



Department
for Education

Trust Establishment and Growth Fund 2023-2025

Information for applicants

March 2024

Contents

Summary	3
Expiry date	3
Who is this publication for?	3
Main points	3
What is the fund?	4
Eligibility	5
Eligible activities	5
When and how can I apply?	6
Application deadlines	6
Writing your application	8
Questions and clarifications	9
Submitting your application form	9
How will my bid be assessed?	10
Assessment process	10
Assessment criteria	10
Geographical need	10
Project assessment	11
Trust development statements (strand A applicants only)	11
Project need (strand B applicants only)	11
Project plan (all applicants)	11
Deliverability	11
What happens next?	12
Annex A: Education investment areas by local authority district	13

Summary

This publication provides non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE). It has been produced to help schools, trusts and other organisations looking to establish a new trust, apply for the [Trust Establishment and Growth \(TEG\) fund](#) 2023-2025.

Expiry date

This guidance will expire on 31 March 2025, when all activities funded by TEG must be completed.

Who is this publication for?

This guidance is for:

- multi-academy trusts (MAT) looking to establish a new geographical hub
- local authority-maintained schools and/or stand-alone academy trusts forming a MAT
- dioceses and other organisations looking to establish a new MAT

Main points

This guidance explains:

- what the TEG fund is and what it will fund
- who can apply
- how and when to apply
- how we will assess applications

You should read the guidance in full before applying for funding. If you have any questions, please contact the grant team at TEG.fund@education.gov.uk.

Please note that to better manage anticipated demand, we have removed window 5 and extended the window 4 application dates. Please see [Table 2](#) for more details.

What is the fund?

The [Trust Establishment and Growth \(TEG\) Fund](#) forms part of an enhanced package of support to the trust sector to support growth, particularly in [education investment areas](#) (EIAs) and areas of priority as determined by regional directors. Both TEG and the Trust Capacity Fund (TCaF) are designed to enable trusts to grow, TEG through providing start-up funding for projects in their initial stages and TCaF for trusts once growth projects are approved (please see the [TCaF guidance](#) for a description of growth projects). For example, a trust may successfully apply for TEG for funding to help establish a hub in an EIA and once a project is approved by the regional director that project would then become eligible for TCaF 2023-2025.

The TEG fund is a competitive grant of up to £50,000 per project to provide start-up funding to either:

- existing trusts wishing to expand or create a new MAT hub
- or organisations wishing to establish a new trust

The TEG fund is a competitive grant to support the costs of developing a growth project. A successful application to TEG does not guarantee that a growth project will subsequently be approved. Similarly, a successful application for TEG does not guarantee that any subsequent application to TCaF will also be successful. Applications for both grants are considered on a case-by-case basis.

TEG 2023-2025 is organised into two strands as detailed in table 1 below. Applications for projects in education investment areas (EIAs) will be prioritised (strand A). These should address [trust development statements \(TDS\)](#). Strand B applications should be for projects outside an EIA and not listed in [Annex A](#). Strand B applications should address the regional director's priorities for the area. Applications for both strands should be proposing to take on a minimum of 3 schools. Applicants are required to indicate the school(s) with which they are either already engaging or planning to engage.

Table 1: TEG fund 2023-2025 funding strands

Strand	Minimum grant value	Maximum grant value
A - For projects in EIAs (listed in Annex A), planning on taking on a minimum of 3 schools	£10,000	£50,000
B - For projects outside EIAs, planning on taking on a minimum of 3 schools	£10,000	£50,000

Eligibility

Before applying it is a requirement that applicants must discuss their proposed project with the relevant [regional office](#) to ensure this fits with the Regional Director priorities. To be eligible:

- strand A applicants must be able to demonstrate that the trust development project for which they are seeking funding will contribute to meeting the expectations detailed in the [trust development statement](#) (TDS) for an EIA (listed in [Annex A](#)).
- strand B applicants must be planning a project that involves taking on 3 or more schools in an area outside an EIA (and not listed in [Annex A](#)) and be able to demonstrate that the project meets the needs of the area for additional trust capacity.
- proposed projects must not involve any schools that are included in a pre-existing growth project which has either been approved or is due to be taken to an advisory board for a decision by a regional director.

