



## **Waltham Forest Adult Learning Service**

### **Tailored Learning Grants 2025-2026**

#### **Funding Guidance**

##### **Introduction & Background**

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 approach builds on trusted partnerships and relationships, allowing us to meet the needs of disadvantaged individuals and communities. It enables participation in learning and supports progression into further education and sustainable employment. The community and voluntary sectors have strong, trusted relationships with local communities and often provide innovative approaches to learning engagement.

Waltham Forest Adult Learning Service (ALS) provides grants to organisations that can widen access to learning for their communities. We support projects that offer people a 'first step' into learning, helping them build confidence, increase motivation, and access further learning opportunities. Grant funding is aligned with our Tailored learning strategy and is offered in rounds each academic year.

Funded courses and activities must meet Ofsted and GLA standards. Organisations do not need prior experience in education delivery. Successful applicants will be supported by an assigned Curriculum team member. ALS will conduct lesson observations and provide quality assurance training early in the programme

## Key Aims and Priority Areas of Learning

ALS prioritises learning in the following areas:

- Employability
- Digital Inclusion
- Cost of Living
- Health & Wellbeing
- Family Learning
- Sustainability

Projects with a strong focus in these areas will be prioritised.

Delivery should aim to:

- Engage learners and build confidence.
- Prepare learners for further learning or employment!
- Improve foundation skills (English, Maths, Digital)
- Equip parents/carers to support children's learning.
- Promote health and wellbeing.
- Strengthen community bonds.

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## Priority Target Groups

- Individuals and families on low incomes
- Those experiencing domestic violence\*
- People with long-term health or mental health conditions
- Diverse communities (especially Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Afro-Caribbean)
- Men underrepresented in learning.

**Priority Target Areas** Organisations based in the following wards will be prioritised:

- Leyton, Higham Hill, Cathall, Hoe Street, Leabridge, Markhouse, Wood Street, Cann Hall
- as these wards have the highest levels of deprivation and unemployed residents.

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## Priority Areas of Delivery

Waltham Forest Adult Learning's key funding priorities include Employability, Digital Inclusion, Cost of Living, Health & Wellbeing, Family Learning and Sustainability. Applications with a strong focus on these areas will be given priority.

## ***Activities to Improve Quality of Life***

- Targeted promoting health and well-being, building confidence and connecting people at different life stages.

- Promote non-medical means of improving well-being, such as exercise classes, yoga, arts and *crafts, and cultural events*
- Promote healthy eating, and making positive choices around risk behaviors (smoking, alcohol, substance misuse)
- Information, advice and guidance sessions for unemployed residents.

#### **Activities to Improve Outcomes for Families**

- Increase family participation in STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts & Mathematics)
- Enhance parental engagement via the secondary schools.
- Deliver wellbeing, nutrition, and lifestyle sessions in schools.
- Offer school holiday workshops to support family learning.
- Parenting programmes, including:
  - SEND awareness and inclusive practices.
  - Emotional wellbeing and resilience
  - Early years development
  - Digital safety and online behaviour
  - Parenting teens i.e. behaviours
  - Mental health awareness for parents
  - Peer-support networks

#### **Activities to Increase Digital Literacy and Inclusion**

- Targeted digital skills across life stages.
- Promote internet safety.
- Build confidence and reduce cybercrime fears.
- Support progression to Essential Digital Skills (EDSQ)
- Help excluded groups access digital tools.

#### **Activities aimed at Reducing Isolation Amongst Men and Older Adults**

- Reducing loneliness and promoting health and independence
- Promoting active lifestyles and community participation

#### **Activities Promoting the Green Agenda**

- Promoting carbon literacy and the climate emergency
- Workshops on upcycling and recycling

#### **Activities Supporting the Cost-of-Living Crisis**

- Mental Wellbeing & Money - Coping with financial anxiety & wellbeing tips.
- Money Skills - debt awareness, building financial resilience, smart spending and saving tips
- Food & Healthy Living – Budgeting, shopping smart, label reading, cooking and eating healthy

### Improving Learner Progression to Higher-Level Courses or Employment

We aim to better understand and support how community learners in Waltham forest adult learning are progressing toward opportunities that may have once felt out of reach. Our focus is on creating clear, supported pathways that lead to further education, sustainable employment, or self-employment.

