# Westminster Adult Education Service

# Community Learning

# 2024-25

# Funding Guidance

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## 1. Introduction and background

The City Council is committed to supplying its citizens (aged 19 years and above) with adult learning programmes and activities within the city of Westminster. Westminster Adult Education (WAES), as a part of the council, is key to delivering this. We are seeking to support projects and ways of working that can provide people with their 'first step' into learning, increased confidence and motivation and an ability to access further learning and career opportunities.

Westminster Adult Education Service (WAES) is dedicated to increasing skills and employment of key groups of residents in the most deprived wards of the Westminster and surrounding boroughs, particularly those residents in receipt of out of work benefits. The main purpose of the Community Learning (CL) fund is to reach disadvantaged communities and individuals, to enable them to participate in learning and to progress towards further learning and/or sustainable employment. Intended wider skills outcomes of community learning are to improve civic and community engagement, promote community cohesion, increase residents' confidence and wellbeing and to enable residents to take advantage of the cultural capital on their doorstep. This fund is crucial in supporting a Fairer Westminster and for all our communities to thrive.

The CL fund comes from Greater London Authority (GLA) and while the bulk of the provision is delivered internally, a small proportion is given by WAES to community projects. It is recognised that the community and voluntary sector can provide some of the most innovative ways of providing learning opportunities to groups that have traditionally found it hard to engage with formal education. GLA have categorized CL as part of tailored learning and there is more emphasis placed on the progression of learners to wider and higher levels of learning including positive outcomes for learners.

The courses and activities funded will be for non-accredited (meaning learners on programme will not need to do qualifications). However, provision must meet Ofsted and GLA requirements. Organisations applying to this fund do not need any specific previous experience of delivering educational activity. All community partners will be fully supported to meet the GLA requirements and Ofsted quality standards.

## 2. Key aims and priority areas of learning.

### a) Priority target groups

We want to attract individuals to learning with WAES who have not engaged in similar services previously and target the most disadvantaged citizens including those that find it hardest to reach formal education and access local services. The priority target group is unemployed residents who live and/or work in the City of Westminster, particularly those with low-level skills and those who are less likely to be engaged into learning directly by a mainstream provider.

These may include:

- Job Seekers' Allowance claimants
- Income Support claimants
- Employment Support Allowance claimants
- Incapacity Benefit claimants
- People claiming Universal Credit
- Other working age people not on benefits and not in work

Focus on groups such lone parents, carers, global majority groups, learners with learning difficulties and disabilities, families, older people, offenders, substance abusers and other traditionally hard-to-reach groups. Ensure that appropriate and accessible education is available to Westminster residents with physical and sensory impairments and those who have problems relating to mental health, learning difficulties and other complex needs including the elderly and those who are at risk of isolation.

Priority will be given to organisations working with residents from at least one of the following wards of Westminster: Church Street, Queens Park, Harrow Road, Churchill Gardens, Tachbrook, Westbourne as these wards have the highest levels of unemployed residents.

**b) Learning areas and outcomes**

Westminster Adult Education Service's key aims for this round of funding are below. Applications with an added focus on **Employability, Digital Inclusion, Maths/Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing** and **Sustainability,** will be considered favourably and prioritised.

The purpose of delivery should cover the following areas:

- Engaging and/or building confidence
- Preparation for further learning
- Preparation for employment
- Improving foundation skills including English, Maths and Digital
- Equipping parents/carers to support children's learning
- Health and well-being
- Developing stronger communities

Proposals for learning activities could cover, but are not limited to, the following;

- First step engagement in learning
- Green skills and environmental sustainability
- Employability and transferable skills
- Vocational introduction to career sectors
- Preparation for Access to Higher Education
- Managing mental health and wellbeing
- English, Maths and Numeracy skills
- Digital Skills for life and work
- Short bridging programmes that help learners progress to higher programmes
- Life Skills, e.g household budgeting, first aid, accessing local services, gardening, cooking, managing life transitions
- Family Learning – Supporting your child in school, parenting Skills
- Volunteering and active citizenship
- Creative and performing arts to build confidence
- Supported Learning and Independent Living
- Activities to tackle social isolation

The aim is to deliver innovative non-accredited community learning programmes, which will engage and encourage adults to move towards improving their lives, whether that is in gaining sustained employment, volunteering, work experience, further learning to support themselves and their families, cultural participation, civic engagement or contributing to a greener planet.

***Improve Quality of Life:***
We want to improve the quality of life of people who visit, live and work in Westminster, thus promoting health and well-being across a range of activities:

- Ensure that the services offer guidance on health and well-being (for people at different life stages and particularly in respect of matters affecting families and children);
- Promoting non-medical means of improving well-being, such as crafts and cultural events
- Promoting healthy eating and making positive choices around risk behaviours (eg. smoking, alcohol, substance misuse)
- Promoting greener and sustainable living amongst communities
- Information, advice and guidance sessions for unemployed residents

***Improve Digital Inclusion:***
We want to make digital more accessible to engage Westminster residents:

- Promoting digital inclusion for people at different life stages i.e**.,** access to online skills, online services and skills for work.
- Information, advice and guidance sessions focused on keeping safe whilst online or understanding why using the internet is relevant and helpful.
- Increasing confidence in using the internet and thus reducing the fear of crime, 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.

