



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Unique Application No:

EFIF2:

MHCLG USE ONLY

ESOL for Integration Fund: Expression of Interest application form

A 1-year extension fund to help local authorities meet the English language needs of their communities

Please email form to: Englishlanguage@communities.gov.uk

Applications must be received no later than 23.45 on 25 June 2021

Please include “EFIF” and the name of your local authority in the subject line.

Organisation details

Local area from eligibility list	Nottingham
Applying lower tier or unitary Local Authority	Nottingham City Council
Address	Loxley House Station Street Nottingham NG2 3NG
Name of Local Authority contact	Owen Harvey
Job title of Local Authority contact	Economic Strategic Manager
Email address of Local Authority contact	Owen.harvey@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
Telephone number of Local Authority contact	0115 8762820 07977963223
Nominated lead. If you would like to nominate a contact outside of the local authority please enter details	N/A

Guidance notes

- Please refer to the prospectus when completing this form.
- Please reference 2020-21 end of year report and data from DELTA submissions in 2020-21 where relevant.
- Additional supporting material and diagrams to those requested in Q4 are not required but can be submitted.
- Information in your application may be shared with other Government colleagues for the purpose of developing our understanding and informing wider policy development and best practice.
- Use of black type, Arial font 12 is preferred.

1. Building on 2020-21

Briefly, in no more than 2 A4 sides, set out how your programme will build upon foundations from Esol for Integration Fund delivery in 2020-21 to:

- **increase taught learners and social club participants' English language proficiency for use in everyday situations such as going shopping, visiting the Doctor or talking to a teacher for residents with little or no English and;**
- **build taught learners' and social club participants' confidence to interact more widely with people, places, services, public transport and amenities with their local area.**

Please include how an extension to funding will:

- encourage enrolment, participation and retention of target pre-Entry up to Entry 1 level learners,
- remove barriers to learning, with particular focus on digital accessibility and childcare,
- deliver social mixing opportunities for informal practise of English language, including connecting residents to local arts, culture, leisure and each other through ESOL clubs (up to 25% of funding requested permitted for clubs) and;
- signpost learners and participants to sources of advice on a range of issues that may directly or indirectly affect them (for example, employment, health and wellbeing, public health, domestic abuse, hate crime and support for victims or concerns regarding extremism and radicalisation)

In 2020-21 Nottingham City Council delivered the ESOL for Integration Fund with four experienced ESOL community partners BEGIN, Belong, Enable, and the Workers' Educational Association (WEA). This was done under the branding of "Learn English Together (LET)". With the Covid-19 pandemic, delivery was interrupted with partners moving for all delivery to be online delivered digitally and no in person social mixing opportunities. In total there were 431 starters (and completers) out of the target of 504. A number of statistics were collected (previously reported in full) including a 59/41 percent female/male split and 27 first languages reported. 68% said they felt confident booking a health appointment in English, over 70% were confident at talking in English with people at their children's school, and 70% agreed that their local areas is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

The LET extension 2021-22 will build on the above. The same partners will be involved, offering a strong partnership that ultimately benefits the learners. The key difference will be that, with the confidence in teaching digitally gained in 2020-21, the partners will offer a stronger individualised learning experience. Also, the project will build in operational flexibility to be able to quickly respond to any changes in the Covid-19 restrictions and guidelines. Due to required nature of ESOL community delivery, all partners are still planning face-to-face delivery but with no more than 8 learners per class. However, if required, all partners and their workforce have vast experience and the ability to swiftly change to online delivery.

Any underspends from 2020/21 have supported the purchase of tablets and laptops for 2021/22 provision. Delivery partners have also continued to offer learners a reduced programme offer in order to keep learners warm, continuing to develop their language skills and integration into the wide community with social mixing activities.

Encourage enrolment, participation and retention - All course delivery partners will continue to develop effective working relationship with the referral agency BEGIN to enrol participants. All provision will be free, delivered locally, with experienced, friendly and approachable tutors, within set venues that are known to people and where they feel safe in order to maximise participation. Delivery partners will seek to re-engage (EFIF Phase 1) pre-Entry learners, specifically focus on recruiting learners from segregated communities. We will recruit and stream learners on to a higher level course to reinforce existing learning, extend confidence, knowledge and skills in the use of English language for everyday life, and stretch and challenge them to progress on to further learning.

