with successful applicants

The Department will work further with those applicants who are successful.

Applicants must note that, in order to assist the Department in achieving the best use of this investment, winning applicants may be requested to demonstrate flexibility in the geographical spread of their projects.

We will discuss the areas to be covered so as to ensure that, between them, the winning applicants are able to best cover our priority areas. We will also

assist with any additional partnership working arrangements that need to be finalised to achieve this.

Payment of grant funding

The winning applicants will be required to enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with the Department, which will set out the expectations of both the recipient and the Department.

We will work with the recipient to agree the profile of the funding – the amount to be awarded; the size and frequency of instalments; and the timespan over which they will be made. These arrangements will reflect the implementation needs of the project.

We are keen to see delivery in communities from April 2019.

We will work with successful applicants to agree targets and milestones over the lifetime of the project. If these targets and milestones are not met, we will reserve the right to withhold funding, or terminate the Grant Funding Agreement.

Annex A – Priority Areas

Local Authority
Barking and Dagenham
Birmingham
Blackburn with Darwen
Boston
Bradford
Brent
City of London, Westminster
Ealing
Enfield
Hackney
Haringey
Harrow
Hounslow
Leicester
Luton
Newham
Oldham
Pendle
Peterborough
Redbridge
Sandwell
Slough
Tower Hamlets
Waltham Forest