

MAYOR OF LONDON

Mayor's European Social Fund (ESF) Co- Financing Programme

Project Requirements

ESF Academies Programme



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1. Snapshot

The ESF Academies programme of activity will support underrepresented groups and those most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic on the journey to employment as part of the London Recovery Programme, in support of the Good Work mission.¹

ESF Academies will enable unemployed and economically inactive Londoners to access wraparound, sectoral focused and employability guidance and support to help them get jobs in the digital, creative, green, hospitality, and health and social care sectors.

In addition to addressing skills and labour shortages the programme will look to increase the participation of under-represented groups within the Mayor's priority sectors.

Key Information

Delivery Period:

- This programme will run from July 2022 to mid September 2023.

Target group:

- London residents who are unemployed or economically inactive.

Funding per grant:

- The GLA expects to award a maximum of £558,300 per grant

Number of Projects supported:

- A maximum of 12 grants will be awarded (total funding £6.7m).

The activity is designed to support London's priority sectors. To ensure an even allocation of funds across the digital, creative, green, hospitality and health and social care sectors, sectoral focus will be taken into consideration in the grant award decision-making process. The exact number of projects funded for each priority sector will be determined by the strength of the proposals submitted, however we will aim to fund at least one project per sector, subject to receiving a sufficient number of quality bids. The GLA also reserves the right not to allocate all funding.

If additional funding becomes available during the commissioning stage of the ESF Academies Programme, the GLA reserves the right to fund additional projects subject to the quality of bids received.

Geographical focus:

- Projects may be delivered pan-London or may focus on a smaller geographical area, however they must all have a strategic and proposed operational link to one or more of the Mayor's Academies Programme (MAP) Hubs.

¹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/coronavirus/londons-recovery-coronavirus-crisis/recovery-context>

Sector focus:

- Digital
- Creative
- Green
- Hospitality
- Health and social care (applications may focus on health only, social care only or health *and* social care)

Programme wide targets:

- Minimum of 3,000 Londoners from the programme target group starting on the programme and receiving wraparound, sectoral focused employability guidance and support to help them get jobs in the target sectors
- Minimum of 600 Londoners from the programme target group progressing into further or higher education or training
- Minimum of 450 Londoners from the programme target group progressing into paid employment, a paid apprenticeship, or a work placement. A minimum of 60% of paid employment outcomes should be “Good Work” jobs (for a definition of “Good Work” see “Aims and Objectives” below).

2. Rationale

The ESF Academies Programme aligns with commitments made in the Mayor’s Skills for Londoners Strategy.² It will support the London Recovery Programme (LRP) and the Helping Londoners into Good Work mission.

The London Recovery Board³ established the LRP to deliver its challenge to restore confidence in the city, minimise the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on communities and build back better the city’s economy and society.

The Helping Londoners into Good Work mission, which forms part of the LRP, includes a recommendation to establish new academies in key sectors, including creative, digital, green and health and social care. Hospitality was subsequently identified as another priority sector due to the high vacancy rates as the sector reopened in 2021 following the relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions.

The ESF Academies programme will complement the MAP by supporting Londoners most affected by the pandemic to access quality employability guidance, support and training with a focus on ultimately securing good jobs in the priority sectors.

² <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/skills-and-employment-1/skills-roadmap>

³ The London Recovery Board is a non-statutory group led by the Mayor of London and London Councils, comprising elected leaders and senior stakeholders to provide strategic direction to, and democratic oversight of, London’s COVID-19 recovery work.

Rationale for sectors

Digital

Digital skills are increasingly in demand at all levels (basic, intermediate and advanced) across London's economy. The impact of COVID-19 has accelerated the move to online delivery for businesses and changed patterns of work and learning. Hybrid models of home/office working and online/face-to-face interaction are likely to become the long-term norm following the pandemic. Furthermore, automation is affecting the nature of some job roles. London is a leading international city for digital innovation and in order to benefit from the opportunities this brings, Londoners will need a range of digital and other skills. This is also important for addressing digital exclusion and making sure the digital workforce is more representative of London's diverse population. There is a significant opportunity to address demand for digitally skilled workers by increasing the number of workers from under-represented groups in the digital sector. At a London level, GLA analysis indicates that BAME, female and deaf and disabled Londoners are some of the groups underrepresented in the digital and tech sector. It is estimated that by 2030, 90% of all jobs will include some level of digitisation, and digital skills will become more and more important at every level.⁴