The TEG Fund aims to support the costs of developing a growth project at its earliest stages. Projects should represent good value for money, as set out in the deliverability section. If a project has not yet gone to an Advisory Board, but is otherwise at an advanced stage, it is unlikely to be accepted. Where that is the case, it will usually be more appropriate for applicants to apply directly to TCaF once their growth project has been approved by a regional director.

Applications are sought from either established high-quality MATs or organisations wishing to set up a MAT in an area. You must also be considered by the Education and Skills Funding Agency to be of sound financial health. As a minimum requirement, academy trusts must not have an open [financial notice to improve](#).

The [regional office](#) will confirm if the project meets the needs of the area; please allow adequate time ahead of any application for this engagement with the relevant [regional office](#).

Eligible activities

Activities must be associated with the development of a growth project to set up a new MAT or hub and developing a presence in a specified region. The TEG fund will support the following start-up activity:

- the legal costs of setting up a MAT
- area-wide promotion of a trust or prospective trust to schools
- the establishment of professional networks

- out of region travel and subsistence for key trust personnel
- project management costs
- initial operating costs (for example, office rental)
- audit fees for assurance of grant

All activities funded by TEG must be completed by 31 March 2025. These costs should be outlined in the [application form](#).

Examples of activities for which you cannot seek trust establishment funding include:

- due diligence activities relating to the schools being taken on
- expenditure on tangible items, such as the purchase of assets (for example, buildings, furniture, fittings, IT equipment) up to and including individual items such as stationery
- costs for refurbishment
- activities that are already funded from other sources, such as legal fees that are covered by the sponsorship/conversion grant
- time for pre-existing staff to undertake work that is already in progress as part of their current responsibilities
- time for senior trust personnel (such as CEOs, headteachers) to conduct further school improvement activities or trust audits as a part or an extension of their current role/duties
- consultancy costs for writing your TEG application project

Neither of these lists is exhaustive. If you are uncertain whether any of your proposed activities are suitable for the TEG Fund, please contact the team at TEG.fund@education.gov.uk.

When and how can I apply?

Application deadlines

Applications may be made between 1 March 2024 and 25 June 2024. Applications will be assessed, and awards made in the month following the application window. The application windows for Financial Year 2024/25 funding is shown in [Table 2](#) below.

Table 2: TEG 2023-2025 key dates

Application window	Window 4
Window opens	1 Mar 24
Submission deadline	25 Jun 24

There will be a [national moderation exercise](#) following the window. Decisions will be communicated to trusts as quickly as possible afterwards.

You can only submit one TEG application per project. You may withdraw and resubmit your application if it has not yet been to [national moderation](#), but we will not provide feedback on the initial submission. You cannot submit a revised application for the same project after a decision has been made.

Writing your application

Before applying, applicants must discuss their proposed project with the relevant [regional office](#) to ensure this fits with the Regional Director priorities.

To apply for the TEG fund 2023-2025, you must download and complete the [application form](#) and the [expenditure plan](#).

The application requires the following information (further guidance can be found in the form):

- organisation details – basic information about your organisation, such as its name, location, Group ID and contact details
- project location – the area in which you are proposing to work, the region in which your organisation is currently based (if different) and the specific schools your project is proposing to engage.
- project details –
 - a narrative outlining how you will meet either:
 - the trust development expectations for the relevant EIA (strand A applicants only)
 - or the needs of an area outside of EIAs as determined in consultation with the relevant DfE Regional team (strand B applicants only)
 - a project overview and action plan.

Taken together, these should demonstrate how you will deliver on the expectations while offering value for money.

