



Embedding Workplace Basic Skills Training in London Local Authorities 2002 - 2005

Application Prospectus

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SECTION 1

BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

The Basic Skills Agency is working on behalf of the London Development Agency on a workplace basic skills project to be based in three London Local Authorities. Local Authorities will be funded and supported over the next two and a half years to

- ❖ develop comprehensive, inclusive and sustainable workplace basic skills policies, and embed them in their HR strategies
- ❖ build capacity within their own organisation to meet employee basic skills needs
- ❖ work in partnership with local basic skills providers to deliver learning programmes
- ❖ contribute to a good practice guide.

The project aims both to draw on the full range of experience nationally and to build on existing local activity and planning. The overall aim is to develop effective workplace basic skills policies and practice in the local authority context which can provide proven models for other authorities to follow. A central strand is the strengthening of the training infrastructure for workplace basic skills work.

Key local players have been involved in developing the proposal including

- ❖ the London Learning and Skills Councils
- ❖ Local Authorities, and their representative organisations
- ❖ TUC Learning Services, UNISON and other relevant unions

Three London Local Authorities will receive:

- ❖ a grant of £94,000 over the lifetime of the project to develop and implement a workplace basic skills strategy
- ❖ a grant to employ an experienced workplace basic skills practitioner for more than 1 day per week for the duration of the project
- ❖ sustained support to embed workplace basic skills training from the Basic Skills Agency (BSA) and partner local basic skills providers.

What commitment will Local Authorities need to make?

Over the lifetime of the project, the successful Local Authorities will:

1.1	secure senior management support for the project, including the commitment of management time, staffing, administrative support and resources
1.2	select and support an internal champion to lead the development work
1.3	set up an internal steering group with representation from all key players
1.4	recruit a consultant basic skills practitioner to work with the steering group to develop a strategy and action plan to meet basic skills needs within the organisation
1.5	consult externally on the Local Authority's plan with the local Learning and Skills Council, actual and potential partner providers and other key players such as learndirect.
1.6	ensure plans take into account the need to engage staff at all levels; to enable staff release for learning activities; to address potential sensitivities about weak literacy, numeracy and ESOL skills
1.7	agree roles in setting up and delivering workplace basic skills programmes for relevant employees which could include HR staff, supervisors, learning representatives and peer support
1.8	create a team of appropriately trained workplace basic skills staff by recruiting at least 16 staff to undertake a minimum of 30 hours of logged training over the lifetime of the project. This training will be designed and delivered by external providers in response to identified needs ¹ but this might typically include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Local Authority Champion to receive a logged package of customised development training

¹ National training for different roles in workplace basic skills has been mapped recently. For more information on needs analysis, training development and delivery contact the Basic Skills Agency Local Authorities project manager – see details at the end of this prospectus.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 key HR staff to be trained using Employment National Training Organisation L Units to identify and support employees with basic skills needs • 10 local authority staff including learning reps, supervisors and peer advocates to undertake Unit 1 of the new Level 2 Basic Skills Volunteer/Front Line Worker Qualification or other course as appropriate <p>NB Local Authorities are not responsible for the cost of design and delivery of the training described in section 1.8</p>
1.9	revise workforce documentation to meet the guidelines of the Plain English Campaign
1.10	<p>work with the project team to support capacity building for local providers at different levels. This will include a minimum of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Basic Skills Consultant Practitioner to undertake customised training² in Basic Skills Organisational Consultancy at Post Graduate level • 4 representatives of selected providers working with each Authority to undertake Enhanced Broker Provider training • 15 experienced practitioners from selected providers working with each Authority to undertake a customised course on contextualised curriculum development. <p>Representatives from other London providers will be invited to attend provider or practitioner training in the event that fewer suitable staff can be released from Local Authority Providers.</p>
1.11	<p>Select one or more partner provider, and work with them to develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a flexible basic skills employee training programme including use of new technology where it is available • an in-house resource bank, which could include customised learning materials, schemes of work and lesson plans including use of new technology where it is available. <p>progression tracking for all basic skills learners</p>
1.12	<p>work with the partner provider to recruit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 organisation employees to receive 30 hours minimum basic skills training, • 50 organisation employees gaining nationally recognised basic skills qualifications (achievement of 1 level of the National Basic Skills Standards) <p>These outcomes will generate LSC match funding claimed by the partner provider.</p>
1.13	Participate in the overall project steering group, and contribute to a good practice guide

² At the time of writing a practitioner training needs analysis is being undertaken to inform development work in all sections under 1.8

Preparing your application

Applications will be assessed on the basis of Local Authorities' demonstrated commitment and preparedness to deliver the outcomes of the project. It is important that applicants discuss their proposals with internal and external key players while preparing their application. This should include:

Internally

- the Chief Executive, or another Executive Officer
- the Head of HR
- relevant Heads of other Departments
- relevant union/s

Externally

- the Basic Skills contact at the local Learning and Skills Council
- possible and actual partner providers, including learndirect

Support with your application

Support and advice is available from the BSA in preparing your application. Please contact the project team for clarification of any of the project documentation; contacts for key organisations; information on the national strategy; and other reading and information sources. The project team can also support you in making the case internally.

Contact details for the project team are given at the end of this prospectus.