Key intersections are between gender and ethnicity, although it is increasingly recognised that socio-economic group is also an intersecting factor. Women are underrepresented in the digital and tech sector as a whole, as well as in managerial and leadership positions. There is also a clear underrepresentation of ethnic minorities in leadership positions, most notably of ethnic minority women.⁵

Creative

The impact of COVID-19 has been significant in some parts of the creative industries sector. However, demand continues to be strong in other areas, notably film and TV, gaming and immersive industries – and as one of London's leading international specialisms, the creative sector will continue to drive innovation, job creation and economic growth. The sector faces a key challenge in addressing the underrepresentation of certain groups, including Londoners from lower socio-economic backgrounds. This is, in part, connected to the greater role of freelancers and the use of low and unpaid roles to gain valuable work experience.

Previous estimates indicate a significant proportion of workers in the creative industries are self-employed (34%) and those employed are mostly in businesses with fewer than 10 people (around 95%).⁶ There is significant use of unpaid roles and pockets of lower paid work which act as informal entry points. This is a barrier for many Londoners and therefore certain groups are underrepresented in the creative economy. GLA analysis indicates that

⁴ DCMS, No Longer Optional: Employer Demand for Digital Skills, June 2019.

⁵ IES Source Evidence Report: Under-representation in Digital and Tech Careers. Analysis to support Workforce Integration Network Skills Academies, November 2021

⁶ DCMS Economic Estimates 2016

BAME Londoners and Londoners from intermediate and lower socio-economic groups are some of the main groups underrepresented.⁷

Additionally, there is a gender imbalance particularly in roles related to IT and technical skills. Senior leadership particularly is white-dominated and progression to management roles is constrained for ethnic minority groups. Privilege also continues to have an influence, with those who are more privileged on entry also more likely to see progression.⁸

Green

London's low carbon sector has grown significantly over the last ten years. Green finance has played a key role in this, mirroring London's strengths in financial services. The sector is varied and innovative and there is still a need to grow in areas such as climate adaptation. The Mayor's zero-carbon 2030 target, and the UK's priorities for its presidency of COP26 will create new green jobs for the future, further increasing the demand for green skills across a range of occupations and services. These include construction of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, retrofitting of buildings for energy efficiency and to adapt them to the changing climate and more extreme weather, low-carbon heating technology, solar photovoltaic (PV) installation and construction of active travel infrastructure. Green spaces also play a key role in supporting green growth and London's transition to a net zero-carbon economy. It is important that opportunities in this key growth sector are available to all Londoners.⁹

The green sector is broad and so to complement the work of the MAP this programme aims to focus on delivering employability support in the following green sub-sectors where there is high or growing demand for skills and jobs, including (but not limited to):

- Green Construction - covering energy-efficient retrofitting (e.g. insulation and heat pump installation), retrofitting cooling and flood resilience measures/products, low-carbon transport (e.g. EV maintenance and charging points) and active travel infrastructure (e.g. cycle paths);
- Green Spaces and Resilience - building on the work of the London Green Spaces Commission;¹⁰
- Waste Reduction and Recycling – and driving activity towards the circular economy;
- Green roles in other sectors – e.g. energy systems, district energy networks, water management and logistics.

⁷ The Mayor's Academies Programme: Hub Funding Prospectus, Annex 2, August 2021.

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mayors_academies_programme_-_hub_funding_prospectus_2021.pdf

⁸ IES Source Evidence Report: Under-representation in Creative and Screen Careers. Analysis to support Workforce Integration Network Skills Academies, November 2021

⁹ The Mayor's Academies Programme: Hub Funding Prospectus, Annex 2, August 2021.

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mayors_academies_programme_-_hub_funding_prospectus_2021.pdf

¹⁰ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/environment/parks-green-spaces-and-biodiversity/london-green-spaces-commission>

Hospitality

Hospitality is a major employer in the capital and plays a critical role in supporting London's position as a centre for international business and tourism. As a sector, it has been particularly impacted by the pandemic: payroll jobs have declined more than any other sector¹¹ and GLA Economics analysis has highlighted that the pandemic has likely created long-term damage in the sector, inhibiting its recovery.¹² The impact on the sector of Brexit and the UK's new approach to migration is also uncertain. Ensuring the sector can access skilled workers but also offer productive, "Good Work" opportunities for Londoners will be important to its future success.

