

Q & A for Mayor's Construction Academy Hub Status and Funding Opportunity

- Q1.** In appendix 1 of the MCA prospectus it is stated that you expect organisations to comply with certain due diligence requirements as part of the process. Listed are such things as audited accounts, current turnover, cash flow forecast, budget, insurance policies, and financial regulations. As a rule, with most government and EU funding applications this process doesn't normally apply to public bodies such as local authorities. Can you please advise whether local authorities would also be expected to provide this information alongside an application to become an MCA Hub?
- A1.** The MCA Team can confirm that Local Authorities would be exempt from our Due Diligence process.
- Q2.** Can an Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) and/or a Recruitment Agency partner with a HUB for employment opportunities?
- A2.** Yes, an ATA and/ or recruitment agency can potentially be a partner in an MCA hub application. It is a requirement of the MCA that hub applications must clearly name at least one MCA quality-marked construction skills training provider within the partnership. In addition, the Prospectus provides examples of other organisations who might act as partners in an MCA hub application. However, this list is not intended to be comprehensive. There is therefore no limit to organisations which may be named as a partner in a hub application. All applications should however clearly demonstrate the role and responsibilities of each partner in supporting successful delivery of MCA hub outcomes and outputs and the value that this will bring to the proposed hub model.
- Q3.** Do you have any guidance on the minimum number of boroughs a bid should cover, any maximum number of boroughs that can be covered, or any wider guidance on your preferred number of boroughs within a bid?
- A3.** There is no minimum or maximum requirement for the number of boroughs in a hub. It will be the decision of those involved with the hub application as to the number of boroughs covered which will be dependent on the focus of the hub – themed, geographical etc.
- Q4.** The figures for numbers achieving in construction training is nearly 22,000. Is the conversion rate for progression into construction employment known?
- A4.** No, while positive progression is recorded by providers we do not have the exact number for those who have gone into construction employment and that is what we will be expecting of the MCA. The hub lead will be required to report back on the number of people going into construction employment. This will be one of the key metrics.
- Q5.** There is a lot of talk about collaboration and a lot of ambition around changing the landscape for skills supply and demand, but there is not much emphasis on inter hub collaboration and how that might work and what weighting that might be given. As we all know programmes come and go, the nature of the industry is very transitory and

there may well be opportunities within a hub that beneficiaries from another hub could benefit from. How are the opportunities going to be managed across the piece as the alternative is you end up with six good but standalone hubs that don't provide that connectivity?

A5. The central team at City Hall will provide a link between the respective hubs. We haven't yet identified a metric or KPI for that.

There is an emphasis in the Hub prospectus on good practice and sharing lessons learned. This would be within a particular hub and how different partners can share good practice but also across all of the different hubs. Ultimately, this is about one academy and all hub partners, regardless of which hub you are part of, coming together and sharing good practice. It is key. We do recognise that there are some organisations that have a role to play across all hubs. They may want to have a relationship with one hub but we do recognise that the offer they can provide may well be relevant to others as well so we will also explore that option. We want there to be a collaborative approach to the MCA.

Q5. What is the approach and process for ensuring the quality marked providers maintain the standard going forward?

A5. It will be within the remit of the team at City Hall to monitor this and it will be formally reviewed on an annual basis. We will also expect the hub lead to raise any concerns they have.

Q6. The prospect of encouraging Women, BAME, young people and ex-offenders into construction is exciting. There are colleges doing good work in this area. When you come to evaluate, it will be good to see a real emphasis on joining up everything we are all trying to do to improve London. Can you assure me that bids will have different hats on? This is about the one opportunity we have to build more homes. The social value of this is enormous.

A6. Young people are a focus of the MCA and we will be running a campaign around progression opportunities we know exist in this sector.

In terms of young offenders, there are representatives at the event from NOMS and Novus. We have also invested in facilities in Brixton Prison to give people skills they can use when they leave. We recognise this within our capital programme as well as including offender learning within the in-scope partners of this programme so we will hope to make some traction in that space.

As the construction industry, we know we need to attract people from all backgrounds. We have recognised the diversity angle but also need to consider young offenders, people changing careers, adult entrants and graduates for example. We recognise there are a variety of different target audiences and it is really about how can we make the industry a lot more attractive for people from all backgrounds. That is the basis of the campaign that we are going to start focusing on.