***Improved learner progression to higher-level courses or employment****:*
We want to understand how our community learners are taking the opportunities that often seem impossible for them in Westminster:

- Project activities with clear pathways onto WAES and other courses. offer coherent routes towards sustained employment and/or enterprise
- Activities that foster transferrable life and work skills.
- Speaking to learners about their career and life aspirations.
- Activities that improve English and Maths skills.
- offer volunteering opportunities and help to build the confidence and skills of Westminster residents;

***Improved civic engagement****:*

We want our learners to be active citizens.

- through greater social interaction between learners from all backgrounds, cultures and income groups in the city of Westminster; promote social renewal by bringing local communities together to experience the joy of learning and pride that comes with achievement.
- We want to promote sustainability by raising environmental awareness to support lifestyle changes, wellbeing and employment into green jobs, and to contribute towards the wider green context.

**c) Supporting Progression**

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

Learners on programmes funded by CL will be enrolled as WAES learners and have a WAES student number. As such, they can access priority progression to other WAES programmes where this is an appropriate progression route for the individual. The partnership between WAES and your organization must be made explicit to all learners on programme.

To document and measure impact, organisations will be expected to track wider skills and employment outcomes for learners after they have completed their courses and provide this information to WAES.

**3. Project delivery requirements/partnering with WAES**

Each organisation will need to have a named person who will take responsibility for project management, which includes quality assurance, and quality improvement for their provision. WAES will carry out informal and formal lesson observations during delivery of the project. WAES will provide support, including training (teaching and learning, safeguarding, measuring outcomes, E&DI) and how to complete essential quality assurance tasks and evidence. WAES will also carry out visits to ensure key policies and documents are in place by each Community partner. Key training and updates will be provided through the Partner Forums. You will be required to attend three Partner Forums over the year – two online and one in person. WAES will arrange two update meetings for your specific Project during the year, which will fall in line with critical funding timetables. Guidelines on joint promotion will be given before the start of the project delivery.

## 4. Timescales for 2024/25

| | |
|---|---|
| Tue July 30th 2024, 5pm | Invitation to Tender Opens 24/25 |
| Wed Aug 21st, 1-2pm | 24/25 Tender Information Q&A Thu |
| Thu Sep 5th 12pm | 24/25 Tender Application deadline |
| Fri Sep 13th | 24/25 Partners notified of outcome |
| Fri 27th Sep – 25th Oct | Award of Contracts and due diligence |
| Fri 27th Sep – 25th Oct | Send course delivery plan/course code requests |
| Oct – Nov 2024 | Site visits |
| Wed Nov 6th, 1-2.30pm | 1st Partner Forum (online) |
| January – February 2025 | Individual partner update meetings |
| Wed Feb 12th 2025, 1pm-2.30pm | 2nd Partner Forum (online) |
| 17th Feb – 28th Feb 2025 | Individual partner update meetings |
| 17th Feb – 28th Feb 2025 | Individual partner update meetings |
| 3rd July 2025, 1-3.30pm | 3rd Partner Forum and showcase (in person) |
| 10th July 2025, 5pm | Final Project Monitoring and Impact Report due |

WAES will convene an **online information session on 21st August 2024 for those interested in applying for this funding**, which will give an opportunity for prospective partners to discuss proposals with WAES managers and how they fit with the local offer. This session will also give organisations a chance to ask any questions they have about CL funding in general. To join please register your interest to communitylearning@waes.ac.uk

This information session 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.

## 5. Who can apply?

### a) To apply for Community Learning funding you must be

- Any organisation proposing learning activities in the borough of Westminster or a combination of Westminster and surrounding boroughs in the correct proportion, 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
- Able to show current information such as DBS, risk assessments and Public Liability documents prior to the start of the delivery (as stated below)
- Able to give a named person responsible for project management including completing the necessary quality assurance tasks

### 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 enterprise and principally reinvest your surpluses for social benefit (for example, with at least three unrelated Directors and a clear clause within your governing document about how you reinvest surpluses into the community)
- Any other organisation which has a written governing document and is managed by a board of governors, trustees or management committee.

## 6. Funding

### a) Evidence required for funding

**In order to receive funding, you must be able to produce evidence of the following at the contract negotiation stage:**

- Governance arrangements that show that you are managed by a board or a committee, and Annual General Meeting minutes and a list of board or committee members names
- Your audited accounts for the past two years
- Your Registered Charity Number or Registered Company Number (Companies House)
- Your UKPRN (UK Provider Reference Number) – if you don't already have one, you'll need to apply for one – see details here: www.ukrlp.co.uk
- Your policies on Equal Opportunities, 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.
- DBS of teaching staff

**b) What can be funded?**

- WAES would expect 80% of the learners engaged to be Westminster residents
- Learning projects focusing on areas of deprivation and poverty within the borough of Westminster
- 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.
- The successful providers will develop and deliver a flexible programme of engagement, learning activity and progression, which can be tailored to individual needs. They must be able to demonstrate that the approach used is appropriate and effective provision to meet the needs of the target groups and that there is an appropriate mix of engagement and longer/more substantial activity.