Evidence from research and stakeholder engagement has identified recruitment and retention challenges for the hospitality sector, even before the pandemic.¹³ The GLA's engagement with London's hospitality employers has indicated that the staff and skills most in need in the short term are security, door staff, housekeeping and kitchen teams. However, the sector's demand for chef and culinary skills is longstanding.

Health and social care

Whilst bidders can focus solely on health or social care, applications encompassing both health and social care will also be welcomed.

Health. The National Health Service (NHS) is a large, public-sector monopsony, with its own national workforce planning function (Health Education England (HEE)), and each of London's five integrated care systems (ICS) has its own workforce strategy. NHS jobs fall within two main categories: clinical and non-clinical roles. An overview of the many clinical roles within the NHS is set out on the HEE website¹⁴, and covers the many higher-level roles including specialists, doctors and nurses, as well as allied health professionals, such as dietitians and paramedics. An overview of many of the non-clinical roles, including entry level opportunities, can be found in the Wider Healthcare Teams section of the NHS website.¹⁵ GLA analysis indicates that Londoners working in health have a slightly older age profile and are more likely to have a degree.¹⁶

Social Care. Recent Skills for Care research¹⁷ identifies that in the London care sector alone there are over 238,000 jobs with more than 3,000 organisations delivering across 5,500 locations. Roughly 6% of these jobs constitute direct employment by local authorities, with the remainder being with the capital's independent providers of social

¹¹ JOBS03: Employee jobs by industry - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

¹² Macroeconomic scenarios for London's economy post COVID-19 – March 2021, GLA Economics

¹³ GLA Hospitality Roundtable, 8 June 2021

¹⁴ <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles>

¹⁵ <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/wider-healthcare-team>

¹⁶ The Mayor's Academies Programme: Hub Funding Prospectus, Annex 2, August 2021.

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/mayors_academies_programme_-_hub_funding_prospectus_2021.pdf

¹⁷ <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/adult-social-care-workforce-data-old/Workforce-intelligence/publications/regional-information/London/London.aspx>

care, many of whom will be employed via agencies. The number of employees on zero-hours contracts in the sector regionally currently stands at 42%.

Approximately 81% of the adult social care workforce are female and the average age of the workforce is 46; 28% of workers are aged 55 and above. For social care settings in London, it is estimated that 63% of the workforce are British and 37% are non-UK nationals: 13% had an EU nationality and 24% (48,000 jobs) had a non-EU nationality. The social care sector in London has higher proportions of BAME workers, compared with the UK as a whole.¹⁸ In London, under half (39%) of the adult care workforce hold a qualification at Level 2 or above and only 46% of direct care-providing staff hold a relevant adult social care qualification.

The Mayor's Workforce Integration Network

The Mayor's Workforce Integration Network (WIN) was established to address the structural barriers that prevent underrepresented groups from accessing high quality work opportunities across the different sectors in London. The MAP builds on the first phase of WIN, which has focused on supporting young black men aged 16-24 into quality employment in the digital/tech and construction sectors.

Initial analysis indicates that the workforce of the MAP sectors is not representative of London's communities, particularly in the green, creative and digital sectors. In sectors where there is more diversity, this is concentrated in junior and lower-paid roles.

The ambition to create systemic change towards growing and strengthening diversity in London's workforce will be supported by making WIN a key component of the MAP. Specifically, the aims are to:

- increase businesses engagement and commitment to WIN across the six priority sectors, creating sector-wide impact by working with the biggest employers;
- share learning from the WIN employability programmes and mainstream this across the MAP Hubs;
- create and share resources for businesses to use on their journey to change.

Through the MAP Hubs the WIN programme has been funded to deliver the following:

- up to three Design Labs a year, each working with up to 10 employers across the six priority sectors;
- four sector-specific toolkits focusing on the creative, green, hospitality, and health sectors in addition to the existing toolkit for the digital technology and construction sectors;¹⁹

¹⁸ <https://www.skillsforcare.org.uk/adult-social-care-workforce-data-old/Workforce-intelligence/documents/State-of-the-adult-social-care-sector/The-State-of-the-Adult-Social-Care-Sector-and-Workforce-2021.pdf>

¹⁹ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/communities/workforce-integration-network-win/inclusive-employers-toolkit>

- bespoke support to help the Hubs apply the toolkits and develop a community of practice;
- research into workforce underrepresentation in priority sectors and opportunities for more effective approaches to diversity and inclusion.