- Clear progression routes to further learning and employment
- Develop transferable life and work skills
- Facilitate conversations about career/life goals
- Improve core English and Maths skills
- Provide volunteering opportunities

The goal is to offer innovative, non-accredited community learning programs that empower adults to enhance their lives through employment, volunteering, further education, cultural participation, civic engagement, or sustainability efforts. This can include targeted workshops, information sessions, advice and guidance, courses, or other activities that encourage participation across our diverse communities.

### Timetable for 2025-2026

25/03/2025	Project Funding advertised
09/4/25 -22/04/25	Grants Information Q&A
04/05/25	Application deadline
12/05/25	Outcome notifications
16/05/25	Contracts awarded; due diligence begin
19/05/25	Delivery starts
30/04/26	Delivery ends
May 2026	Final monitoring and impact report due

### Grant Information Sharing Meetings

ALS will host info sessions for interested organisations. These will provide opportunities to discuss proposals, ask questions, and align with the local learning offer.

- Wednesday 9th April 2025 – 1pm - Queen Roads Adult Learning Centre
- Tuesday 15th April 2025 – 3pm – On Zoom
- Tuesday 22nd April 6pm - Queen Roads Adult Learning Centre

## Who Can Apply

Organisations working with Waltham Forest residents aged 19+ who are unemployed or in low-skilled work. Eligible organisations include:

- Voluntary and community unincorporated associations
- Registered charities
- CICs and other social enterprises
- Organisations with governing documents and a board of governors, trustees or management committee.

### All applicants must:

- Provide DBS, risk assessment and public liability documents
- Policies on Equal Opportunities, GDPR, Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Prevent
- Have a named person for quality assurance tasks.

## Funding Information

- Maximum bid: £3,000 per project (*subject to total number of bids received*)
- At least 85% of learners must live, work, or study in Waltham Forest
- Learning activities should target areas of deprivation and poverty within Waltham Forest (see priority areas)
- Approach: Projects should use innovative methods to engage target groups in learning
  - Clear learning Purpose
  - Expected learning outcomes.
  - How you will engage residents through your group
  - How learners will progress into employment, volunteering, work experience, or further learning

### Funding can cover.

Eligible Costs:

- Salaries, volunteer expenses
- Resources and materials i.e. learner resources
- Room hire
- Publicity and marketing cost
- Admin & staff costs (up to 15%)

Not Funded:

- Capital equipment (e.g., computers, tablets)

### Rates Per Learner

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.

Type of Activity	Rate	Example – delivery only
Workshop – one session only	£90 per learner	= 12 learners x £90 = £1,080
Courses More than one session.	£210 per learner	= 12 x £200 = £2,520

### Grant Process and Evaluation Criteria

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

Applications will be evaluated on:

1. Alignment with specification guidelines
2. Value for money in relation to the number of learners engaged.
3. Engagement of a significant number of learners from key Waltham Forest wards
4. A clear and well-justified project plan
5. Defined learner outcomes throughout the project duration.
6. Evidence of non-accredited and/or accredited achievement outcomes (e.g. learner work, RARPA, portfolios, Individual Learning Plan reviews)
7. Proposals that broaden or complement the existing learning offer.
8. A clear progression pathway into further learning, volunteering, or employment

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

Grants will be awarded by a panel of ALS board members, officers, and invited experts. No appeals process is available.

Applicants must present proposals and respond to panel questions

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 present their project proposals

## If Your Application Is Successful

### A) Contract Signing

Successful organisations will be invited to sign a formal agreement outlining the monitoring requirements and funding conditions. Before this, due diligence checks will be conducted, including:

- Sign agreement with monitoring/funding terms
- Undergo due diligence (financial, conflict of interest, extremism checks)

### B) Contract Variations

The contract will be managed by Waltham Forest Adult Education Service (ALS). It will be subject to negotiation, and providers may be asked to:

- Deliver only part of their proposed programme.
- Rebalance elements of their delivery based on need and feasibility!
- All proposed changes to the contract must be submitted in advance.
- Variations are not guaranteed and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### C) Performance Monitoring

Each project will report regularly to an assigned Project Manager.

