

LSIS FLEXIBILITY AND INNOVATION FUND

Invitation

1. LSIS is pleased to invite bids from Further Education and Skills provider organisations, and provider representative bodies, for funding from its new 'Flexibility and Innovation' fund. Two million pounds is available for projects in the 2009-10 financial year. Bids, up to a maximum of £90,000, may be submitted from individual organisations or in collaboration with others, but they must be for activities that would benefit the sector or a major subsection thereof rather than an individual organisation. Providers should only submit one bid.
2. Bids should be submitted by:
 - Friday 23 October 2009 to be considered at the end of October
 - Friday 19 February 2010 for consideration at the end of February, and
 - Friday 18 June 2010 for consideration at the end of June.

At this point, bids are invited for the Autumn round.

3. Successful projects will receive funding in the form of a grant. Half will be payable once the project funding has been approved. The second half will be paid on receipt of a satisfactory interim project report.

Criteria for funding LSIS Flexibility and Innovation projects

4. The following criteria will be applied in selecting bids for funding:
 - Is innovative in terms of current sector practice.
 - Is aligned to priorities set out in the new National Improvement Strategy for the learning and skills sector.
 - Has potential to secure significant improvements in sector practice or performance, ie, the anticipated learning from the project is transferable to other organisations across the sector.
 - Promotes equality of opportunity.
 - Clearly indicates any preparatory research establishing the need for the project.
 - Sets out the main project activities, with clear dates and milestones.

- Indicates how any collaborative or partnership activities will be managed successfully.
- Provides clear measures for evidencing project success, including benefits for learners, employers or communities.
- Clearly describes arrangements for reporting on and sharing project outcomes, including the lessons learned.
- Does not include significant capital expenditure.
- Does not exceed a total cost of £90,000.
- Represents good value for money.
- Has a dissemination strategy and outputs that will be shared with the sector via the Excellence Gateway.

Review and reporting arrangements

5. A brief interim report will be required at the halfway stage of the project and a final report by the agreed end date. Details of the reporting required will be supplied to successful applicants. Interim and final reports from the projects may be used by LSIS to build expertise within the sector and promote the sharing of good practice.

Applications

6. In order to maximise the benefits of this fund across the sector, bids are limited to one per organisation or provider representative body.
7. To apply for Flexibility and Innovation funding, Autumn round, please complete, clearly and concisely, all the boxes on the accompanying form, to include a breakdown of the total cost of the project, with the contribution requested from LSIS, and the anticipated project start and end dates. Applications must not duplicate activities which are being funded from elsewhere, though may follow on from previous projects. Please state if the project has previously received funding from LSIS or elsewhere, or has previously been submitted to LSIS for programme funding.
8. This should be returned to Alex Fraser, alex.fraser@lsis.org.uk, titled 'LSIS Flexibility and Innovation fund'. If you have any questions, please contact the LSIS helpline on 0870 211 3434.
9. All organisations submitting bids to the Flexibility and Innovation fund will be advised by Friday 20 November whether their application has been successful, and given details of arrangements for the payment of the grant for this work.
10. Successful bidders will be invited to a project initiation workshop at Friars House in Coventry on **Friday 4 December 2009**, and will be offered further support during the course of their project.