The GLA expects findings from the WIN workforce underrepresentation research to be published in April 2022. Through an in-depth analysis of workforce and labour market insights, this research aims to examine how ethnicity interacts with other factors such as age, gender, education, and class in shaping people's experiences with work. The research will identify groups that are especially impacted by labour market inequality and lack of access to Good Work and consider how structural inequalities can translate into underrepresentation and a lack of workforce diversity in key sectors of London's economy.

Projects funded through this ESF Academies Programme will be expected to:

- refer to the WIN research into workforce underrepresentation and use the findings to inform the development of appropriate project activities and strategies which effectively address barriers to entry and progression for underrepresented groups in the sector(s) relevant to the project;
- promote the existing and future WIN toolkits to employers or employer networks engaged in the projects and share details with the GLA of employers that have expressed an intention to implement the toolkit actions.

3. Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of the ESF Academies programme is to:

- Provide wraparound, sectoral-focused guidance and employability support to unemployed and economically inactive Londoners to help them get jobs in the digital, creative, green, hospitality, and health and social care sectors.

The objectives are to:

- Support project participants to gain an understanding of the world of work and to rise effectively to the challenge of meeting the particular aptitudes, skills and occupational requirements of the priority sectors by providing Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) and Jobsearch.
- Embed into delivery wraparound support that will enable all project participants to overcome barriers to employment, further education and training.
- Create high quality, mutually productive connections between the MAP Hubs and other delivery providers and sector networks in order to better meet labour and skills shortages within the priority sectors.
- Address the underrepresentation of BAME, women, young people, older people, lone parents, people with caring responsibilities and deaf and disabled people within the priority sectors.

As stated in the targets in section 11 below, at least 60% of any employment outcomes (including apprenticeships) will need to meet the criteria for “Good Work”. “Good Work” is defined in the MAP Hubs prospectus as employment which:

- pays at or above the London Living Wage (LLW), and
- does not involve the use of zero-hours contracts, and
- lasts for a minimum of 16 hours per week for 4 weeks (or a minimum of 64 hours in a four-week period in sectors that require more intense hours over a shorter period).

All job outcomes, including any job, apprenticeship or paid work placement which does not meet the “Good Work” criteria above, must relate to an ESF Academies priority sector and must not involve the use of zero-hours contracts.

4. Eligibility and Target Groups

London residents who are unemployed or economically inactive are eligible to participate in the ESF Academies programme.

Additionally, participants may fall into one or more of the categories below:

- BAME
- Women
- Older people
- Lone parents and carers
- Young people aged 16+
- People with caring responsibilities
- Deaf and disabled people, including those with learning difficulties and health conditions.

Furthermore, early indications from the WIN research are that Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black women as well as Black men, particularly those aged 16-24 and those aged 50+, face higher levels of labour market disadvantage across the London workforce.

Providers are particularly encouraged to tailor their delivery methods to enable Londoners from the above groups that are underrepresented in the priority sector on which their project is focused to participate and achieve appropriate outcomes into further training, jobsearch and employment, drawing upon the WIN research and toolkits where relevant.

For the GLA, the degree to which projects are able to support Londoners from underrepresented groups to achieve appropriate outcomes will be a key indicator of the success of the project.

Equalities Targets

In accordance with targets set for the GLA’s overall ESF programme, projects should aim to recruit the proportions of participants from the equality groups set out below.

Equality Groups	Project Target (%)
Participants from ethnic minorities	50
Female participants	45
Participants who live in a single adult household with dependent children	20
Deaf and disabled participants	22
Participants without Basic Skills	18
Participants over 50 years of age	15

Bidders must describe how they will identify, recruit and support eligible participants from these groups, taking into account any particular barriers to participation.

5. Geography

Any eligible London resident should be able to access the project, but bidders may choose to focus their participant recruitment and employer engagement in particular geographies.

Bidders must provide a clear rationale for their chosen geography, taking into account business needs, local demographics and opportunity areas. They should also ensure that education, training and employment outcomes are based in a range of localities and consider participants' travel needs.

This ESF Academies Programme will strategically link to the MAP Hubs in London. Successful providers will need to engage with relevant Hubs covering a similar sectoral focus and geographic area through a number of routes, including developing referral pathways between Hub providers and the project and onward signposting for learners completing the programme and looking to secure employment. Formal partnership with Hubs will be actively encouraged to build connectivity and add value to both programmes.

