

Waltham Forest Adult Learning Service

Community Learning

2024-2024

Funding Guidance

Introduction

1. Introduction and background

Community Learning

We believe the best way to widen participation in learning for underrepresented community groups within Waltham Forest is through a Community Learning grants process. This process will build on existing trusted partnerships and relationships and enable us to reach the needs of disadvantaged communities and individuals, to enable them to participate in learning and to progress towards further learning and/or sustainable employment. It is widely recognised that the community and voluntary sector have trusted relationships with those in their community and can provide some of the most innovative ways of enabling people to engage in learning.

Waltham Forest Adult Learning Service (ALS) is seeking to provide grants to organisations who can open up access to learning for the people who they work with. We will support projects and ways of working that can provide people with their 'first step' into learning, increase confidence and motivation and an ability to access further learning opportunities. We will use grant funding to contribute to achieving our strategy for community learning. We will offer grants in rounds in each academic year.

The courses and activities funded will need to meet Ofsted and GLA requirements but organisations applying to this fund don't need any specific previous experience of delivering Educational activity. All subcontracted organisations will be fully supported to meet the GLA requirements and Ofsted quality standards via monthly training sessions and assignment of a Programme Manager from ALS.

Each organisation will need to have a named person who will take responsibility for quality assurance and quality improvement for their provision, and ALS will carry out one informal and one formal lesson observation within the first few weeks of the delivery. ALS will provide support, including training in observation of teaching and learning and how to complete essential quality assurance tasks.

02. Key aims and priority areas of learning.

Waltham Forest Adult learning Service Service's key aims for this round of funding are below:

To deliver innovative non-accredited community learning programmes which will engage and encourage adults to move towards sustained employment, volunteering / work experience or further learning and will do one or more of the following:

a) Priority areas of delivery

Improving quality of life

The primary objective of this round of funding is to improve the quality of life of people who visit, live and work in Waltham Forest, thus promoting **Physical, Mental health and Well-being** across a range of activities.

- targeted activities promoting health and well-being, building confidence and connecting people at different life stages
- activities that promote non-medical means of improving well-being, such as exercise classes, yoga, arts and crafts, and cultural events
- activities that promote healthy eating, and making positive choices around risk behaviours (smoking, alcohol, substance misuse)
- Information, advice and guidance sessions for unemployed residents.

Improving outcomes for Families

Schools and parenting programmes across Waltham Forest, these can be in the form of targeted workshops, information, advice and guidance sessions courses or activities. We are looking for ways to widen participation across our communities amongst families, schools and parenting programmes across Waltham Forest. These can be in the form of targeted workshops, information, advice and guidance sessions, courses or activities.

- Increase family STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, the Arts, Math) provision.
- Increase parental and family engagement in secondary schools through the learning network
- Delivery wellbeing, healthy eating and lifestyle programmes in both primary and secondary schools
- We are looking for ways to widen participation across our communities, through Workshops for Families across the borough during school holidays.

Increasing digital literacy skills and digital inclusion

We are looking for innovative ways to increase digital literacy skills and digital inclusion across Waltham Forest to support recently unemployed residents and the most economically disadvantaged local residents. These can be in the form of targeted workshops, information, advice and guidance sessions, courses or activities.

- targeted activities promoting digital inclusion for people at different life stages i.e. access to online skills and online service
- Information, advice and guidance sessions focusing on keeping safe whilst online or understanding why using the internet is relevant and helpful.
- activities that increase confidence in using the internet and thus reducing the fear of cybercrime, lack of trust or not knowing where to start online.
- activities for those who are socially and economically excluded to get online
- activities aimed at promoting digital literacy, increasing confidence in using new technologies and technical language and progress to Essential Digital Skills qualifications (EDSQs)

Improving participation amongst men and help overcome isolation amongst older residents

We are looking for ways of reducing social isolation and loneliness across Waltham Forest, these can be in the form of targeted workshops, Information, advice and guidance sessions, courses or activities.

- targeted activities that reduce social isolation and loneliness for older people in particular men.
- activities for those who are socially and/or economically excluded from learning
- activities that increase health and wellbeing, thus increasing mobility and independence.
- activities aimed at promoting or maintaining active lifestyles and can contribute meaningfully to their families and society.

Increase awareness of the Green Agenda:

We are looking for ways of increased awareness of the Green agenda, through targeted workshops, Information, advice and guidance sessions, courses or activities.