- Projects not meeting agreed performance levels may be subject to remedial action.
- If performance does not improve, providers may receive reduced funding or, in some cases, be asked to repay part or all of the funding.

ALS may set monthly targets for:

- Number of learners
- Number of learning hours per learner

## Monitoring & Support

ALS will assign a Project Manager and Link Manager. Organisations will receive training and at least two quality assurance visits. All funded projects will be required to complete a simple evaluation report at two key stages—midway through delivery and upon completion. This process allows Waltham Forest ALS to assess progress, effectiveness, and impact.

Performance will be reviewed during the first months of delivery. If a provider is not meeting targets, ALS may:

- Adjust timelines for achieving targets.
- Reduce overall funding if underperformance continues.

## Quality Arrangements

Providers are expected to deliver their courses and activities in line with the quality standards set by ALS. To support this, ALS will assign a Link Manager who will conduct at least two monitoring visits during the project (depending on the project duration).

ALS quality monitoring will include:

- Review and discussion of teaching and management systems
- Verification of learner experience and project performance
- Ongoing support to ensure high-quality delivery.

A full schedule of visits and observations will be shared at the initial Quality Session for contracted providers. All systems in place should be fit for purpose, reflecting the scale and nature of the organisation.

### Monitoring and Evidence Requirements

Projects will be evaluated against stated **purposes** and **outcomes** in the application and confirmed in the signed Project Agreement.

Providers will be required to report on the following:

- Number of workshops/courses delivered.
- Participant numbers per session
- Demographic data: age, ethnicity, and location of participants
- Lessons learned and suggestions for future improvements.
- Unexpected outcomes and/or case studies
- Detailed project expenditure breakdown with supporting evidence

### Documentation and Audit

All relevant documents must be available for audit (pre-arranged). Retain original invoices, management returns, and supporting documents for at least 7 years after the program ends

### Payments

Payments will be made upon receipt of a valid invoice and submission of all required evidence, as outlined in the contract. To ensure compliance with Tailored Learning funding regulations, the following evidence must be submitted for all reported outputs:

Funding will be proportional to the achievement of agreed targets, including:

- **Schedule of Activity:** Dates, times, and venues (as submitted with the bid)
- **Enrolment Forms:** One per learner (ALS provides blank forms)
- **Attendance Registers:** Fully completed (ALS provides blank registers)
- **Impact Report:** Includes learner feedback and photographic evidence

### Payment Structure

- 33%: Upon contract signing and submission of paperwork.
- 33%: Upon reaching learner targets and submitting documentation.
- 33%: Upon successful project completion and evaluation report submission



### Equality and Diversity

ALS is committed to providing high-quality, accessible learning that meets diverse needs and promotes equality of opportunity. We aim to create a supportive environment where all learners—regardless of background—are respected, encouraged, and inspired to succeed.

- Projects should be open to all, unless there is a clear, justifiable reason for restricting participation.
- If you plan to limit access to specific groups, you must explain why in your application for consideration.
- Providers must comply fully with the **Equality Act 2010** and uphold best practices in **equal opportunities and anti-discrimination**.

### Health, Safety, and Wellbeing

ALS recognises its responsibility to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all staff and learners.

- Providers must demonstrate that learning will take place in a safe, healthy, and supportive setting.
- You must have appropriate health and safety arrangements in place for all activities and venues.
- A Health and Safety Risk Assessment must be completed for each delivery location. This will be reviewed by your ALS link manager.

### Safeguarding Adults

Providers must comply with the **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006** and associated regulations.

- A vulnerable adult is defined as anyone aged 18 or over who, due to age, illness, or disability, may be unable to care for or protect themselves from harm or exploitation.
- Safeguarding involves both risk prevention and taking action to address concerns—actively promoting the concept of the “safe learner.”

### Provider Responsibilities:

- Hold a current **Safeguarding Policy** that includes the **Prevent Duty**
- Ensure all staff working with vulnerable adults or children have an **enhanced DBS check**
- Submit both your **Health & Safety** and **Safeguarding** policies at the **contracting stage**.

### Contact

For queries, contact: [sindihearn@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:sindihearn@walthamforest.gov.uk) using the **Subject line:**

**‘Community Learning 2025-26 Program 1’**