

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR DECISION – ADD2059

Title: ESOL for resettled refugees - regional co-ordination grant

Executive Summary:

The Government has made additional funding available for local authorities to provide appropriate English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learning opportunities for resettled Syrian refugees. To support this, the Government has also agreed to provide £30k grant funding to the GLA to enable a regional co-ordination function to support London boroughs in understanding local provision and opportunities for collaboration/innovative approaches.

This funding will enable mapping of ESOL provision in the Capital, supporting boroughs to provide appropriate ESOL learning opportunities to resettled Syrian refugees, as well as increasing our intelligence for wider policy on ESOL, including in relation to skills devolution. It will also enable boroughs and other stakeholders to collaborate on approaches to ESOL provision and share best practice.

The Diversity and Social Policy team worked with colleagues from the GLA's skills devolution team and London Councils to develop the grant bid and proposed work.

Decision:

That the Assistant Director of Health and Communities approves:

1. Receipt and expenditure of a one-off £30k grant from the Home Office to commission regional ESOL co-ordination resource to support London boroughs in providing appropriate ESOL opportunities to resettled Syrian refugees.

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: Amanda Coyle

Position: Assistant Director of Health and Communities

Signature:



Date: 10 Jan 2017

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

The Government has made £30k funding available for regional ESOL co-ordination to support the additional ESOL funding made available to local authorities to provide appropriate ESOL support to resettled adult Syrian refugees.

ESOL courses are delivered by a range of providers in London. These include private providers, charities and colleges. To date it has been difficult to quantify the total supply of ESOL courses across London but an ongoing GLA review into Adult Community Learning provides an opportunity to build on newly forged relationships with community providers. Provision is likely to be varied geographically and there may well be boroughs participating in resettlement with much less existing community-level provision and capacity.

In addition, boroughs resettling Syrian refugees in London must also navigate significant changes in London's skills infrastructure and provision, affecting ESOL in particular – cuts to ESOL funding, area reviews of skills provision, and the potential devolution of skills funding.

In this context, the need for a regional resource to support London boroughs participating/planning to participate in Syrian resettlement to understand existing ESOL provision and to plan for the future ESOL needs of resettled Syrian refugees could not be greater.

The funding will help unlock expertise within London so that all local authorities can consistently access effective provision for Syrian refugees, to best support them into employment, training and/or education and to enable them to participate fully in their new communities.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

Proposed scope of work for the regional ESOL co-ordinator resource

In the first instance the regional ESOL resource will need to engage with relevant local authorities to agree the scope of work, to make sure it will meet the needs of local authorities participating/planning to participate in the resettlement of Syrian refugees. However, we anticipate the key activities will be:

- Undertake mapping exercise of formal and informal ESOL provision in London, engaging with relevant stakeholders to build on existing internal and external knowledge and research, to identify the extent of provision and its capacity to deal with the demand, particularly in areas already participating or considering participating in refugee resettlement
- Review the ESOL needs of Syrian refugees resettled in London to date and, where possible, upcoming arrivals to build a picture of anticipated ESOL needs of those arriving in London through the resettlement scheme
- Identify where there may be gaps in provision locally and at city level to develop options with London boroughs on how to make the best use of additional Government funding available for ESOL learning of resettled adult Syrian refugees, taking into account changes through skills devolution, best practice and funding available
- Bring local authorities and other appropriate stakeholders such as HOLEX together to share learning on meeting ESOL needs of resettled refugees and agree any shared approaches to ESOL provision

- Where appropriate/necessary, work with partners to identify a lead organisation to manage pooled ESOL funding and co-commissioning, and support that organisation to design commissioning requirements

Anticipated outcomes/deliverables

It is anticipated that investment in a regional ESOL co-ordination resource in London will enable the following outcomes and deliverables:

- City and local understanding of ESOL provision in the Capital increased
- Gaps in existing provision identified, particularly in relation to anticipated needs of future arrivals through the Syrian resettlement scheme
- Opportunity for shared approaches to ESOL provision for resettled Syrian refugees identified by boroughs and other appropriate stakeholders
- Best practice on ESOL provision, particularly for resettled Syrian refugees, shared

3. Equality comments

This funding will enable the GLA and boroughs to have a much clearer understanding of the ESOL provision in the Capital to inform decision making on access to ESOL learning opportunities, which will help advance equality of opportunity particularly for resettled Syrian refugees but with wider benefits for all Londoners who would benefit from improving their English language proficiency.

4. Other considerations

The grant agreement requires the GLA to have accrued the full £30k spend by the end of March 2017 which means timescales for delivery are extremely tight, and our ability to meet the grant agreement requirements will be dependent on the availability and capacity of appropriate providers.

This work has clear benefits for the skills devolution agenda and the Mayor's wider position on ESOL provision in the Capital. The Diversity and Social Policy team worked with colleagues from the GLA's skills devolution team and London Councils to develop the grant bid and proposed work. DSP will continue to work with the GLA Skills team and London Councils in the delivery of this work.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Approval is being sought for the receipt and expenditure of a one-off Home Office grant of £30,000 for the commissioning of regional ESOL co-ordination resource to support London boroughs in the provision of learning opportunities.
- 5.2 The grant must be fully spent by 31/03/2017 as per T&C. The Diversity & Social Policy team within the C&I Directorate will be responsible for managing this project and ensuring the grant agreement requirements are met.
- 5.4 The WBS for the grant income and costs to be allocated to will be GG.0240.015.003

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
ITQ	January
Delivery Start Date	February
Work complete and report to Home Office	April

Appendices and supporting papers: None

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) 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 approval or on the defer date.

Part 1 Deferral:

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

Part 2 Confidentiality: Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be 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:**

Shanthi Gunsekera has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that the Finance and –if relevant- Legal teams have commented on this proposal as required, and this decision reflects their comments.


Corporate Investment Board:

The Corporate Investment Board reviewed this proposal on 9 January 2017.

HEAD OF FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE:

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

Signature:



Date:

10.01.17