The MAP Hub partnerships bring together organisations such as training providers, employers and other local partners to improve coordination of training provision and employment, reflecting the priorities of the digital, green, creative, hospitality and health and social care sectors. Further information is available on the GLA's website.²⁰

Bidders must demonstrate how they will work with the MAP Hubs to align with their strategic priorities and support a pipeline of participants into the priority sectors. The successful ESF provider should work with the MAP Hub leads to ensure their project adds value and does not duplicate Hub activities.

²⁰ <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/skills-and-employment-1/mayors-academies-programme>

6. Partnership Working

We encourage bids where the projects are delivered through a partnership approach which draws upon the expertise of delivery organisations and sub-grantees or sub-contractors to ensure a high-quality range of activities and experiences tailored to meet the needs of participants.

Providers will be required to establish links with local stakeholders, have an understanding of their needs, and develop strong connections with them. These connections will be key not only to identifying and engaging marginalised individuals, but also to facilitating ease of access more generally through the use of local venues and support organisations. They will also enable a comprehensive wraparound service which can address any barriers that participants may have to engaging fully and productively with the project and, ultimately, achieving their employment goals.

Providers should be mindful of other ESF programmes and add value to these existing activities. More information on the other ESF programmes in London is available on the LEAP and GLA websites.²¹ Efforts to ensure a joined up and complementary approach will help avoid duplication and create stronger pathways into the priority sectors, linking into the opportunities created by the MAP Hubs.

7. Project Deliverables

Providers should choose how they will deliver their project, bringing their expertise, innovation and knowledge of the sector and delivery area to their proposed methodology.

Providers will be asked to demonstrate how they will

- Market and publicise the provision and promote the sector;
- Identify and recruit eligible participants, taking into account the needs of those in the priority equalities groups;
- Develop and deliver a needs assessment and Bespoke Training Plan – as described in the ESF Evidence Handbook, for each participant and deliver appropriate activities against that plan, including IAG, employability and jobsearch support;
- Support participants to access appropriate wrap-around support and progression opportunities;
- Develop and use external partnerships to deliver the project objectives and ensure the legacy of the project.

²¹ https://lep.london/content_page/european-social-fund and <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/funding/european-social-fund>

8. ESF Requirements

When delivering the project, providers must comply with the national eligibility rules and programme guidance for ESF, which are available on the European Structural and Investment Funds 2014-20 website (www.gov.uk/government/publications/european-social-fund-eligibility-documents/esf-national-eligibility-rules-and-programme-guidance). Note that these documents are regularly updated and supplemented by additional guidance and action notes providing detail of how the guidance should be implemented and interpreted. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are complying with the latest version of the guidance.

9. Payment Model

This project is funded via an Actual Costs model. This means that only the actual defrayed direct costs that you incur, and can evidence, plus an allocation for indirect costs, will be paid.

Please see Section 6 of the Prospectus and the Eligibility and Part 1 of the Evidence Handbook for detailed examples of how these costs are broken down and examples of eligible and ineligible expenditure.

Payments will be made by the GLA quarterly, based on a claim form setting out actual costs incurred and defrayed, and on receipt of a satisfactory progress report setting out achievements against agreed targets for outputs and results.

An advance of up to 5% of the total grant value is eligible to be claimed. This advance is to support the provider's cashflow in the initial delivery period and it will be recovered in full from the second quarter's claim, and from subsequent claims if the quarter 2 claim is less than the advance.

10. Reporting

ESF Providers will be expected to submit a quarterly claim report detailing progress made over the previous quarter in relation to delivery, financial and output/results performance, , risks and issues along with any other information necessary to assess performance in accordance with the GLA grant agreement.

11. Project Outputs and Results Targets

The project Outputs and Results are the measurable deliverables for which the ESF Academies grant funding is made available.

The table below provides the Outputs/Results to be achieved **per grant award**.

Target Outputs/Results		% of Participants to achieve the Outputs/Results
Participants from the eligible target group starting on the programme	Minimum 250	
Participants receiving Information, Advice and Guidance		90
Participant progression outputs (Results)		
Participants progressing into further or higher education or training		20
Participants progressing into employment or a paid apprenticeship		15
Of participants progressing into employment, or an apprenticeship, percentage that are "Good Work" job outcomes		60
Participants progressing into a supported work placement		6
Economically inactive participants progressing onto further jobsearch		20

Note that only one progression output (Result) can be reported per participant.

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