

Foreword

The Skills Roadmap for London sets out how the Mayor plans to ensure London's skills offer better serves London's communities and economies, building on the success of the delegation of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) to the Mayor in 2019.

It includes the Mayor's plans to make adult education and skills provision even more accessible to those who need it most, recognising that participation in learning can lift people out of poverty and address persistent inequality at its roots.

Often the people who stand to benefit most from learning opportunities are least likely to engage with the skills system. Community groups and local organisations are valued and trusted and can be more effective at reaching these people than traditional routes.

Last year we launched the first round of the Skills for Londoners Community Outreach Programme, and we are pleased to build on this further by launching this second round of funding, to raise awareness of London's skills and learning offer to Londoners.

This programme will seek to engage and reach diverse communities across London to raise awareness about the Mayor's skills offer, with a specific focus on available numeracy skills provision and to provide referral routes for Londoners to access the range of learning opportunities available.

I would encourage community organisations to apply for this funding opportunity to enable them to use their established grassroots outreach work to help the GLA and the skills sector better serve those Londoners most in need.

The Mayor is committed to building a fairer and more prosperous city for all Londoners. At City Hall, collaboration is key to our approach to skills and employment, and we look forward to working together with you to build a better London for everyone.

Jules Pipe CBE

Deputy Mayor – Planning, Regeneration and Skills

Community Outreach Fund 23/24 Specification

1. Introduction

Adult education provides an important opportunity to learn new skills, progress into new career opportunities or simply to build up social and emotional connections with the wider community. This is especially relevant in the context of the economic impacts of the current cost of living crisis.

As part of the [Skills Roadmap for London](#), the Mayor has set out plans for making the adult education system more accessible and locally relevant. This included a commitment to delivering a long-term engagement and community outreach programme for adult education in London, to raise awareness of London's skills and learning offer to Londoners.

It is often those people who would stand to benefit most from learning opportunities that are least likely to engage with the skills system. Peer research and our consultation for the Skills Roadmap reported that community groups and local organisations are highly valued and trusted and, as such, can be more effective at reaching people than through traditional routes.

Additionally, London is currently facing a cost of living crisis and this will most impact Londoners not in work, those without qualifications, and those in insecure or low-income work. Evidence suggests that people with higher-level skills are not only more likely to be in employment but are also likely to earn more in employment as well as improve social outcomes such as health and wellbeing. Further evidence around the impact of the cost of living can be found in Appendix A.

For this reason, the Mayor launched the Skills for Londoners Community Outreach Programme to directly fund community organisations across London, raise awareness about the Mayor's skills offer, and provide referral routes for Londoners to access the range of learning opportunities available. This also includes a specific focus on raising awareness of the role of numeracy skills to life and work and available numeracy skills provision in London, such as the London Multiply programme. London has a numeracy skills gap and

there are significant negative attitudes to maths that can stop Londoners accessing numeracy skills provision. These include maths anxiety and a lack of confidence, sometimes resulting from negative experiences.

In 2022/23 the programme supported 12 organisations to engage learners, and across 23/24 the Mayor is extending funding to reach up to 40 London-based community groups. This year, the programme will offer small grants of £15k-27k to community organisations to deliver outreach activity designed to engage Londoners and refer them on to adult learning opportunities.

2. What are we looking to fund?

The programme will fund community groups and organisations to increase Londoners' participation in adult learning, particularly learning opportunities that are funded and or supported by the Mayor. The objectives of the programme are to:

- Increase participation in AEB and other adult education provision, for those who need it most.
- Increase awareness and understanding of what the Mayor is doing to support and deliver adult education and skills by Londoners, employers, and key referrers into the skills system.
- Reduce attitudinal barriers towards numeracy learning and raise awareness of the role of numeracy to everyday life and work.
- Increase awareness and participation in numeracy learning opportunities including the London Multiply programme and AEB numeracy provision.
- Increase awareness of the skills opportunities and careers in the Academy priority sectors (green, health and care, hospitality, digital and creative) by Londoners, employers, and key referrers into the system.
- Share best practice in promoting adult education to those who need it most with AEB providers and other partners.

Community organisations can have pre-existing connections with adult education providers in their area or be looking to establish new connections for the Londoners and cohorts they regularly engage.