Remove barriers to learning - Covid-19 has demonstrated that certain groups (e.g. low level ESOL adults) are negatively impacted more than other groups in society by local or national lockdown arrangements, and many have been excluded from online learning or accessing other digital services during this time. New to the programme extension project, partners will offer digital skills sessions to support those with low digital skills, loan equipment such as a laptop or tablet, purchased from 2020/21 underspend and/or access funding for data allowance (e.g. through our corporate partnership with Lloyds Banking Group) to ensure that no one is left behind. Lack of affordable childcare can also be a barrier to participation, so we have included a Learner Support Fund in the project budget to support with costs of childcare facilities where required. It is envisaged we will provide childcare for up to 30 learners.

Deliver social mixing opportunities - Nottingham offers many opportunities for informal practise of English language, with many local community centres, leisure centres, local community groups, and great tourist/cultural attractions (e.g. the refurbished Nottingham Castle, and Contemporary Art Centre, and the National Justice Museum) along with many parks and open spaces. The aim is for the learners to practice language skills but also enjoy themselves and make new friends.

Social mixing activities will embed learning in social context that is relevant and meaningful to the learners, relating to e.g. health and wellbeing, community and creativity. For example, a half day field trip to a local place of interest using public transport to thoroughly embed practice. This will be planned by the students and led by the tutor in order to take participants out of the classroom and use their skills in new settings. Examples include: asking/paying for tickets in a shop or museum; asking directions; speaking to a teacher, doctor or librarian; or speaking to a local housing officer to support social integration. Other examples of proposed social mixing activities include:

- Celebration events designed to recognise and reward student achievements with participants from different cohorts, and family, friends and neighbours.
- Conversation clubs – informal gatherings to practise and perfect new language skills and in students mixing socially, at break time, over lunch and through activities, with other students from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.
- Students from different ethnic backgrounds becoming friends on the course, learning about each other, e.g. Sikh and Muslim, Yemeni & Kurdish students.
- Through homework and classroom activities and students borrowing bi-lingual books from the library to read together with their children, so that they can read together two languages at the same time (their own language and English).

Signpost learners and participants to sources of advice - Information, advice and

guidance will be provided by course tutors to inform participants about places of interest, welfare/benefits support, progression to further learning, and volunteering opportunities, etc. In addition, partners will seek to engage Futures (part of National Careers Service provider network) to attend face-to-face classes to deliver high-quality IAG, signposting and referral to progression opportunities or services where appropriate.

In order to achieve the targets, and in particular encourage enrolment, participation and retention elements are in place. The project will continue to work with community partners that are embedded in the communities across Nottingham and have a reputation within such for delivering ESOL and supporting people in safe local environments. The project will start with IAG and focuses on learner needs so that, once enrolled, learners tend to stay.

It is likely that many learners will have barriers to a fulfilling life in the UK beyond English Language skills (for example, employment, health and wellbeing, public health, domestic abuse, hate crime and support for victims or concerns regarding extremism and radicalisation). The partners will include discussions on other sources of help throughout the programmes. This will start with the 1-2-1 IAG session and build on that as people gain confidence and trust in the tutors and volunteers. All the partners are embedded in the community and have links with others who can help with these areas of support. Learners will be signposted to these sources of help but in addition the partners will take a proactive stance (especially Nottingham City Council) by facilitating help for the learners and getting support groups to contact the learners to help remove barriers.

2. Deliverability

Briefly, in no more than 2 A4 sides, set out how an extension of funding will enable:

- **delivery of practical literacy skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening for use in everyday situations to learners at new to ESOL level (pre-Entry up to Entry 1). Please state structure of sessions and clubs e.g. anticipated length of course, number of guided learning hours and anticipated delivery methods -face to face, blended and/or online,**
- **provision of place-focused curriculum, activities and social clubs to build learner confidence to use local services, amenities and public transport,**
- **the utilisation of current workforce, or recruitment of suitably trained L5+ practitioners, language support assistants and volunteers to support guided learning, face to face and/or online, and deliver ESOL clubs and activities,**
- **arrangements to support digitally excluded learners and/or participants.**
- **arrangements to provide information, advice and guidance (minimum 1 session per learner, either individually or within a group), supporting progression towards further learning and longer-term goals such as formal ESOL education, volunteering or employment and**
- **arrangements to provide OFSTED-registered childcare to support learners where needed.**

LET will build on the 2020/21 project by providing high quality pre-entry ESOL programmes in community-based settings in the following ways:

- Two of the three delivery organisations are grade 2 Ofsted providers.
- The third provider is a small voluntary sector organisation with a long history of providing high quality community-based ESOL support.
- In 2018, NCC was awarded an OFSTED grade 2 for Community Learning. The Council's standards and quality assurance processes will be applied across the programme to ensure consistent practice and a good experience for learners.
- All community premises are well-established venues, in areas of high need, easily accessible to the local community, and comply with health & safety legislation.