The academy is focused on the quality side and the coordination between the different initiatives but we do recognise there is a real need within London as well as wider afield

to inspire people about construction careers. The campaign aims to effectively trigger that pipeline for people to come through the academy and hopefully to generate the outcomes we are looking for. The hubs also have a responsibility to get the word out about their offer but we are planning the campaign to really showcase what the industry is about and, what the opportunities are for people regardless of their background.

Q7. As an industry, we want to ensure that the MCA Team is proactive as well as reactive. Because of your position will you be able to identify metrics/data and make some suggestions/share best practice among the hubs.

A7. The MCA Team, and the GLA are committed to being proactive.

Q8. I have been working with getting women into construction for 10 years and am pleased with the ambitious 30% target and the target for BAME. How will this be monitored and if there are difficulties with attaining these targets, how will they be addressed?

A8. Women and BAME are part of the stated KPIs and so will be measured and monitored on a regular basis through the hub leads.

Also, we will be reflecting upon progress and some of the challenges in meeting those targets and we'll be enabling dialogue between the hubs to see how they can share good practice to tackle some of those issues, as part of our remit as we are at the centre.

Q9. The Construction Skills Fund (CSF) has been launched. Is there not a case for the devolved AEB budget being aligned to work with CITB to allocate funding because we have already scoped what the construction skills needs of London are?

A9. We want to avoid any duplication with the new government scheme. There have been discussions between the MCA and CITB and what's planned with the Construction Skills Fund (CSF) and we will be looking to ensure these schemes complement each other. The CSF is a national fund being driven by central government that has been devolved to the sector to identify 20 on-site learning hubs across the country. There are similarities to the MCA but they are not the same. A key aspect with the CSF is that they are major sites and we would expect some of those hubs to be across London and the South-East due to the pipeline of work. We have very good communication links with the CSF and have been talking closely with CITB. In the MCA prospectus there is a reference to the National Retraining Scheme as it was previously known and an alignment to that fund and there is also a mirror statement in the CSF guidance about the MCA and specifically in relation to London as we are looking for close alignment between the schemes.

Q10. Will the Skills for Londoners Capital fund exclude construction given we now have these two funds?

A10. The GLA has ringfenced £7.2m within the overall Skills for Londoners Capital fund.

- Q11.** One key issue is Brexit. We have a large European workforce at present and the Mayor is very keen on retaining the European workforce in London. Do you think there is scope for us to encourage people from all walks of life to train and be involved and to upskill?
- A11.** We highlighted the exposure Brexit will bring to the workforce in this sector. We will use this as a platform to attract as many new people from the domestic workforce into the sector as possible and will hope this builds upon the migrant workforce.
- Q12** How can a Professional Institution get involved with construction skills?
- A12.** Professional Institutions and Federations should liaise with the delegates who attended the MCA event telling them what value would be added to their application because of your links with industry.
- Q13.** Emphasis on trade skills. How could professional organisations get involved? Also, what about ethnicity as a themed hub? How do we as an organisation get close to those who have an active aspiration to address this.
- A13.** The GLA would urge those organisations who are considering becoming part of a hub to be mindful of the diversity KPI on which revenue is attached. So, to deliver upon it they may need to speak to organisations like BTEG who have those networks and contacts in place.

Regarding the professional organisation, this isn't just about trades. That is one part of the industry, but there are also the technical routes and the professional routes. There is a role for both federations and Professional Institutions to play. When you are scoping out what your hub will look like, the GLA haven't defined what occupations are in or out of scope for an MCA hub, so we would welcome applications that do include and do recognise the value that the professions bring to the industry. Certainly, within London, professional occupations are a big focus. There are lots of skills shortages around the construction professions and we would really like to see that as part of a hub. It would be for the hub applications to define which occupations they wish to cover.

- Q14.** We are at the cusp of changing something in London and we don't want to repeat the same mistakes so we need to move forward but digital skills have not been mentioned. We are looking at innovation and new forms of housebuilding. How will this be addressed?
- A14.** Digital skills were discussed at the MCA quality marked provider briefing session. We are conscious of the findings of the Farmer report and how we can drive the wider uptake of innovative methods of construction which includes digital skills. In the provider briefing, new and emerging curriculum developments were discussed as well as things that are either in place or on the horizon that will shape how the MCA will move forward in the future.
- Q15.** If I have one quality marked provider in my hub and they failed the quality assurance in year one what would happen?

