

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2729

Title: Growth Funding for London Multiply (2024-25 financial year)

Executive Summary:

This decision asks the Assistant Director (AD) – Skills & Employment to approve a process for the use of £607,977 of funding towards growth in provider allocations for the final financial year (FY) of London Multiply (FY 2024-25). The process will entail expressions of interest cases being submitted by existing high performing London Multiply providers for delivery against programme aims. The decision requests this approval in line with the delegated authority given by the Mayor to the AD – Skills and Employment to make programme-level decisions via an (Assistant Director Decision) ADD Form, as set out in [MD3035](#).

Overall expenditure for London Multiply FY 2024-25 will remain at £14,283,345

Decision:

That the Assistant Director– Skills & Employment (Delivery) approves:

1. an indicative spend of £607,977 for growth in London Multiply allocations for providers that have exceeded 95 per cent of their London Multiply learner targets and over 90 per cent spend against their London Multiply allocation for 2023-24 FY. This funding will be drawn from the following,
 - £427,418 from previously allocated funding for growth in London Multiply allocations in FY 2024-25
 - £61,639 from projected reductions in Management and Administration spend in FY 2024-25
 - £118,920 reduction in allocations for two providers for FY 2024-25
2. reprofiling between the funding streams outlined above in line with MD3035 and ADD2632, in line with internal governance processes and without the need for a further decision form.

AUTHORISING ASSISTANT DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

Name: Ayo Akande

Position: Assistant Director (Delivery) – Skills & Employment

Signature:



Date:

27/08/2024

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1. The GLA received a regional allocation of £40.9m from the Department for Education (DfE) to deliver Multiply between 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2025. This is delivered by 56 providers including local authorities, colleges and Institutes of Adult Learning (IALs) who work in partnership with employers, schools, and community organisations to help Londoners build the numeracy skills and confidence they need for life and work. The GLA approach to managing the allocation was agreed through [Mayoral Decision \(MD\)3035](#).
- 1.2. London Multiply programme is run on a financial year basis as determined by the DfE. The first financial year ran between 1 August 2022 through to 31 March 2023. Due to reported provider underspend for the 2022-23 financial year (FY), largely due to late programme commissioning by DfE and therefore late programme delivery starts. In addition, DfE informed the GLA at the end of FY1 (2023) that funding must be fully utilised within the financial year, which led to a provider underspend for FY1 between 1 August 2022 to 31 March 2023 of £4,007,116.
- 1.3. As a result of underspend, the GLA permitted providers to increase delivery between 1 April 2023 and 31 July 2023 to deliver their full allocations across 2022-23 academic year. Expenditure of up to £1,506,969 from the London Multiply budget (2023-24), was awarded under cover of [ADD2677](#) to fund over delivery for the period of 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024. This funding included £718,000 previously allocated for growth for FY1, £500,000 previously allocated for employer engagement activity and forecast recouped funding from under-performance.
- 1.4. For the second Financial Year of Multiply (2023-24), provider underperformance totalled £576,896 across 22 providers. In line with the Multiply Funding Rules that state that any underspend below 100 per cent of allocation will be returned to the GLA, underperformance is being reconciled in full.
- 1.5. In March and April 2024, the Assistant Director – Skills & Employment Delivery approved reductions in FY3 allocations from four providers, totalling £564,724, to be redistributed amongst other London Multiply providers in line with internal governance arrangements.
- 1.6. At the start of the programme, under cover of MD3035, £3.55m was allocated for growth and to procure further activity to meet additional Multiply aims from the 2023-24 AY.
- 1.7. Following procurement of further activity, London Multiply had an allocation for growth funding in 2024-25 FY for the London Multiply engagement and outreach programme, with £427,418 allocated for this purpose under cover of [ADD2632](#). This has been reallocated towards growth funding of London Multiply provision.
- 1.8. The Management and Administration (M&A) budget for 2024-25 FY has reduced by £61,639, partly due to a reduction in spend through a vacant Senior Project Officer role, which is not proposed to be filled as the programme reaches the final year of delivery.
- 1.9. As a result of the reductions in spending in the 2024-25 FY, through reductions in allocations, lower M&A costs and funding allocated to growth originally, there is potential funding for growth in allocation for the 2024-25 FY of £607,977.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

Growth Process for London Multiply (2024-25 Financial Year)

- 2.1. The proposed focus for growth in allocations is on expanding existing Multiply provision to reach more Londoners and focusing on priority groups of care leavers; prison leavers; parents and

engaging with employers to support employees to access careers and progress in their career in the final year of the programme.