Delivery - The project will deliver practical language and literacy skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities in everyday situations. Activities will be varied, differentiated, and challenging to allow participants to build the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to take part in everyday life and develop the confidence to use local services, amenities and public transport.

- All partners have agreed a standardised delivery model of 40 guided learning model, delivered 2 hours a week, twice a week over 10 weeks. This length programme and twice weekly session will enable learners to make significant progress
- A face to face delivery model will be used, alongside the offer of either blended learning and/or online. The exact model used will depend on the identified learner needs and Government advice at the time of delivery.

Teaching and learning materials, schemes of work and session plans will address subjects and issues in a diverse and inclusive way, making them accessible and easily adaptable. Tutors will organise, direct and facilitate learning and assessment activities with a direct focus on English language acquisition and opportunities to practise English during and outside class. This will:

- Develop learner confidence.
- Sustain motivation.
- Reinforce learning.
- Increase the sense of belonging/integration within the wider community.

Community partners will plan the curriculum and organise a series of integration / enrichment activities for participants. Enrichment activities will be planned by the participants, led by the tutor, with volunteers supporting, taking learners out of the classroom to use their skills in new settings.

Social mixing sessions will take place in high quality venues with relevant health & safety and risk assessments being undertaken prior to any visits. The venues used will include:

- Libraries
- Sport venues - including Zumba sessions.
- Museums and other public open spaces for cultural visits.
- Doctors surgeries and/or schools.

Social mixing sessions will be for participants, their families and/or friends. These will embed learning in a social context that is relevant and meaningful to the learners, relating to health and wellbeing/community cohesion/creativity. All activities will be planned by the participants, led by the tutor, with volunteers supporting. Taking learners out of the classroom to use their skills in new settings will build confidence.

There will also be a final celebration event, bringing all participants across the project, their friends and family together to recognise and celebrate their achievements.

Workforce -

- The tutors are ESOL qualified to Level 5+.
- The workforce is either in post or ready to employ on a sessional arrangement.
- All will have current enhanced DBS checks prior to delivery.

Where appropriate, volunteers will support the programme. They will be recruited by the community partners through links to local communities and the two Nottingham universities. Volunteers will include: ESOL Learner Ambassadors, trainee EFL teachers and university students. They will be supervised, integrated into the team and receive training based on a skills audit of professional development requirements.

Digitally excluded learners - The partners offer digital skills sessions to support those with low digital skills, loan equipment such as laptop or tablet purchased via EFIF Phase 1 delivery where necessary, or access funds for data allowance (e.g. through our Corporate partnership with Lloyds Banking Group) to ensure that no one is left behind.

All partners support digitally excluded learners. This builds on last years' experience, of overnight having to put in place a 100% online delivery model. Partners can loan equipment such as laptops, tablets, dongles purchased through the EFIF Phase 1 underspend. Partners access funds for data allowance (e.g. through Corporate partnerships with Lloyds Banking Group) to ensure that no one is left behind. Through ESFA Community Learning funding, partners offer digital training to allow participants to access digital learning and take an active part in the sessions. The partners who do not have access to this funding sign post learners to those with it.

IAG - All sessions will include, advice and guidance that will be embedded in schemes of work:

- Each learner will receive a minimum of 1 IAG session on their learning journey via partners. Futures, the local National Careers Service provider will provide face-to-face impartial Advice and Guidance, and referral to progression opportunities or services. Learners will be signposted to further learning opportunities (there is an extensive range of non-regulated and accredited learning available locally) including further ESOL provision as appropriate, as well as being encouraged to progress as volunteers and target longer term aims such as employment
- Progression will start from the moment a learner first attends an engagement/taster event and will continue throughout their course, to continually improve skills and confidence, evidenced through Individual Learning Plans (ILPs). Partners ensure provision specifically supports narrowing the gaps for under-represented learners by continuing to develop educational opportunities for the most disadvantaged.

Childcare - Subject to availability and eligibility, Ofsted registered childcare will be offered to learners in a range of contexts, including:

- Free childcare via the Early Years, two year old's free childcare offer.
- Mobile crèche support for groups that require childcare support for 3 or more children.
- Childcare for individual participants, by local childminders or children centre childcare support.

NCC's Early Years team also have access to a range of high quality childminders/child day-care partners that can be readily accessed.

