

Skills Advisory Panels: Factsheet on Local Skills Report and Funding

Thank you all for your hard work over the past year to establish your Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) and build your evidence base in line with the standards set out in the [SAPs Governance Guidance](#) and [Analytical Toolkit](#).

We want to help you build on this as you continue to develop your SAP's analytical capability sustainably. We also want SAPs to continue to gain influence so that they fully play their important leadership role so changes in local skills provision better meet the needs of employers.

Part of building influence is through your publications. We want one of those publications to be a Local Skills Report, which will highlight how your SAP has supported local providers and employers to respond to your local skills priorities, and set out the future challenges and opportunities for your area.

DfE will support you to do this through a further round of £75,000 grant funding in financial year 2020/21. We expect you to use the funding to achieve these two broad objectives:

- publish a Local Skills Report by March 2021; and
- further develop your analytical capability in a sustainable way, which includes developing local action plans.

The Local Skills Report

We want to work with you to develop what the Local Skills Report will contain. We will want to provide a substantial degree of flexibility to individual SAPs to decide what is included, while allowing for some comparability across areas. It is important that we get your views on the correct balance.

The Local Skills Report will highlight how your SAP has assisted local providers and employers to respond to your local skills priorities, where more might be done by providers to meet local skills needs, and how employers might engage even more with the local skills system. The publication will also set out the future key challenges and opportunities for your area.

The Local Skills Reports published by each Panel and the national-level evidence from the Skills and Productivity Board (SPB) will complement each other. The SPB (currently in establishment) will provide strategic analysis of emerging and developing skills needs at national level, and its evidence may be used by Ministers to inform policy decisions on wider skills issues. Your reports will form part of the wider evidence base that the SPB will draw upon. Your reports may equally draw on the SPB's findings, which will provide a national context and longer term, forward-looking evidence of which skills will add most value.

We expect you to publish your first Local Skills Report by March 2021. We will work with you as we develop a framework and guidance to support you in publishing it.

Funding to build analytical capability sustainably

Recognising the progress you have already made in developing your analytical capability, the funding can be used to (in addition to the Local Skills Report):

- respond to particular aspects of the feedback you received from DfE (as a result of our recent review), including converting your skills and labour market analysis into fully effective action plans;
- continue to fund staff or contractors to further develop your analytical framework;
- continue to upskill staff and/or stakeholders to increase their analytical capability and its sustainability; and
- undertake additional analysis, and/or deep dives into areas of particular interest around local skills needs and labour market challenges.

If you have external contracts to provide some/all of your analytical functions, we would like to see you putting arrangements in place to embed them into your local working practices - to ensure that your capability is sustainable in the future. Any further funding will be subject to future Spending Review outcomes.

As with the previous funding, this grant will be subject to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the relevant authority. The MoU will stipulate the purpose of the grant (summarised above) and set out suggested activities for the funding.

We will request that each SAP provides a *Use of Funds* statement at the end of the Financial Year 2020-21, signed by the relevant Accounting Officer. Funding will not be released until there is a satisfactory MoU in place. Any future funds, if made available, will be contingent on you achieving the objectives of this round of funding.

Next Steps

We look forward to answering any questions you have at the workshops on 10 and 14 February, and to continuing working collaboratively with you over the coming year as we further develop the SAPs programme. In particular, we will continue to scope ways of building SAPs' influence by working across government to explore the role that SAPs (and your parent LEPs and MCAs) could play in relation to skills related policies and interventions of the new government.

For any enquiries on the Skills Advisory Panels, please contact us:

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The SAPs Programme Team