This funding should not be used to deliver training or employment support activity directly.

Programme activity should include:

- Promoting and raising awareness of adult learning opportunities with target communities.
- Highlighting training and job opportunities in sectors key to London's recovery.
- Building relationships with local adult education providers to generate referrals into adult learning provision, including the AEB, and the [Mayor's Skills Academies](#) provision.
- Addressing and reducing barriers to education and numeracy learning by raising awareness of the role of numeracy skills to everyday life and work.

- Promoting and raising awareness of numeracy learning opportunities, generating referrals into the [London Multiply programme](#) and AEB numeracy provision.
- Promoting learner attendance to adult education opportunities once referred.
- Strengthening relationships and referral pathways between grassroots community groups and organisations, adult learning providers, No Wrong Door Integration Hubs, and other support agencies who can help address barriers to learning.
- Working closely with other skills community engagement programmes such as the Local Community Numeracy Roadshow.
- Contributing to case studies about how community groups can support referrals into adult community learning and working with our evaluator to collect evidence on the programme.
- Supporting with setting up models of good practice and signposting to adult community learning provision.

Examples could include:

- In-person face-to-face engagement with local communities.
- Workshops or open-door sessions.
- Joining up with existing community projects and spaces.
- Embedding information about skills provision into existing advice or support offers.
- Direct relationships and referrals to adult education providers.

These activities could involve, but are not limited to, numeracy, confidence building, mentoring services and accessibility awareness around childcare and care services.

The key metrics that your project should work towards are:

- The number of Londoners engaged.
- The number of referrals made into adult education opportunities.
- The number of referrals made into numeracy provision, including the London Multiply programme and AEB numeracy provision, where appropriate.
- Proportion of learners who have attended a course.

Alongside these metrics, organisations should monitor attitudinal barriers to education including changes in attitudes to numeracy. Reporting should focus on recording and monitoring learner

engagement activities and best practice for journeys into adult education provision. This could include learner action plans, feedback from participants, specialist advice provided and support they received including sign posting.

It is expected that successful applicants will implement and maintain systems to regularly monitor and report on the above metrics and contribute to the overall evaluation of the programme. Templates and delivery paperwork will be provided at intervals throughout the delivery period to be completed for regular reporting.

The reporting of this information should be broken down by target group, and the types of learning opportunity they are referred to.

Organisations are only permitted to submit 1 application form per funding round.

3. Target groups

All London-based organisations that qualify under the eligibility requirements can apply for funding. Organisations are not required to be London wide and can operate in a single borough or across multiple different London boroughs.

Research and engagement undertaken during the development of the Skills Roadmap demonstrated that there are groups of Londoners who are most in need of support through adult education, including those who have been disproportionately impacted by financial circumstances. Driving participation in learning for these groups is important so they can experience the social and economic benefits of learning.

Examples of those demographics that may benefit the most from the programme include (but are not limited to):

- individuals who are digitally excluded and/or have negative experiences of mainstream education,
- older and younger Londoners,
- black or ethnic minority Londoners,
- women,
- individuals with English language needs,
- those seeking asylum,
- those most likely not to be engaged in adult education,
- individuals impacted by the cost of living including those who are out of work or Londoners earning below the London living wage,
- And Deaf, disabled and neurodivergent Londoners, and those with long-term health conditions.

Additionally, the London Multiply programme has a specific focus on supporting parents, care leavers and those with experience of the criminal justice system, and some providers will have dedicated skills provision for these groups. Organisations looking to focus referrals into numeracy provision should evidence how they are also targeting those groups through their project.

4. How much funding is available?

Grant funding between £15,000 and £27,000 is available for London-based community groups and grassroots organisations active in their community. Grant funding will be provided across the 2023-24 financial year in three instalments.

Costs that will be covered by the fund include (but are not limited to):

- Staffing costs
- Resource and event costs
- Venue hire costs
- Overheads

There is a possibility that I funding may become available for an additional delivery year from April 2024, with more targeted deliverables with additional monitoring. This will be subject to funding being available and the success of this year's programme. Providers will be contacted by early next year to confirm if this is the case and provided with further advice.