3. Financial Viability

Please set out all costings required to implement the proposal outlined at 2. Indicate clearly use of any 2020-21 underspend or match funding and the total amount required from MHCLG to extend your programme for a further year.

Please note:

- Up to £6.6m is available to share with up to 30 local authorities. To be able to reach as many as possible please be as cost efficient as possible and build upon current delivery where possible. Any bid requesting over £300,000 will not be accepted,
- at least 75% of the requested amount should be for the provision of taught pre-Entry up to Entry 1 level English language sessions in reading, writing speaking and listening led by level 5 or above qualified practitioners,
- include associated project and admin costs within the relevant % of bid. Costs may be pro-rata'd between the two elements, but boundaries may not be exceeded (at least 75% of amount requested for taught sessions and up to 25% of amount requested for social clubs),
- where social activities are for learners enrolled on taught sessions, e.g. a trip to a local place of interest linked to a taught session, please include this within taught element costs and;
- all funding must be committed to activities by 31 March 2022, with all delivery completed by 31 May 2022.

This round of the project again, has been costed to achieve the best value for money possible. For full costings, please see appendix 5.

Whilst the overall budget has reduced to £184,974.48 from £225,939, the cost per learner has slightly increased from £448 to £550. This is a result of reducing learner numbers to 336 due to restricted venue capacities as a result of current lockdown guidance. Project delivery remain broadly the same with learners offered 40 hours of guided learning, however acting on evaluation and learner feedback, the 40 hour programme will be delivered over ten weeks instead of the previous eight. Social mixing has also been extended with all partners scheduling ten hours of social mixing activities.

Where providers reported underspend from the 2020 2021 programme, agreements were reached and enacted prior to the release of this new funding round, which saw additional courses being delivered and IT equipment purchased to support ongoing digitally delivered ESOL learning. As such no funding from the 2020 2021 programme will be brought forward into the current round.

Whilst tutor costs remain consistent to the 2020 2021 programme, savings have been gained through reduced management costs, more accurate costings around the provision and uptake of childcare and developed social activity models to reduce facilitation costs.

The headline costs are as follows;

item	Cost
Accountable body project management	£22,334
Engagement and referral coordination	£10,000

ESOL taught sessions	£120,596
Social mixing activities	£32,017
Total Project Cost	£184,947
Cost per participant	£550
ESOL taught sessions % of costs*	80.31%
Social Mixing sessions % of costs*	18.69%

- includes apportioned Accountable Body management costs

TAs with the 2020 2021 programme, the profiling of all costs has been directly linked to the project implementation plan. Due to the short project duration a review of the available pipeline of learners has already been undertaken through Begin with preparation for commencement of engagement activity to be started on notification of award to ensure a prompt September start.

Programme cohorts have been planned for commencement during September 21 and January 22. The final cohort is scheduled to finish Mar 22 although in the event of stricter lockdown requirements, adjustments will be made to extend delivery periods (not going beyond May 2022 or move delivery on-line).

4. Project management, performance indicators and governance

Briefly outline any delivery and financial risks identified and how these will be mitigated. Show how the project team will meet the learner level monitoring and evaluation ask detailed within the prospectus.

Please also attach:

- **A delivery implementation plan and timeline.**
- **Project level Theory of Change model.**
- **Local project Governance structure, including details of any delivery partners.**
- **Target numbers of learners anticipated to enrol in taught sessions and target numbers of participants anticipated to attend ESOL social mixing clubs.**

Delivery and financial risks - Based on lessons learnt from the previous round and input from partners, potential risks to the project have been identified and a risk management process established. The Project Manager will own the risks and work with the Project Lead and Steering Group for monitoring and mitigation purposes. The overall mitigation strategy includes:

- Collaboration agreements with partners which cover all of their commitments in terms of delivery, budget and output / outcome targets, as well as an underperformance policy.

- Regular monthly reviews by the project management team of performance and spending against the project implementation plan and budget.
- A partnership approach where partners support each other and help to plug gaps to ensure that overall project objectives and targets are reached.
- Using evidence-based research, best practice, input from the Council's HR, legal and information specialists to both inform the project's design and resolve any subsequent issues that might arise.
- Maintaining the same partnership membership as the previous round suitably qualified and experienced partners so that the project is properly resourced from the outset, with the understanding of the challenges previously faced and outcome of previous remedial actions.
- The rapid instigation of the underperformance policy if and when required.
- The use of standardised systems, documentation, and course delivery model.

