

SMALL PROJECTS AND EQUIPMENT FUND

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Last updated: 17 October 2019

Summary of updates:

- *Question 16*
- *Question 17*
- *Question 22*

	Theme	Question	Answer
1.	Applicant Eligibility	Who can apply to the fund?	<p>Please refer to page 13 of the Small Projects and Equipment Fund round 2 Prospectus and page 9 of the Application Guidance for the eligibility criteria.</p> <p>Your organisation should be eligible if you have a UKPRN number, and are on the latest version of either of the following lists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-of-apprenticeship-training-providers ESFA List of Declared Subcontractors: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sfa-subcontractors-list <p>You would also be eligible if you have a UKPRN number and have been endorsed to enter into a direct contract or grant agreement to deliver education and training with either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Greater London Authority (GLA) for the devolved Adult Education Budget (for learners aged 19 and over) for the academic year 2019/20, or the Education and Skills Funding Agency (for learners aged 16-18 years) for the academic year 2019/20. <p>If none of the above applies to your organisation you can still apply, providing you have the support of a 'Lead Provider' i.e. formal support of an organisation who <u>is</u> eligible under the above terms.</p>
2.	Applicant Eligibility	Do we need to have headquarters in London to apply?	<p>We will consider funding any provider who is delivering skills provision at a location in London (regardless of where your head office is) with the following caveats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the application has a new-build or a refurbishment element, then the location of the project site must be in Greater London. Any projected outputs specified within the bid must relate to learners who reside within Greater London. If the project is Equipment only, you must demonstrate clearly both within the application, and then through quarterly and annual project monitoring following practical completion, that the investment is supporting delivery of outputs to learners who reside within Greater London. To be successful the bid must as a minimum provide us with sufficient assurance that the project will be able to satisfy these requirements.
3.	Applicant Eligibility	Can applicants submit more than one project proposal with a value of up to £300,000 per project?	<p>Yes applicants/organisations can submit multiple project proposals. Proposals must be separate from each other.</p>

4.	Application Process	How do I apply?	The application process is completely online using GLA Ops . Instructions on how to register on Ops can be found on the Small Projects and Equipment Fund webpage , and at the start of the Application Guidance document, which is also available on the SPEF webpage.
5.	Application Process	Can we request a pre-meeting to discuss our project before we submit an application?	The LEAP Delivery Team who manage this process are not able to hold individual meetings or phone calls with potential applicants to avoid giving unfair advantage to any applicant. You can direct any queries to skillscapital@london.gov.uk
6.	Application Process	Is there a Stage 2 to this application?	This is a one-stage application process. For timelines relating to the Fund, see pg 24 of the Prospectus . You should know the outcome by March 2020. Entry in to grant agreement for successful applicants should occur in the first quarter of the 2020/21 financial year.
7.	Application process	What is the deadline for applications?	For your application to be considered you will need to have submitted it on GLA OPS by 4pm on Thursday 7th November .
8.	Application process	How do you determine which bids are successful?	The process includes appraisal and moderation by a panel of GLA officers, scrutiny by the London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP), and then a final decision taken by the Mayor.
9.	What will we consider funding?	We wish to deliver a capital project but require revenue funding – can we apply for this?	There is currently no funding available to deliver revenue-based skills capital projects. For other skills funding opportunities run by the GLA please check this link .
10.	What will we consider funding?	Is the LEAP looking for proposals which are for transformational buildings and equipment applications or will they accept proposals for investment with more of a maintenance focus?	The LEAP has expressed a preference to see innovative bids which respond to the priorities set out in the Prospectus . This does not mean that maintenance bids, providing they represent capitalisable investment, are precluded from applying where a clear need can be demonstrated and where the outputs can be aligned with some of the key priorities and metrics we have set out.
11.	What will we consider funding?	How should applicants package a suite of proposals which deliver against broader aims?	This will depend on the scale and scope of the proposal; however, each physical component of the project the funding enables should be able to be related to some tangible and measurable learner focused or physical/spatial related outputs and outcomes. The proposal you share with us should also be able to be delivered in isolation (i.e. not be dependent upon future receipt of other funding from the LEAP).
12.	What will we consider funding?	Our proposal is for a large-scale project which would be difficult to deliver over a period of two years. Will this mean that our application will be excluded?	It is expected that projects are delivered over a two-year period. In exceptional circumstances a longer delivery timeline will be considered, but if funds are unlikely to be spent prior to the end of the Financial Year 2021/22 this may affect how we score the bid's Deliverability.