- A15.** You would have to seek another quality marked provider. They can be in more than one hub and do not have to be in the same geographical location.

There is a statement in the prospectus saying that if the Ofsted status of a provider in the hub is downgraded, their MCA status and delivery model will be reviewed. One of the mitigating options would be to work with another QM provider as this is all about collaboration so you may want to join forces with more than one provider from the beginning.

- Q16.** At the recent GLA launch of MCA revenue, the total budget for this work was given as £1.8m, while the Prospectus states it as £1.2m. Is the Prospectus correct?

- A16.** The total amount of confirmed GLA revenue funding available to support the network of MCA hubs is now £1.8m.

- Q17.** At the MCA market warming event it was stated that six bids would be funded. The Prospectus has no information on this. Is it still your intention to fund six bids, or has the number reduced with the funding?

- A17.** The reference to 6 MCA hubs at the market warming event was intended to provide an indication only of the number of hubs which may be approved through the current application process. The final number of approved MCA hubs will depend on the quality and scope of the applications submitted. The GLA may therefore decide to award a lower number of contracts if a number of very strong large hub proposals are received which demonstrate a clear rationale and wide network of partners. The GLA does however recognise that some hubs may also be smaller in scale e.g. those with a specialist remit. Where this is the case, a higher number of applications could be approved. The figure of 6 is therefore intended to be indicative only.

- Q18.** Given that the role you are seeking to fund will be the same in all hubs, do you have an indicative budget for each? If six bids are sought for £1.2m revenue, is it reasonable to assume each bid should seek £200,000 from revenue funding?

- A18.** We envisage that the final amount of GLA revenue funding allocated to each hub will be roughly equal. However as indicated above, we recognise that the scope and scale of MCA hubs will vary. There may therefore be some variation in the final funding allocated to each hub by the GLA depending on their delivery model and the quality of the application.

- Q19.** Do you have any further guidance on the type of activities match funding should support? The Prospectus states that MCA revenue will fund the whole Co-ordinator post, and other sources including ESFA will fund training.

- A19.** GLA revenue funding is being made available to support one full-time coordinator post for each MCA hub. This co-ordinator must be dedicated solely to delivering the outputs and outcomes required of the MCA hub. GLA revenue funding cannot be used to pay for training delivery. A hub may wish to supplement GLA revenue funding available to support the co-ordinator post through match funding depending on the scope and scale

of the hub model being proposed. Where this is the case, an application should clearly demonstrate the rationale for this. Alternatively, a hub may consider using match funding to support other elements of their delivery model. Applications should clearly state what match funding will support. This will depend on the scope, scale and partnership network of the hub application.

Q20. Within the prospectus (section 2.1) it refers to a:

- delivery and cost template &
- delivery plan and risks template

that need to be submitted. I cannot see that these are available to download anywhere - can you clarify if you are providing a template or is the intention that bidders will create their own

A20. Applicants should provide their own templates for the above documents.

Q21. Can you please clarify what response/information you are seeking for:

Q3.7 - Explain how these will improve upon any existing baseline

Can you please what existing baseline you are referring to?

A21. MCA applicants should clearly state their proposed outcomes associated with MCA hub delivery in response to question 3.6. Under question 3.7 applicants should provide details of current learner achievements and explain how MCA outcomes will exceed these.

Q22. Can you please clarify what information or requirements you are seeking providers to cover for the Financial Plan required for Q2.6?

A22. MCA hub applicants should submit a proposed financial profile in keeping with the application's funding ask. This should clearly state the delivery profile for hub outcomes for the duration of the project and the corresponding financial profile.

Q23. Question 3.9 in the application form is listed as an "essential – Pass/Fail". The MCA Hub prospectus (3.3.3) states there is no conditional match requirement, although question 3.9 indicates this is a pass/fail requirement, please can you clarify what level of match is required to 'pass' and whether it is purely the MCA Hub applicant match or whether it should include hub-partners, whoever these may be?