**c) Value for money**:

We ask for value for money with the greatest possible impact for learners. Number of learners enrolled on a meaningful program will be considered from application proposals. Value for money can also be demonstrated through in-kind expertise, other received funding and through the collection of fees from those persons who are able to pay and extension of subsidised or free places for those on low incomes/those who have not previously engaged in activities the same or similar to the Services.

**d) Just a few examples of projects we have funded in 2023 - 2024 academic year**

| |
|---|
| Discover your Westminster - guided walks focusing on history, wildlife and culture, helping people to discover their London. |
| Smartphone Workshop – to enable older and long-term unemployed people better understand the functionality of their smart phones, tablets and other devices so that they have better communication with relatives and friends as well as improve their daily lives. |
| Learning Unlimited specialises in adult and family learning to deliver ESOL and integration, literacy, numeracy and family wellbeing. |
| Home-Start supports families living in Westminster who have at least 1 child under 5 or a baby on the way. Through a network of volunteers, they support parents and children who are experiencing a variety of difficulties including: social isolation, illness, disability, post-natal depression and bereavement. |
| Dance with Digital - Dance and movement course integrated with digital technology focusing on health and wellbeing to encourage positive changes for inactive and vulnerable people. |
| IGLS – Money Management workshops and mentoring for Westminster residents to tackle the cost of living crisis. |

**e) What funding is available?**

This year the maximum amount available for projects is £120,000. A single bid can be for a maximum of £25,000. However, the amount offered to partners may vary depending on the number of successful bids accepted.

**Funding can cover**

- Tutors' 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

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

**f) 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 ten hours or more are deemed as courses, whereas those nine hours or less are workshops or tasters.

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

| Type of Activity | Rate | Example |
|---|---|---|
| Workshops<br>(less than nine hours) | £130 per learner | 20 learners on a course which is less than nine hours<br>= 20 x £130 = £2,600 |
| Courses<br>(Ten hours or more) | £200 per learner | 20 learners on a course which is ten hours or more<br>= 20 x £200 = £4,000 |

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 administrative expenditure and resources, e.g materials, expenses up to 13% only. If you go above this figure the costing spreadsheet will appear red and will need to be adjusted. An expectation of £250 per learner is the maximum we would fund.

**7. Selection Process**

The procurement and contracting 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 Westminster 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 (e.g. evidenced through learner work, RARPAP, 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.

**8. 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.

Westminster Adult Education Service (Westminster City Council) 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 WAES 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.

WAES 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 4 months of the contract.

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

Where an organisation has a larger contract, the profile will be weighted in the initial 4 months to demonstrate performance capability. This will mean that your income will be in jeopardy if your project fails to achieve its targets.

**d) Quality arrangements**
Providers will be expected to deliver their courses, programmes and activities in accordance with the quality standards set by WAES. WAES will provide support and assign a Link Manager, who will visit/meet 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 WAES 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 (completed fully with course code)
- Attendance register
- Learner Surveys/Evaluation Forms
- Individual Learning Plan/Initial Action plan with progression review for each learner
- Information Advice and Guidance recorded on each learner's Individual Learning Plan
- Scheme of Work or lesson Plans

Taster or workshop sessions

- Enrolment form
- Lesson Plans
- Attendance register
- Learner Surveys/Evaluation Forms

Towards the end of the project the provider will be expected to complete a Final Project Monitoring and Impact Report. You will need to self-evaluate the Project by:

- Assessing its impact and determine the effectiveness of the approaches implemented
- Identifying areas of good practice,
- including at least three case studies,
- Highlighting lessons learnt and making recommendations for future activity

Providers will be expected to attend three Partner Forums to share practice and keep updated with training during the year.

**e) Funding – Payment schedule**

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 two instalments: half the payment will be made once 50% of the target numbers have been achieved and the necessary paperwork/evidence submitted.
Final payment will be made against the successful completion of all project documentation and the final project self-evaluation report. All original receipts and evidence will need to be retained for auditing purposes.

**f) Paperwork required**

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 with course codes – blank enrolment forms will be provided by WAES
- Schedule of activity, with clear dates, time and venues listed – submitted with bid
- Completed registers of attendance – blank registers will be provided by WAES
- Evidence of achievement – e.g. learner work/portfolio/photos
- Learner Surveys/Evaluation

The 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.

**9. Equality and Diversity**

WAES exists to provide high quality accessible learning opportunities for individuals that meet diverse needs and promote equality of opportunity. WAES 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**

WAES 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, and this includes arrangements in response to Covid-19. All staff working directly with vulnerable learners or children will need to have an enhanced DBS.

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 and Submission**

If you would like to apply for this funding, please submit your applications by Sept 5th noon to communitylearning@waes.ac.uk

To join the online tender information session on 21st Aug or if you have any further queries please e-mail: communitylearning@waes.ac.uk

Please enter **'Community Learning 2024-25 Tender'** in the email subject line when you contact us. We will endeavour to answer all queries within two working days of receiving them.