- activities that increase promote Carbon literacy offer in line with local authority climate emergency agenda
- activities that increase awareness in upcycling and recycling.

Learning Projects that support the cost-of-living crisis.

We are looking for ways of increase awareness of the Cost of Living Crisis through targeted workshops, Information, advice and guidance sessions, courses or activities.

- activities that supporting residents with household and personal budgets.
- activities that promote healthy eating such as cooking on a budget

b) Priority target groups

We particularly welcome unemployed residents with low level skills or without qualifications who haven't learned for a while or are underrepresented in community learning including:

- Individuals and families on low Incomes
- Individuals and families experiencing domestic violence*
- Residents with long term health conditions/mental health issues and COVID related health conditions*
- BAME especially Pakistani /Bangladeshi/Afro-Caribbean)
- Men

c) Priority target areas

Priority will be given to organisations working with residents from at least one of the following wards of Waltham Forest, Leyton, Higham Hill, Cathall, Hoe street, Leabridge, Markhouse, Wood Street, Cann Hall as these wards have the highest levels of deprivation and unemployed residents.

d) Progression Outcomes

Organisations applying for funding should demonstrate clear and established progression routes and positive outcomes that will enable residents to progress on to one or more of the following:

- A vocational course
- An English, Maths or ESOL course
- Volunteering activity
- Full time or part time employment
- Work experience
- Other progression clearly demonstrating a continuing benefit in line with the programme aims

Organisations will be expected to track outcomes for learners after they have completed their courses in order to measure impact and provide this information to ALS.

03. Timescales for 2023-2024

Timetable/Key dates

Date	Activity
Thursday 14 th December 2023	Project Funding is advertised
Friday 16 th February 2024	Deadline for receipt of applications
Friday 1 st March 2024	Award of contracts: All applicants to be informed outcome of the bid
Friday 8 th March 2024	Delivery can start
31 st December 2024	Delivery must be completed

January – 2024	Evaluation and Monitoring outcomes
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a) Grant Information Sharing Meeting

ALS will convene a **meeting for those interested in applying for this funding**, which will give an opportunity to partners to discuss proposals with ALS managers and discuss how it fits with the local offer. This meeting will also give organisations considering putting in an application a chance to ask any questions they have about CL funding in general. Please see the schedule below.

This meeting is aimed particularly at organisations new to this fund, and whilst all are welcome to attend, it is not mandatory to attend as an indication to bid for this funding – your attendance at this meeting will not be considered in the assessment of your application.

FAQ Grant Information Sharing Meeting	Wednesday 10th January, 6,30pm at Queen Road
FAQ Grant Information Sharing Meeting	Friday 12th January 2024, 10am, online
FAQ Grant Information Sharing Meeting	Monday 15th January 2024, 2pm at Queen Road
FAQ Grant Information Sharing Meeting	Thursday 8th February - 10am and 6pm at Queen Road
FAQ Grant Information Sharing Meeting	Tuesday 12th February - 2pm - online

04. Who can apply?

a) To apply for Community Learning funding, you must be:

- Any organisation proposing learning activities in the borough of Waltham Forest with any of the stated target groups above in section 2
- Proposing learning activities which are aimed at adults aged 19 and over.
- Targeting residents who are out of work or excluded from the labour market for various reasons. However, the fund can also be used to help people who have temporary, casual, part-time or low skilled jobs if projects will help them to improve their skills and confidence to obtain a more secure place in the labour market.

b) A range of organisations are eligible to apply for this funding, including

- Voluntary and community unincorporated associations (e.g. community centre, group with a basic constitution)
- Registered charities
- Community benefit societies registered as industrial and provident societies.
- Community interest companies or organisations of another type if you operate as a social
- Any other organisation which has a written governing document and is managed by a board of governors, trustees or management committee.

- Able to show current information such as DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service), safeguarding, risk assessments and Public Liability documents prior to the start of the delivery alongside up-to-date safeguarding training.
- Able to give a named person responsible for completing the necessary quality assurance tasks.

05. Funding

a) What funding is available?

A single bid can be for a maximum of £3,000. However, the amount offered to partners may vary depending on the number of successful bids accepted.