A23. The MCA lead applicant is responsible for submitting the application on behalf of all prospective MCA hub partners. Should the application for GLA revenue funding be successful, then the appointed MCA hub co-ordinator will be expected to work closely across all hub partners to coordinate delivery the MCA outcomes. The match identified in the application may therefore be identified from any of the stated hub partners. The nature of this will depend on the hub scope and the range of participating hub partners. For further information please refer to the response to Q.19 in the Q&A document.

- Q24.** For the purposes of creating the project delivery plan, can you please confirm what the project start date and end date should be?
- A24.** Subject to completion of the evaluation process we envisage MCA hub agreements being awarded in early Autumn 2018. The MCA hub delivery phase will run until the end of the current mayoralty in May 2020.
- Q25.** There is an overarching question of what are the total MCA hub programme KPIs for this table, i.e. the total all the MCA Hubs are expected to deliver?
- A25.** As stated in the prospectus and application pack, final KPI volumes will be determined in response to applicant proposals. The Mayor's Construction Academy is looking for assurance of stretching targets. We do recognise however that the number of outcomes will be partly dependent on the scope of individual MCA hubs. Applicants should clearly state how much revenue funding is being requested and for how many MCA hub outcomes.
- Q26.** Where Appendix 1 - KPIs asks for 'employers engaged across ALL hubs' is this actually asking how many employers 'we' will engage across our proposed hub? How would we be able to ascertain how many employers would be engaged across all MCA hubs / potential hubs?
- A26.** Yes, MCA hub applicants should provide proposed KPIs associated with the scope and delivery of their hub model only. This applies for all KPIs covered in Appendix 1. The GLA will collate the total KPIs across all successful MCA hubs following award of contract.
- Q27.** Where Appendix 1 - KPIs asks 'learners progressing into employment or an apprenticeship' – is there a programme wide / whole programme target for this.
- A27.** As stated in the prospectus and application pack, final KPI volumes will be determined in response to applicant proposals. The Mayor's Construction Academy is looking for assurance of stretching targets. We do recognise however that the number of outcomes will be partly dependent on the scope of individual MCA hubs.
- Q28.** Where Appendix 1 - KPIs asks 'learners progressing into employment or an apprenticeship' and 'learners in 6 months sustained employment' How would you advise that we calculate learners from the London area who are / would be already studying with us – should we try to disaggregate these or can they / should they be counted?
- A28.** The hub lead will be required to report back on the number of people going into construction employment/apprenticeship as well as sustained employment. The MCA is intended to support individuals living in a London postcode area to enter construction careers. Any successful MCA hub will therefore be required to extract and provide regular data about London learners specifically from wider provider outcomes.

Q29. The Female 30% and BAME 32% as a percentage of each indicator is significantly higher than our current percentage, is achieving 30% in 2018/2019 a pass/fail gateway or could our MCA programme aim to achieve 30% by 2020/2021, how do we reflect this within our application?

A29. The MCA is committed to the targets stated in the prospectus. It is recognised that these are ambitious targets, however the MCA is being established to go above and beyond current levels of achievement including current recruitment levels for females and BAME learners. If an MCA hub applicant does not feel they can commit to the targets stated for 2018/19 they should clearly state what level they can achieve in 2018/19 and provide supplementary information to state why this is the case and what measures they will implement to ensure this is achieved in 2019/20. Where MCA hubs deliver below the stated targets in 2018/19 they will be expected to make up the shortfall in later years. The average percentage of female/BAME outcomes over the full contract should therefore meet the figures stated in Appendix 1.

Q30. The prospectus Section 1.3 makes reference to funding an MCA hub co-ordinator from summer 2018 to spring 2020, are there any guidelines or indications as to the expected employment costs per annum or pro-rata for this role, ideally baseline salary level. Do you have any draft job specifications, job description and/or person specification developed for the MCA Hub co-ordinator role, if so would you be able to make these available?

A30. As stated in the prospectus, it is expected that GLA funding will support one full time co-ordinator position for each MCA hub and that revenue funding will be matched in cash or kind. This co-ordinator must be dedicated solely to delivering the outputs and outcomes required of the MCA hub.