5. Which organisations are eligible?

To be eligible for the programme, you must:

1. be a user-led London-based community, voluntary, faith, cultural, or grassroots organisation
2. be a registered charity, social enterprise or Community Interest Company that can demonstrate a track record of transparent financial accounting processes
3. have an annual income under £500,000
4. hold a UK bank account

5. be an individual or un-constituted community group nominating a partner organisation to receive the funds on their behalf.

By the time you start your project, you must have the following documentation in place:

- Public Liability Insurance
- Employers Liability Insurance
- Health and Safety Risk Assessments
- Adult and Child Safeguarding Assessments
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- GDPR Processing Statement.

Organisations may wish to form consortia with other community groups within their local area or who also support similar groups of Londoners. In these cases, it will be the responsibility of the consortia to agree a lead organisation and to collectively manage the administration of the programme.

6. What evidence will you need to provide for due diligence checks?

Organisations will be required to evidence they are financially sound to qualify. This can be done by providing:

- an annual account or report for last year, plus current bank statements.
- confirming registered company/charity name;
- confirming registered address;
- confirming company/charity registration number;

- confirming VAT registration number; and evidence of public liability and employer's liability insurance.

If your application is successful, you will be asked for copies of these documents before being awarded a grant.

In the case of additional years of funding, organisations may be subject to additional financial due diligence checks.

7. What will you be assessed against in the application form?

The application form will ask for details about your organisation, your project, your project budget, and financial due diligence information.

Your project will be scored on the following areas:

- 1. The rationale behind why you are proposing to work with your target cohort (s) and how the project can address barriers evident for that cohort(s). 10 marks**

- In your response you may wish to cover how your project will target local need and previous work you have done with your target cohort(s).
- This is a key question and those with a strong rationale behind working with their cohort are likely to score higher.
- As this is a key question you must score 5 or above to be considered for a Grant Award.

2. How your project will work to promote referrals for your target cohort(s) into adult education opportunities. 10 marks

- In your response you may wish to cover key activities you will be carrying out with your target cohort(s) to address barriers to learning and build up confidence in education.
- This is also a key question and those with a strong idea of the activities they will be carrying out with their target cohort and a rationale behind how they have tailored those activities are likely to score higher.
- As this is a key question you must score 5 or above to be considered for a Grant Award.

3. The systems you have in place to monitor referrals and report referrals back to the GLA. 10 marks

- We will work with successful projects on establishing regular reporting mechanisms but answers may wish to detail how they would put strong monitoring systems with learners in place.

4. How your project will build relationships with local communities and adult education providers. 10 marks

- Projects may wish to reference previous work they have done with local communities here. It is not expected that organisations will have existing relationships with adult education providers to score highly but projects may wish to express their rationale and knowledge around working with local providers.

- We will work with successful organisations to build and strengthen relationships with providers through the programme.

5. How the impact of your project will be shared with your local community. 10 marks

- Answers may wish to outline how the knowledge around best practice when working with your target cohort can be shared within your local community.

6. The number of participants you are aiming to target for engagement and referrals across the lifespan of your project. 10 marks

- Projects may wish to detail a referral rate reflective of the work required to engage their target cohort.

In the event that we receive a high number of applications, projects will be scored on the first two questions. Applications which make it through the initial sift will then be scored in their entirety.

The highest scoring projects will then be prioritised for funding.

Scoring will follow the below marking guides:

Out of 10	
8-10	An answer that demonstrates a good understanding and addresses the GLA defined requirements
5-7	An answer that demonstrates a reasonable understanding and addresses some of the GLA defined requirements
1-4	An answer that demonstrates little understanding of the question and/or addresses few of the GLA defined requirements
0	An answer that demonstrates no understanding of the question and/or addresses none of the GLA defined requirements

8. What support is available to organisations?

To support organisations interested in applying, the GLA will be hosting an online webinar to provide additional information on the programme and eligibility requirements for groups.

Additionally, local in-person ideas camps will be hosted in June 2023 to give groups the support and opportunity to think about and discuss potential ideas ahead of progressing a formal application.

To register interest for an event please click below.

13 June: [Central London Forward Ideas Camp](#)

15 June: [Local London Ideas Camp](#)

19 June: [West London Alliance Ideas Camp](#)

21 June: [South London Ideas Camp](#)

For any other queries please contact the team directly at sflcommunityoutreachprogramme@london.gov.uk. Our Q&A section will be regularly updated throughout the application process with responses.