As detailed in [eligible activities](#), all activities funded by TEG must be completed by 31 March 2025. The grant is designed so that planned activities follow notification of the grant award as shown in [Table 3](#) below.

Table 3: TEG 2023-2025 grant activity start/end dates

Activity	Window 4
Planned grant activities start dates	1 Aug 24

- The expenditure plan will ask for a breakdown of the planned expenditure for the project, including a description of each activity, the dates between which each activity will take place and the individual cost of each activity.
- Please note that if you are awarded funding, this expenditure plan will form the basis of any grant offer letter issued, and you will be expected to commit to deliver against the plan submitted. There will be no opportunity to amend these plans following

submission, so you must be confident of their delivery. All activities funded by TEG must be completed by 31 March 2025.

- Please remember that the TEG fund is a competitive grant: your application is not an agreement of funding. All applicants will be considered relative to the [assessment criteria](#) against which all applications will be scored and prioritised.
- Before submitting your completed application form and expenditure plan, you must ensure that your accounting officer or equivalent has ratified the application. This individual will be accountable for delivery, ensuring funding is used correctly, and in compliance with the [DfE grant funding agreement: terms and conditions](#).
- You are not entitled to claim from the department any costs or expenses that you may incur in preparing your bid, regardless of whether it is successful.

Questions and clarifications

You may query and seek clarification on any aspect of the TEG fund or this guidance prior to submitting your application. Questions must be submitted to TEG.fund@education.gov.uk. However, we will not review or give specific advice on any part of your application before submission.

Submitting your application form

Please email your completed [application form and expenditure plan](#) to the grant delivery team at TEG.Fund@education.gov.uk. Please include your organisation's name and 'TEG fund application' in the email subject field.

On receipt of applications, the grant delivery team will check to ensure you have completed all required details in the relevant fields of the form. They may contact you to clarify elements of your form: this is not an opportunity to provide additional detail beyond that already within the form. Your application for the TEG fund confirms that you have read, understood and will comply with the [DfE grant funding agreement: terms and conditions](#).

How will my bid be assessed?

Assessment process

All applications received will be subject to a two-stage assessment process: regional assessment and national moderation.

1. Regional assessment: the relevant Regional Director will assess the merit of the application against the [assessment criteria](#), treating all applications fairly. They will use the information contained within the application, as well as information generated from DfE-held sources, to make a relative judgment about whether it should be approved
2. National moderation: to ensure applications are assessed consistently, and to maximise value for money against the aims of the TEG fund, all regional assessments will be subject to a national moderation exercise involving senior officials from across the regions. Where the number and value of strong bids exceeds the available funding, this exercise will prioritise applications according to the extent to which they meet the [assessment criteria](#).

Assessment criteria

All applying organisations will be subject to due diligence checks by the department and the quality of trusts will be assessed as a part of this process.

The following sections set out how we will judge applications against specific assessment criteria. You should ensure your application shows clearly how you meet these criteria, but please remember that the TEG fund is a competitive grant: even applications that meet all the criteria are not guaranteed funding.

Applications that support the scheme's specific geographical and contextual priorities will receive higher scores and be prioritised accordingly during moderation. Applications that do not involve projects in EIAs are still eligible but will be prioritised according to the strand criteria.

Geographical need

If you are applying to strand A, your project must be in an EIA (listed in the [Annex A](#) table). If you are applying for strand B, your project can be located outside of an EIA and not in an area listed in [Annex A](#).

If you are applying under strand B your project is less likely to be prioritised and less likely to receive funding.

Within these parameters, geographical need will be assessed by comparing the number of at-risk schools in a local authority district with the supply of effective trusts in the same area. Regional directors will also refer to local intelligence (for example, to ensure that boundary issues and anomalous cases do not unduly influence decisions) and consider their key strategic priorities for their areas to inform decision-making.