MCA hub leads are expected to define the job specification and person specification for their hub coordinator role. This should reflect the aims and objectives described in the prospectus. It is however recognised that the detailed nature of the hub coordinator role is likely to vary slightly dependent on the scope of the hub model and the partnership network. MCA hub applicants should define the role of their proposed hub coordinator post under question 2.3 of the MCA application.

Q31. The Figure 1, graphic in the prospectus indicates that it is not mandatory to be a MCA Hub Lead in order to bid for Stage 2 Capital funding, there is a pink arrow from Stage 1 straight through to Stage 3. Please can you confirm that Stage 3 funding will be open to all MCA mark holders irrespective of their Stage 2 MCA Hub status, decided not to bid, bid but unsuccessful, bid and successful.

A31. Yes, stage 3 will be open to all MCA quality marked providers irrespective of whether they have formed part of a hub.

Q32. Question 1.1 on the application form is being scored as an “essential – Pass/Fail”, is there a stated eligible geography for applicants (we can't see any within the guidance notes)? Assuming the eligible geography is Greater London (?) would a geography that

includes the wider non- Greater London but SE supply chain into Greater London be eligible?

- A32.** The MCA is being established to support London learners and enable them to progress into employment/apprenticeships on London construction projects with a particular focus on housing. The geography defined for the purposes of an MCA hub should be within Greater London only.
- Q33.** For question 1.5 on the application form regarding employer information, can these be part of the supply chain for housebuilding or do they need to be discrete house builders?
- A33.** As stated in question 1.5 MCA hubs should clearly demonstrate support from a mixture of larger and smaller employers. This can include discrete house builders and members of the supply chain.
- Q34.** Question 1.7 on the application form refers to letters of support from all planned 'MCA Hub Partners' are you referring to official Stage 1 successful MCA quality mark holders i.e. the 21 successful holders, or are you referring to wider selected non-MCA partners of us as the lead MCA Quality Mark holder? We ask as by the nature of the call for applications we could end up with delivery partners that are also bidding for MCA Hub status in competition to our bid.
- A34.** Please provide letters of support from all partners you have agreed to work with to deliver the MCA hub outcomes should your application for GLA revenue funding be successful. Further information is provided in the prospectus; however, this might include local authorities, higher education institutions, careers advice and guidance services, construction industry representative bodies, skills sector bodies, housing developers, National Skills Academies (NSAs), offender learning and skills providers among others. The exact selection of partners will depend on the hub model which is being proposed.
- Q35.** In section 2 of the application form there are multiple references to KPIs within the application form and Appendix 3 within the prospectus. What are the overarching KPI totals for the MCA Hub programme and is there any disaggregation estimates per MCA hub?
- A35.** As stated in the prospectus and application pack, final KPI volumes will be determined in response to applicant proposals. The Mayor's Construction Academy is looking for assurance of stretching targets. We do recognise however that the number of outcomes will be partly dependent on the scope of individual MCA hubs. Applicants should clearly state how much revenue funding is being requested and for how many MCA hub outcomes.
- Q36.** Question 2.10 in the application form is listed as an "essential – Pass/Fail" regarding recognition of 'responsibilities' and 'GLA requirements', please can you confirm specifically what these responsibilities and requirements are to ensure we respond accordingly.

- A36.** Under Question 2.10, MCA hub applicants are asked to confirm that they would comply with the requirements detailed in section 6 of the prospectus should their application be successful. This includes a requirement to
- submit a quarterly progress report to the GLA
 - report to the Mayor's Construction Skills Advisory Group on a quarterly basis
 - complete a self-evaluation at the mid-point of the delivery profile
 - participate in a programme-wide evaluation that will be commissioned by the GLA towards the end of the programme delivery period.

Full details of GLA requirements will be provided at the pre-grant clarification meeting should your bid to become an MCA hub be successful.

- Q37.** Question 3.6 in the application form - can we have some clarification on the expected MCA Hub programme and individual Hub KPIs.

- A37.** As stated in the prospectus and application pack, final KPI volumes will be determined in response to applicant proposals. The Mayor's Construction Academy is looking for assurance of stretching targets. We do recognise however that the number of outcomes will be partly dependent on the scope of individual MCA hubs. Applicants should clearly state how much revenue funding is being requested and for how many MCA hub outcomes.