Funding can cover

- Lecturers' salaries
- Volunteer's expenses such as travel, training and refreshments
- Resources and materials i.e. learner resources
- Venue hire or room rental
- Publicity and marketing cost
- Administration and staff costs for management, planning and delivery (up to 15%)

It cannot be used for capital expenditure or for buying computer equipment including iPads.

b) What is the funding rate?

Funding will be calculated based on a rate per learner engaged. The rate will differ based on whether the delivery is a workshop or a course. Programmes of more than one day are deemed as courses, whereas those delivered over one session are considered workshops or tasters.

Programmes of various lengths will be funded, will rate at which programmes are funded are given below.

Type of Activity	Rate	Example – delivery only
Workshop – one session only	£90per learner	=12 learners on the workshop x £80 =£1080
Courses More than one session.	£210 per learner	= 12 learners on a course x £200 = £2,520

When submitting an application, please use the table above to work out the costing. In addition to the rate per learner, every project can build in some management expenditure up to 10% and resources expenses up to 15% only.

c) What can be funded?

- ALS would expect 85% of the learners engaged must live, study or work in the borough of Waltham Forest
- Learning projects focusing on areas of deprivation and poverty within the borough of Waltham Forest, see priority area.
- Innovative approaches to attract the target groups into learning. However, you should be clear what the learning outcomes will be, how you will engage residents through

your group into the activity and how they will progress towards employment, volunteering, work experience and/or further learning following on from this activity.

In order to receive funding organisation must be able to produce evidence of the following at the contract negotiation stage

- Your Registered Charity Number or Registered Company Number (Companies House)
- Your policies on Equal Opportunities, GDPR, Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Prevent
- Your current risk assessments of the venue where any delivery will be held.
- Your current Public Liability insurance document.
- All staff have up to date DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) documentation

d) Examples of projects

Type of Activity	Type of Activity
Active Body Active Mind Archery/Football etc	Wellbeing Wednesday's
Men/Women in Shed's	Smart Devices – Getting to grips with Gadgets
Pathway to Independence -Domestic Violence or Homelessness Courses	Climate Change – What it means to me
Family fun and Fitness Early Years Dance Workshops	Father and Sons – Stem Saturday Families' chess Clubs

06. Selection Process

The grant process will be fair, transparent and accessible, whilst ensuring that the objectives of the CL fund are met. Projects will be evaluated on the extent to which they meet the requirements of the prospectus in the following areas:

1. Ability to meet the specification guidelines.
2. Value for money vs target number engaged.
3. Significant number of learners engaged from key Waltham Forest Wards
4. Clear plan and rationale behind the project.
5. Show clear learner outcomes throughout duration of the project.
6. Clear non –accredited achievement outcomes, accredited (e.g. evidenced through learner work, RARPA, portfolio, review of Individual Learning Plan)
7. Programmes which broaden our existing offer.
8. Able to demonstrate a clear progression path, into either further learning, volunteering or employment.

Awarding of grants is made in by an Award Panel that comprises:

- Board Members of the Council's Adult Learning Board who serve on the Community Learning Subgroup
- Officers of the council responsible for community learning

- Co-opted members (e.g., those with specific experience deemed important to make a full assessment of specific applications)

The panel will consider:

- The extent to which the application meets the eligibility requirements for projects and organisations.
- Value for money (cost per participant engaged)
- The information provided at presentations and responses made to panel questions.

Applicants will be expected to attend panel meetings to promote their project proposals.

The decision of the panel is final and there is no right of appeal.

Signing of contract

Organisations who are awarded funding will be invited to sign a formal agreement that details the monitoring requirements for the funding, following due diligence checks including financial checks, any conflicts of interest and checks for extremist links – as these are requirements of Waltham Forest Council and the Mayor of London.

07. What will happen if you are successful?

a) Negotiation and signing of contract

Organisations who are awarded funding will be invited to sign a formal agreement that details the monitoring requirements for the funding, following due diligence checks including financial checks, any conflicts of interest and checks for extremist links – as these are requirements of the Skills Funding Agency.

Waltham Forest Adult Education Service will manage the contract.

The contract will be subject to negotiation and it is possible that an organisation will be invited to deliver only a part of their overall proposed programme or more of one element and less of another.

b) Variations to contract

Once it has been agreed, providers will be expected to deliver the project as set out in the contract and to contact ALS with any questions or problems as soon as they arise so these can be dealt with quickly. Any proposed variations to contracts must be made well in advance so these can be negotiated and there is no guarantee that they will be agreed.

c) Performance monitoring

All projects will report to a Project Manager on their progress. Projects, which are deemed not to be performing satisfactorily, will be subject to remedial action. In the event that this action does not improve delivery, projects may not receive their full funding, or, exceptionally, may be required to repay part or all of their funding.