9. Ready to apply?

To apply, download and complete the expression of interest below.

[Community Outreach Programme OPS Application](#)

Deadline for submissions is 5pm on 7th July 2023.

If you are successful in receiving a conditional offer of funding, you will be asked to provide due diligence documentation as set out in the section below.

It is expected that successful projects will be announced on 18th **August 2023**.

Appendix A: Evidence

The legacy of inequalities and stresses evident in the wake of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic have now had a further impact on our communities and economies with cost of living pressures. The rising cost of living is putting pressure on Londoners' finances and living standards, particularly among those on lower incomes.

The number of jobs in the capital is now close to pre-pandemic levels, partly down to the furlough scheme and other support measures. At the same time, London's employment rate is still lower than before the pandemic and many Londoners face challenges in progressing to good-quality work. In 2021, one in six employee jobs in London paid below the London Living Wage; this figure increased for Londoners

with lower-level qualifications. A rising proportion of Londoners say that they are struggling with their financial situation.

Around 212,000 Londoners were unemployed in the three months to July 2022. At 4.2 per cent, London's unemployment rate has fallen considerably from its pandemic peak but remains 0.6 percentage points above the UK average (3.6 percent). Over 285,000 Londoners were claiming unemployment-related benefits in August 2022, up from 187,000.

There is also a disproportionate impact of the cost of living crisis on certain groups including deaf and disabled Londoners, households with an income between £20,000 and £39,999 and Asian and Black Londoners.

So with those increases seen in the cost of living, it is now more important than ever to support Londoners to access learning that will equip them with the skills they need for good jobs.

Appendix B: Freedom of Information

The GLA as a public authority is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("the FOIA"). In applying for this (or any) grant award Bidders should be aware that information they provide may be disclosable, either under the GLA's Publication Scheme or if a request is made to the GLA.

The FOIA requires the GLA normally to release information requested by any "person" ("person" legally includes companies and other bodies). At the same time the FOIA recognises that a public authority, in order to carry out its functions, may decline certain requests where an appropriate exemption applies. In particular two exemptions under sections 41 and 43 of FOIA, described below, may apply.

Information provided in confidence

Section 41 provides that information is exempt if it was obtained by the GLA from any other person and the disclosure of the information to the public by the GLA would constitute a breach of confidence actionable ("actionable" meaning that it could be the subject of a legal claim) by that or any other person. In order for the GLA to rely on this exemption the information must be given in confidence, that is, the information must not be in the public domain, must not have been treated as non-confidential in the past, and must have been provided in circumstances importing an obligation of confidence.

Bidders should be aware that, firstly, the GLA will not normally agree to treat information as confidential in the absence of specific legal advice that it is proper to do so, and, secondly, that marking a document as "Confidential" will not give it that status. The scope for Application of the section 41 exemption in relation to an Application for funding is limited.

Commercially sensitive information

It is more likely that this exemption may apply to a grant Application. Section 43 provides that information may be exempt if it constitutes a trade secret or if the disclosure is likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any person (which includes the Bidder). Accordingly, for example, genuinely sensitive pricing information may attract this exemption. This exemption is subject to the public interest test - that is, in considering disclosure, the GLA must weigh up the public interest in withholding disclosure with the public interest in disclosing the information in question.

Requests for special treatment of information

Should a Bidder regard particular information as given in confidence, constituting a trade secret, or likely if disclosed to prejudice their commercial interests, they should indicate this clearly, with an explanation. Note that it will not be sufficient to assert that the whole Application is confidential or commercially sensitive. Indicating what information may be confidential or commercially sensitive may assist the GLA in determining whether any exemptions apply. It should be noted that it is the GLA, which will determine whether a disclosure should be made and that this will be determined on a case by case basis by the GLA.

Effect of time

Bidders should be aware that, over time, some information may lose its confidential nature or commercial sensitivity. If you consider this to be the case, please indicate when, in your view, such information may be released. This should be a reasonable time period in relation to the nature of the data.

Personal data

One other FOIA provision, which may be relevant in certain circumstances, is section 40, which broadly speaking provides an exemption in relation to personal data (as defined in the Data Protection Act). This will not however usually exempt, for example, information provided about individuals involved in the Application.