- 2.2. The application process for growth funding will only be open to existing London Multiply providers who have successfully exceeded 95 per cent of their London Multiply learner targets and over 90 per cent spend against their London Multiply allocation for 2023-24 FY. In addition, narrative will also need to be provided in the business case on how providers seeking growth will engage with hard to reach learners.
- 2.3. All providers will be required to check that they meet the above criteria prior to submitting a business case for growth. Only providers that meet all the criteria below will be eligible for growth funding.
- 2.4. The proposed process is non-competitive, with funding being allocated through a proportional percentage increase in allocation to all providers which meet the criteria. If all providers were to apply for this funding, this would lead to an increase of 8.67 per cent, as set out in Appendix B. Where a provider requests less than this award, the remainder will be distributed amongst other providers.
- 2.5. The rationale for a non-competitive process is to reduce the administrative burden on providers and to ensure the additional funding is received by providers with a strong track record of delivery and capability to utilise the growth in allocation, as all Multiply delivery must cease by 31 March 2025 and funding cannot be spent following this date.
- 2.6. A business case alongside an amended delivery plan will need to be submitted for the request to be considered. The amended delivery plan will be required to show how the provider will use increased funding to reach Multiply target groups and how the funding will be aligned with the London Multiply programme aims. An expression of interest process was launched in July 2024. Following approval of this decision, an assessment process will be launched against the criteria in 2.4 with funding awards being communicated and accepted by the end of September 2024.
- 2.7. Given the short timeframe to utilise growth funding for London Multiply, it is recommended that approval of the outcome of the growth process (distribution of additional funding) be signed off by the Assistant Director for Skills & Employment – Delivery without the need for a further decision form. The final growth awards will be approved through a grant variation agreed by both the GLA and providers.
- 2.8. An ongoing evaluation into London Multiply has been commissioned by the GLA and is being delivered by the Institute for Employment Studies (IES), with delivery of their final evaluation report in April 2025. The evaluation will seek to identify ‘the social and economic benefits of the London Multiply programme, which will give the GLA greater understanding of best practice and interventions that support Londoners to develop the essential numeracy skills and confidence they need for everyday life, to progress in learning, and access good work.’

3. Equality comments

- 3.1. An Equalities and Impact Assessment (EqIA) was conducted for the London Multiply programme during mobilisation.
- 3.2. The EqIA demonstrates how equality groups were considered in the development of the programme and set out the likely impact delivery would have on equality groups and wider issues of socio-economic inequality. Analysis of the demographics of London Multiply learners shows that 75 per cent of learners are female, 12 per cent are LLDD (people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, 21 per cent are aged 50+ and 70 per cent of learners are from a minority ethnic background.

- 3.3. The London Multiply programme gives Londoners without Level Two numeracy qualifications the opportunity to learn and develop essential numeracy confidence and skills they need in life and work. From the EqlA, it is clear that those without a Level Two qualification are more likely to be low income, older, disabled, or from a minority ethnic background. As such, this provision reaches equalities groups and support them to upskill, supporting progression into further learning and good work.
- 3.4. The programme also delivers specific interventions aimed at care leavers, prison leavers and supporting parents of school aged children with numeracy.
- 3.5. The agreed decisions do not make any changes to the intended programme that impacts this assessment.

4. Other considerations

- 4.1. The London Multiply growth process outlined in this decision aligns with commitments made in the Mayor's Skills for Londoners Strategy, Skills Roadmap for London, and the Mayor's commitment to support to Londoners through the cost of living crisis and his mission to build a fairer and more prosperous city for everyone.
- 4.2. Funding amounts set for each strand of the programme are indicative and will be flexible to the needs of the programme (within each FY). Future reprofiling between streams will generally be agreed by the Assistant Director – Skills & Employment (Delivery), in line with internal governance processes and as agreed in [ADD2632](#).
- 4.3. Due to the short timescale for delivery it is not possible to conduct a full tendering process.. Significant underdelivery was reported for 2022-23 FY due to the time required for providers to set up London Multiply delivery. Funding is proposed to be ringfenced to high performing providers to ensure to the budget is fully utilised, as any London Multiply underdelivery will be clawed back by DfE.

Key risks and issues

- 4.4. There is a risk that due to late notification of increased funding, providers may not be able to fully utilise growth funding, leading to clawback from DfE. This would lead to the programme reaching fewer learners and limiting the social impact of London Multiply. This is mitigated against by taking a non-competitive process, so eligible providers know they will receive growth funding if they meet the criteria and plan accordingly. Providers will also need to demonstrate how they will fully deliver the increased allocation in their business case and this will be monitored by their provider managers through quarterly review meetings. In addition, the majority of providers eligible for growth have indicated that they would like to deliver growth at quarterly review meetings and in person roundtables discussing growth.

Conflicts of interest

- 4.5. There are no conflicts of interest to note from any officer involved in the drafting or clearance of this Decision Form.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1. Approval is sought for the following.

- an indicative spend of £607,977 for growth in London Multiply allocations for the final financial year (FY) of London Multiply (FY 2024-25) to providers that have exceeded 95 per cent of their London Multiply learner targets and over 90 per cent spend against their London Multiply allocation for 2023-24 FY. This funding will be drawn from the following,
 - £427,418 from previously allocated funding for growth in London Multiply allocations in FY 2024-25
 - £61,639 from projected reductions in Management and Administration spend
 - £118,920 reduction in allocations for two providers
- Reprofiled between the funding streams outlined above in line with MD3035 and ADD2632, in line with internal governance processes and without the need for a further decision form.

5.2. This expenditure will be funded from the London Multiply programme budget in the 2024-25 financial year and there is sufficient budget to meet this expenditure.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

6.1. The next steps are summarised below:

Activity	Timeline
Submission of Business Case Deadline	10 September 2024
Growth Awarded and Accepted by Providers	24 September 2024
Growth Delivery Completion and Final Delivery for London Multiply	31 March 2025
Programme Closure	April – May 2025

Appendices:

- Appendix A – London Multiply Projected Growth Funding (FY 2024-25)

Supporting documents:

- London Multiply Equalities and Impact Assessment

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoIA) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary. **Note:** This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after it has been approved or on the defer date.

Part 1 - Deferral

Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? NO

Part 2 – Sensitive information

Only the facts or advice that would be exempt from disclosure under FoIA should be included in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to
confirm the
following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Tim Thomas has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms the following:

✓

Corporate Investment Board

A summary of this decision was reviewed by the Corporate Investment Board on 27 August 2024.

✓

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, FINANCIAL SERVICES:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature:

Anna Eastcott

Date:

27/08/2024