ALS may set monthly targets for each organisation, relating to number of learners and number of learning hours delivered per learner. Performance against these interim targets will be reviewed in the initial 3 months of the contract.

Where an organisation is under performing against monthly targets, ALS will negotiate with the organisation either to adjust the timing of achievement of the targets or to reduce the overall funding.

Evaluation and Monitoring

- a) A simple report will need to be completed on the project and presented to the ALS officer at two stages unless otherwise agreed - halfway through the project, and when the project has completed. This will include simple data collection and project monitoring alongside an evaluation of the effectiveness of the project.
- b) Evaluation is against outputs and outcomes of the project as listed in your application and will be confirmed in a Project Agreement Form. A post-delivery meeting will be held to discuss outcomes of the project.
 - i. the number of workshops/courses held.
 - ii. the number of participants in each workshop/course
 - iii. the age of participants
 - iv. the ethnicity of participants
 - v. the participant/service user location
 - vi. Lessons learnt.
 - vii. what might be done differently in the future.
 - viii. what unexpected outcomes were found i.e. Case studies
 - ix. Evidence and breakdown of expenditure

d) Quality arrangements

Providers will be expected to deliver their courses, programmes and activities in accordance with the quality standards set by ALS. ALS will provide support and assign a Link Manager, who will visit at least twice during the lifetime of the project to monitor and verify the performance of the project to ensure a high-quality learning experience, though this will depend very much on the length of the project delivery.

Quality monitoring by ALS will include sight and discussion of all teaching and management systems. The schedule of visits and observations will be given at the first Quality Session for contracted providers. Systems are expected to be 'fit for purpose', reflecting the scale and nature of the organisation.

Providers will be expected to have the following documents in place, though this will depend on the length and nature of the delivery model:

Course based model

- Initial Assessment for each learner
- Enrolment form
- Individual Learning Plan/Initial Action plan with progression review for each learner
- Information Advice and Guidance recorded on each learner's Individual Learning Plan
- SOW or lesson Plans
- Attendance register
- Evaluation Forms

Taster or workshop model

- Enrolment form
- Session Plans
- Attendance register
- Evaluation Forms

Towards the end of the project the provider will be expected to complete a project self-assessment document and attend a workshop evaluation of the programme to:

- Assess its impact and determine the effectiveness of the approaches implemented.
- Identify areas of good practice
- Highlight lessons learnt and make recommendations for future activity.

e) Funding – payments

Payments will be made upon receipt of a valid invoice, and **all evidence requirements** as specified in the contract. Funding will be proportional to achievement of the targets identified in the contract, including enrolment, learning hours completed and attendance.

The payment will be made in three instalments:

- 33% Upfront payment on receipts of signed contract and quality paperwork/evidence submitted.
- 33% payment of the target numbers have been achieved and the necessary paperwork/evidence submitted.
- 33% Final payment will be made against the successful completion of all project documentation and project self-evaluation report. All original receipts and evidence will need to be retained for auditing purposes.

f) Paperwork

Providers will be expected to complete and submit regular returns and provide paperwork as detailed in the contract.

In order to ensure compliance with the Community Learning funding regulations, successful providers will be required to submit the following supporting documentation evidence for all outputs achieved:

- Completed enrolment form for each learner – blank enrolment forms will be provided by ALS
- Schedule of Activity, with clear dates, time and venues listed – submitted with bid
- Completed registers of attendance – blank registers will be provided by ALS
- Evidence of achievement – e.g. learner feedback and photo evidence

Provider will make available other relevant documents for audit with pre-arranged appointment.

Providers will be expected to retain original invoices and management information returns and all other documentation necessary to verify services for at least 7 years following the close of the programme.

08. Equality and Diversity

ALS exists to provide high quality accessible learning opportunities for individuals that meet diverse needs and promote equality of opportunity. ALS aims to do this in a supportive environment in which each learner is encouraged and inspired to enrich his or her life experience and to achieve success through learning, regardless of their background but knowing that differences are respected.