Project assessment

Trust development statements (strand A applicants only)

Those organisations with projects in EIAs (strand A as listed in [Annex A](#)) will be assessed on their ability to raise standards by delivering against some of the priorities for trust development for an EIA as set out in the relevant [TDS](#).

Project need (strand B applicants only)

Those organisations with projects outside EIAs (strand B) will be assessed on their ability to deliver against the project specified in their application. This will be assessed against regional director priorities using criteria set out in the application form. It is a requirement that applicants should have first discussed their project with the relevant region prior to application to ensure their application is in line with regional requirements.

Project plan (all applicants)

We would expect projects to be based on plans involving specific schools in specific areas with a timeline for engagement with these schools. Applications which can demonstrate a greater likelihood of developing a viable growth project are more likely to be funded.

Deliverability

Assessors will consider the extent to which plans are realistic and provide suitable assurance that all funded activity will be completed and paid for according to the terms and conditions of the grant.

A strong application will provide clear evidence of the following:

- a well-conceived, realistic action plan for your TEG fund project which demonstrates a clear understanding of the area's needs
- a clear spending plan which offers value for money while ensuring proposed activities are eligible for funding.

Applications will also be deemed stronger under this criterion if there is clear evidence the activity could not take place without TEG funding (for example, if it cannot be funded through other sources).

What happens next?

Whether it is successful or not, we will inform you via email about the outcome of your application as quickly as possible following national moderation.

As explained in [submitting your application](#), your application for the TEG fund confirms that you have read, understood and will comply with the [DfE grant funding agreement: terms and conditions](#).

If your application is successful, you will be required to sign a grant funding agreement based on the expenditure plan submitted at application stage. This will set out our expectations of you, including the specific grant conditions, monitoring arrangements and payment details, and you will be required to accept it in full.

Grant funding will be paid in arrears throughout the funding period once your agreed activity has been completed and evidenced.

Annex A: Education investment areas by local authority district

To apply for strand A of TEG, your project must be within one of the following local authority districts in EIAs.

- Amber Valley
- Ashfield
- Babergh
- Bassetlaw
- Bedford
- Blackpool
- Bolsover
- Bolton
- Boston
- Bradford
- Breckland
- Broadland
- Broxtowe
- Bury
- Cambridge
- Central Bedfordshire
- Chesterfield
- Cornwall
- County Durham
- Coventry
- Darlington
- Derby
- Derbyshire Dales
- Doncaster
- Dorset
- Dudley
- East Cambridgeshire
- East Lindsey
- East Suffolk
- Eastbourne
- Erewash
- Fenland
- Gedling
- Great Yarmouth
- Halton

- Hartlepool
- Hastings
- High Peak
- Huntingdonshire
- Ipswich
- Isle of Wight
- King's Lynn and West
- Norfolk
- Kirklees
- Knowsley
- Leeds
- Lewes
- Lincoln
- Liverpool
- Luton
- Manchester
- Mansfield
- Mid Suffolk
- Middlesbrough
- Newark and Sherwood
- North East Derbyshire
- North Kesteven
- North Norfolk
- North Northamptonshire
- North Somerset
- North Yorkshire*
- Norwich
- Nottingham
- Oldham
- Peterborough
- Plymouth
- Portsmouth
- Rochdale
- Rother
- Rotherham
- Rushcliffe
- Salford
- Sandwell
- Sefton
- Somerset**
- South Cambridgeshire

- South Derbyshire
- South Gloucestershire
- South Holland
- South Kesteven
- South Norfolk
- South Tyneside
- St. Helens
- Stoke-on-Trent
- Sunderland
- Swindon
- Tameside
- Wakefield
- Walsall
- Wealden
- West Lindsey
- West Suffolk
- Wirral

* North Yorkshire local authority district comprises the former districts of Craven, Hambleton, Harrogate, Richmondshire, Ryedale, Scarborough, and Selby

** Somerset local authority district comprises the former districts of Mendip, Sedgemoor, Somerset West and Taunton, and South Somerset



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