13.	What will we consider funding?	What level of contingency funding is acceptable to the GLA?	This will depend on the scope of the project and we leave it to the applicant to determine the adequate level of contingency for their project. Justification for the level of contingency must be provided within the full application. 10% of the total project value is often considered a benchmark, but the level of risk associated with the project may mean a higher figure is sensible in some cases.
14.	What will we consider funding?	Are we precluded from seeking funding from other GLA sources?	Your applicant contribution should be derived from non-GLA sources.
15.	What will we consider funding?	Is the fund exclusive or inclusive of VAT?	The provision of the GLA funding amounts to a conditional gift and is therefore not subject to VAT. If, at any time, the Recipient is required by the UK government to be subject to VAT, then the Recipient agrees and acknowledges that the GLA Funding shall have included any and all applicable VAT.
16.	What will we consider funding?	Is a software purchase classed as a capital cost?	Software can only be capitalised if it pays for a whole life access. If paid on an ongoing basis (e.g. annual payment and software is not provided if payment stops) then it would be a revenue item so would not be eligible for this funding. See also clause 18.8 of the GLA grant agreement which gives our legal definition for a "Capital Asset" (a draft version of which is available to view under the 'Key Resources' tab of the website).
17.	What will we consider funding?	Are leases of equipment eligible for funding?	Any leasing of equipment as part of your application must be IFRS 16 compliant and meet clause 18.8 of the GLA grant agreement (a draft version of which is available to view under the 'Key Resources' tab of the website).
18.	What will we consider funding?	The overall project will cost more than £25,000, but some of the components, e.g. installing CCTV will be less. Does each part of the project have to exceed £25,000, or just the overall project?	The minimum an applicant can bid for from this fund is £25,000 to go towards the total cost of the overall project. So, for instance, as applicants must demonstrate an ability to provide 1:1 match funding to grant, where a bidder is requesting the minimum of £25,000 grant and providing £25,000 in match funding, then the total project value would be £50,000.
19.	What will we consider funding?	Can I apply for a project that is already underway or does the project have to be completely new?	An application could be for a project that is already in delivery, or part of a larger project, but we would need to be able to identify a distinct element that we can apply our funding to. You will need to refer to the wider project in the application form and make a clear distinction between it and the aspect you are proposing to us. You will also need to note our funding timeframes. For example, your organisation's ability to drawdown our funding will only follow successful entry in to grant agreement with us. Work to enter in to grant will begin from April 2020. You should also note that if you are successful for grant funding, you will only be able to claim costs incurred from the date you receive the notification that you have been successful – costs incurred before this point would be deemed ineligible.