We expect projects to be open to all who want to be involved, unless you can give a good reason why this should not be the case. If you plan to restrict who can take part you should explain why in your application, so we can consider whether this is acceptable. Providers will be expected to comply in all respects with the Equal Opportunities and Discrimination (Equality Act 2010).

Providers are expected to have an Equal Opportunities Policy in place and will need to provide this at the contracting stage.

10. Health and Safety, Health and Wellbeing and Safeguarding Adults

ALS as an employer, recognises and accepts its responsibilities for providing a safe and healthy place of work and learning for all its employers and users.

Providers will be expected to show that learning will take place in a safe, healthy and supportive environment. It is important that providers demonstrate they have suitable and sufficient arrangements for learner health and safety. All staff working directly with vulnerable learners or children will need to have an enhanced DB.

In addition to health and safety legislation, providers will be expected to comply with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 (Controlled Activity and Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulations 2010.

The term vulnerable adult refers to any person over the age of 18 who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of himself or herself, or unable to protect himself or herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.

The two main aspects to safeguarding and promoting welfare of vulnerable adults are minimising risks and taking all appropriate actions to address concerns and actively promoting the concept of the 'safe learner'.

Providers are expected to have a Health and Safety Policy and a Safeguarding Policy, which include the Prevent Duty, in place and will need to provide these at the contracting stage. They will also have to complete a Health and Safety Risk Assessment for each of their delivery venues, which will be verified by their link manager.

11. Contact Details

In the event of any queries e-mail: sindihearn@walthamforest.gov.uk

Please enter '**Community Learning 2023-2024 Program 1**' in the subject line.

We will endeavour to answer all queries within two working days of receiving them.

Process for securing applications and awarding grants.

Stage 1 – Shortlisting

Officers will assess your proposal against the criteria outlined and shortlist the strongest proposals. The ALS Community and Family learning team may contact for additional information should we require it to decide.

Stage 1 – Development of full stage proposal

- 1) Officers in the ALS Community and Family learning team will assess the proposal against the key objectives and priorities.
- 2) The strongest proposals will be shortlisted for the full stage application process. An officer within the team may contact for additional information should we require it to make a decision.
 - a. Decisions will be shared with applicants on **Friday 16th February 2024**
 - b. For unsuccessful applications, feedback is available on request.
 - c. We also recognise that whilst some projects may not entirely meet the aims of the Community Learning Grants process there may be revision: additional clarity around how the questions may be assessed.

Stage 2 - Review and agree submitted grants based on set criteria

- 1) Panel presentations to subgroup
- 2) Decision making and successful applicant requirements, all proposals will be assessed by the Sub Community Learning Panel made up of officers and external council officers using the following criteria and weighting.
- 3) Organisations will be notified by email of the outcome of the application. We will endeavour to notify all applicants no later than 3 weeks after panel meeting has meet.

Stage 3 – Upon successful panel presentation and pre delivery meeting is held.

- a) successful organisations will be asked to provide supporting documentation (e.g. policies and procedures, organisation’s constitution, recent bank statement) before any grant agreement can be signed or funds released.
- b) Final contract details and expectations agree. i.e. target numbers and grant amount.
- c) Successful organisations will be given all supporting document required to delivery successful.
 - a. Teaching and learning, quality, monitoring and evaluation documentation

Stage 4 – Delivery starts

- a) Support and regular meetings are held will ALS officer.

Stage 5– Evaluation and Monitoring

- a) Delivery must be completed 26st July 2022
- b) A simple report will need to be completed on the project and presented to the ALS officer at two stages unless otherwise agreed - halfway through the project, and when the project has completed. This will include simple data collection and project monitoring alongside an evaluation of the effectiveness of the project.

- c) Evaluation is against outputs and outcomes of the project as listed in your application and will be confirmed in a Project Agreement Form. A post-delivery meeting will be held to discuss outcomes of the project.
- x. the number of workshops/courses held
 - xi. the number of participants in each workshop/course
 - xii. the age of participants
 - xiii. the ethnicity of participants
 - xiv. the participant/service user location
 - xv. Lessons learnt.
 - xvi. what might be done differently in the future.
 - xvii. what unexpected outcomes were found?
 - xviii. Case studies
 - xix. Evidence for and a breakdown of expenditure

Stage 6 – Celebration Events

- a. All participations will be invited to attend and celebrate of success of the grant's programmes alongside key stakeholders.