The key risks are:

Delivery -

- Failure to attract the target number of participants and to achieve the outputs and outcomes predicted.
- The ongoing impact of COVID-19 in terms of how support can be delivered to participants, their associated state of mind, and the economic environment in which they and the project is operating.
- The availability and / or departure of key qualified staff.
- Failure to maintain the participant records required for monitoring and evaluation.
- Failure to meet General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Financial -

- Failure to maintain the cost records required for audit and claim purposes.
- The budget doesn't run to profile because of over- or underspend by partners linked to such issues as staffing, demand for courses, and availability of venues.

Cycle of Change

The evaluation and learner feedback from the 2020 2021 programme have been reviewed against the cycle of change attached as Appendix 2, which demonstrates that there is still need for this programme, with broader benefits still to be achieved. Waiting lists for lower level ESOL support have undoubtedly benefited from the previous round funding and contributed towards progressions towards Nottingham's broader social aims and goals set out in the cycle of change document.

Project Team's governance, monitoring and evaluation activities - As with the previous round of funding, the project will be led and managed by Nottingham City Council who will act as the accountable body for the funding. The four delivery organisations who made up the previous round's partnership have been retained, providing a strong and successful platform from which to build on.

The governance structure for the project is attached as Appendix 3. For consistency, responsibility for successful delivery will remain with the Project Lead (Community Project and Partnership Development Manager) with project management activity delivered by the previous rounds Project Manager. Both posts will again report to the established Project Steering Group consisting of all of the delivery partners and Nottingham City Council. The Steering Group will meet regularly to:

- Review performance against budget, delivery and output targets
- Share best practice
- Monitor and manage risks

The Project Manager will oversee the work of the partners to ensure effective day-to-day delivery, compliance with funding requirements, achievement of agreed outputs and results as well as manage the Project Administrator.

Delivery will be governed under refreshed Collaboration agreements, which sets out each organisation's delivery responsibilities, the funding they receive, performance criteria and performance management methodologies.

Taking the lessons learnt from the previous round, a clear delivery implementation plan and timeline has been established for the project based on the Council's and partners' previous experience of running this learning support project (see the attached Appendix 1). This includes trigger dates for decisions governing delivery format (face to face vs online delivery), based on government guidelines at the time of cohort establishment. The Project Manager will be responsible for monitoring progress against the plan and taking any remedial actions required to ensure successful implementation.

The review of the previous funding rounds outputs, results and evaluation demonstrated learners, whilst feeling like they had progressed, would benefit from a longer period of intervention. This coincides with BEGIN reporting that the number of potential learners waiting for lower levelled ESOL support has reduced as a result of the previous round. To this end, the project proposes to deliver a longer period of intervention for a slightly fewer number of learners. The number of learners have also been impacted by capacity of community spaces suitable for delivery. See the attached Appendix 4 for the proposed outcomes and results. For this round, the project has built in additional flexibility to a standardised course structure. All delivery partners will deliver a 40 ESOL teaching hours programme during a 10 week period (previously 8 weeks). The additional duration will allow for organised transition between face to face and online delivery in line with government guidance. The Project Manager will monitor and review individual partner delivery plans to ensure consistency in tuition across the partnership, and undertake quality assurance monitoring to ensure quality delivery and achieve value for money.

The Council, will again act of central point for collecting, storing and managing participant data. It will use the same processes and systems which have all successfully met compliance requirements and passed internal and external audit. These include:

- Secure central management information system to record project participants and their assessments, and capture subsequent outputs achieved.
- Use of standardised data capture forms.
- A Project Administrator with responsibility for ensuring that data is collected, accurately recorded and returned to MHCLG when required.
- All partners nominating a suitably qualified project lead to oversee their respective organisation's monitoring activities.

Efficient data flows were established during the previous rounds and will be embedded into the project again. Participant data and all project paperwork will be stored electronically on the Council's internal servers in restricted access folders and will adhere to GDPR regulations. As per the previous round, It will be retained there for any longitudinal research

study requirements and to enable the return of outcome and longer-term impact data.

The project will again, draw on wider resources within the Council to add evaluation expertise, ensure compliance with state aid, procurement and GDPR regulations, and enhance risk management processes. These include: an Economic Research and Evaluation Officer, and specialist teams in Data Protection, Law, Finance, HR and Procurement.

For evaluation purposes, providers will again collect data using MHCLG documentation and submit for central collation. Nottingham City Council will retain the responsibility for collating project wide data, developing evaluation reports and feedback to the authority.