Local Authority Outcomes

Local Authorities need to plan to deliver the following specific outcomes by the end of the project:

	For each participating Local Authority
2.1	A workplace basic skills policy for the whole organisation
2.2	A sustainable* strategy for workplace basic skills delivery embedded in the organisational HR strategy
2.3	A team of appropriately trained organisation staff, of whom at least 16 have been enabled to undertake a minimum of 30 hours of logged training each in aspects of support for basic skills learning over the life-time of the project**

2.4	A flexible basic skills employee training programme, including progression tracking for all learners
2.5	An in-house basic skills resource bank, which could include customised learning material, schemes of work and lesson plans
2.6	Working with the project team, to recruit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 organisation employees to receive 30 hours minimum basic skills training** • 50 organisation employees to gain nationally recognised basic skills qualifications*** (achievement raised by one level of the National Basic Skills Standards)
2.7	An established partnership with a good quality, specialist basic skills provider or providers****
2.8	Working with the project team, to support capacity building for partner providers to include a minimum of 20 basic skills specialists receiving a minimum of 30 hours additional training**
2.9	Workforce documentation revised to meet the guidelines of the Plain English Campaign

*Taking into account funding available for basic skills delivery from Learning and Skills Councils, currently available through local providers

** Any individual training package must be completed within one year

*** Literacy, Numeracy or ESOL at Entry Level 3, Level 1 or Level 2; Key Skills Communication or Application of Number Levels 1 or 2; GCSE English or Maths.

**** Good quality is defined as full compliance with the requirements of the ALI/OFSTED Common Inspection Framework for basic skills programmes, as demonstrated by inspection grades or the holding of a current Basic Skills Quality Mark Award.

Timescales for applications

Timescales for applications are set out below:

Activity	Date
All applications to be received by the Basic Skills Agency	14 Feb 2003
Assessment of applications	20 Feb 2003
Discussions with successful applicants	27 Feb 2003
Project start dates	3 March 2003

The calendar for the Fund follows financial years and all funds allocated for 2003-05 must be spent by 31 March 2005.

Completing the application form

1. The Application Form at Annex 1 should be used.
2. Font size must not be less than point 10.
3. The total length of your answer **to each question including any sub sections** must not exceed one page of A4 text.

One hard copy of the Application Form must be received by the London Local Authorities Project Team at the Basic Skills Agency by 14 February 03. An email version must also be sent by 14 February to londonlocalauthorities@basic-skills.co.uk

Project value

Applications will only be considered for the full project value of £94,000 over 25 months. In addition to the £94,000 grant the three successful applicants will receive a further grant of £41,250 to employ a part time Basic Skills Consultant Practitioner and £9,000 to be paid to a selected basic skills provider towards project development costs. (If more than one provider is subcontracted the £9,000 can be shared between providers as appropriate).

Contracting

Basic Skills Agency contract documentation will be used for the projects. Contract annexes will include the agreed application form, a delivery/payments schedule, details of funding arrangements and contract monitoring/review arrangements. Projects will be contracted, managed and locally monitored by the Basic Skills Agency.

Funded activity cannot be started before approval. There is no retrospective funding and no expenditure prior to approval.

Sub contracting arrangements

The successful Local Authorities will be expected to select one or more basic skills provider and to work closely with the provider in planning, promoting delivering and evaluating the project. Advice is available from the Basic Skills Agency on a process for selecting providers if needed.

Basic Skills providers should be able to access LSC funding to cover direct teaching of employees on basic skills learning programmes. However providers

may wish to negotiate payment from Local Authorities towards learning needs analysis, customised development work, small group or 1:1 teaching and evaluation activities to supplement the £9,000 grant, see example of Expenditure Budget at the end of the application form.

The Local Authority will be responsible for the delivery of all LDA outcomes specified in the application and will need to account for LSC match funding of basic skills learning outcomes.

Match funding

Each Local Authority bid will need to be match-funded for a total of £46,000. Of this, an estimated £36,500 over the lifetime of the project will be generated by LSC-funded delivery of basic skills programmes by local providers. In addition Local Authorities should identify a further match of at least £10,000. This could come from staff time provided in kind or provider development time: see example of Expenditure Budget at the end of the Application Form.

These sums should be entered as match funding in Section 11.

SECTION 3	THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS
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1. An assessment panel comprised of officers of the London Development Agency, the Basic Skills Agency, the Association of Local Government and the TUC Learning Services will assess applications. Applications will also be discussed with the relevant Learning Skills Councils.
2. Discussions will be held with successful applicants to finalise details of the project and to review any points of concern raised by the assessment panel.
3. The Local Authority Project Manager and the local LSC Basic Skills contact will be informed of the outcome of the application and a contract will be prepared.

Assessment Criteria

All proposals that demonstrate:

- commitment to delivering the project's outcomes
- preparedness to start work as soon as funding is agreed
- a realistic delivery plan
- a robust and competent approach to project management

will be considered for funding.

Other factors that will be taken into account are:

- ❖ Geographical spread, with not more than one funded Local Authority for any one LSC area
- ❖ The need to have a range of approaches and levels of experience in the funded authorities.

The scoring system will be used:

- ❖ To ensure all applications considered reach a good standard
- ❖ To enable equitable choices to be made between authorities

Some questions are for the panel's information only. These are indicated clearly on the form. While these questions will not be scored competitively, it is essential that the information is provided. Please make sure you complete these sections as fully as possible.

Some questions have scores attached to them. The table below shows how the scoring system works. In this example the maximum score for the question is 10 marks:

Has not completed the section or has missed the meaning of the section	0 marks
Some attempt has been made, but is sketchy and fails to answer the questions in most respects	3 marks
Broadly meets the requirements but there are some gaps	7 marks
Fully meets the requirements with information and/or evidence where needed, etc	10 marks
Total marks available:	10 marks

SECTION 4**CONTACT DETAILS****Contact details for further information**

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