20.	What will we consider funding?	Are there specific types of provision you want this funding to support?	<p>For our priorities and areas we would like this capital funding to benefit see pgs 11-12 in the Prospectus. There are also case studies on pg 25-26 to give you an idea of the sorts of projects funded through round 1 of this fund.</p> <p>You can also review the Skills for Londoners Capital Fund round 2 Prospectus, which has additional information around the Mayor's priorities and how we would like to see these furthered by our funds.</p>
21.	Applicant contribution	Are we required to provide evidence of our applicant contribution?	<p>Yes, we want to understand the proposed source of your applicant contribution (i.e. your match funding) and have sight of proof if the funding has already been secured. If it has not been secured you must share an update and evidence of the progress you have made towards securing it.</p> <p>Examples of sources for your applicant contribution might include organisation reserves, bank financing, capital proceeds from estate rationalisation, local authority funding or employer sponsorship. The applicant contribution can also be sourced from other public sources.</p> <p>You will not be able to enter in to grant agreement with us until we have proof your full applicant contribution is secured.</p> <p>Leveraging in revenue funding is encouraged but will not count towards your applicant capital contribution.</p>
22.	Additional documents required	What is an estate strategy?	<p>The estate strategy refers to a strategic plan for managing your estate over a set period (often 10 years from the plan's collation). In general, the strategy is developed to support the strategic objectives of your organisation and ensures that the estate remains fit for purpose and space is used efficiently.</p> <p>The form requests that an Estates Strategy is uploaded, should it be available. If no such document is available, then be sure to answer the field immediately beneath it in as much detail as possible.</p>
23.	Additional documents required	Are we required to included detail plans/drawing for the proposed works?	<p>Where viable we would want to see architectural proposals with relevant drawings and documentation developed to RIBA Stage 2 – Concept Design (RIBA Small Project Plan of Work), if your project has a new-build or refurbishment component. Any architecture brief, photos, designs, drawings and plans beyond this can also be submitted. Such documentation is not essential for Equipment-only proposals.</p>
24.	Additional documents required	Do we already need a BREEAM certificate to apply?	<p>No, a BREEAM certificate is not necessary but you should share what and how the BREEAM rating will be achieved by the scheme if a new-build or refurbishment.</p>
25.	Additional documents required	Is it necessary to provide the statement on state aid compliance or would it be sufficient to identify the fact that legal advice is being sort and from whom?	<p>We require confirmation of state aid compliance as described in the Prospectus prior to funding being awarded. It is sufficient to identify that legal advice will be sought, and alongside this to explain according to your understanding how you expect the project to be state aid compliant</p>

26.	Outputs and outcomes	What baseline data should be used?	Please use baseline data relating to the specific skills provision for which the application relates. You should also view the Outputs section in the Application Guidance document for further support around completing this portion of the application (see pgs 27-28 & pgs 35-36).
27.	Outputs and outcomes	How will applications which include softer outcomes be judged (i.e. beyond enabling the delivery of qualification and employment outcomes?)	<p>We understand that aspects of some projects may deliver benefits and outcomes that are harder to measure. In such instances, we ask applicants to provide quantitative and qualitative assessment of the benefits of the proposals and to propose how outcomes will be measured at the evaluation stage of the project.</p> <p>For example, if your project's deliverable is primarily for a space that doesn't directly support teaching and learning, but instead is more broadly set to improve student experience - try to state the case for how that investment should materially improve provision within the application (i.e. enhance learner retention etc.). You should also flag any instances where the investment would support the Fund's wider benefits of investment (especially around environmental, community or business focussed deliverables).</p>
28.	Timeframes	Are we able to start the project before knowing whether we have had our bid approved for funding?	It is at the projects own risk that you commence before a formal decision is given on whether you will receive funding and before the grant agreement is signed. If you are successful for grant funding, you will be able to claim costs incurred from the date you receive the notification that you have been successful. Please note you must be in grant agreement with the GLA before any claims can be paid.
29.	Timeframes	What are the timescales for spending the money?	Any projects we award funding to this round should ideally enter grant early in the new financial year. We would expect projects to finish practical completion by March 2022 at the latest, with the majority completing earlier than this.
30.	Construction funding	Are construction focused applications eligible for the Small Projects and Equipment Fund or do we have to go through the Mayor's Construction Academy (MCA) team?	Yes, we will accept construction skills related bids through this Fund.
31.	What other skills capital funding is available?	Will there be future rounds of the Skills for Londoners Capital Fund?	Any upcoming skills-capital funding opportunities will be published on our webpage - however, the current stream of funding from government is coming to an end. Through London Government's recent Skills for Londoners: A Call for Action (Sept 2019) the GLA and London Councils are lobbying for a commitment from central government for continued funding to support further education capital investment. This is vital to facilitating the essential improvement of learning and skills providers' estates and equipment, and to underpinning London's devolved skills and employment responsibilities.