

# COMMUNITY-BASED ADULT LEARNING RECOVERY FUND

## GUIDANCE NOTE

This document provides guidance for Third Sector Interfaces (TSIs) working alongside local Community Learning and Development (CLD) partners on the Scottish Government's £1.7m investment into the Community-Based Adult Learning Fund.

The purpose of this guidance is to help TSIs understand the funding allocated to them as part of the Scottish Government's commitments to Covid-19 Recovery and expectations for reporting.

### **1. Why the funding has been provided**

TSIs across Scotland have been provided with this funding to help improve engagement of adult learners in community-based learning opportunities. TSIs will be able to work with local and national partners to coordinate and deliver learning which is based on their assessment of local needs, determined by the recently published CLD Plan for their Local Authority. This work will be targeted at adults with low or no qualifications and those experiencing significant barriers to learning, life and work.

The priority for this £1.7 million investment is to help address the negative impacts associated with extended periods of isolation, lack of participation in normal activities, and learning loss experienced during the pandemic.

It is to provide opportunities for adults to connect and reconnect with learning and with others within their local communities.

It is not anticipated that this will be a recurring fund.

### **2. Who the funding is intended to reach**

This provision is aimed at adults most likely to be experiencing continued disadvantage and who will therefore have been particularly adversely affected by the pandemic. This includes adults of post-compulsory school age and those who experience significant barriers in learning, life and work.

Whilst there's no requirement for this funding to focus on family learning, where it is a part of the planned activity, this should be focused on the priority families identified in the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan: lone parent families, minority ethnic families, families with a disabled adult or child, families with a younger mother (under 25), families with a child under 1, and larger families (3+ children).

Partners should also consider how activities and services are delivered in remote/rural areas, where the range of existing provision could be more limited and geographic barriers to access services may be considerable.

The particular needs of adult learners, their views and priorities, should be considered when planning provision to ensure that they are able to fully participate.

### 3. Guiding Principles

- Involvement of adult learners  
It is important that, as far as possible, any local offers are shaped around what adult learners say/have said that they want and need, and what would help them to recover from the impact of Covid-19 and re-engage in learning and in their local communities.
- Building on existing services, assets and knowledge of what works  
Much activity will already be in place at a local level, many local authorities and local third sector and community partners deliver community-based adult learning currently, and this is reflected in the local authority CLD Plan for the area. The aim of this investment is to enhance any such existing work, building on and learning from existing good practice. It is anticipated that this funding will support additional and enhanced community-based adult learning opportunities improved coordination of existing provision and provide positive pathways for adult learners.
- Partnership working and coordination  
It is expected that existing and new local partnerships will play a key role in ensuring the coordination and reach of provision. In particular the Community Learning and Development Partnership should take the lead role in planning to ensure a joined up whole system approach to its development and delivery.

### 4. Using the funding

TSIs with local partners have the flexibility to use this funding to meet local needs, building on what is already in place and responding creatively to what adult learners' needs. Travel costs, particularly for those on low incomes and in rural areas, could also be covered as a key measure to remove barriers to participation.

The funding could be used for hiring spaces where adult learning can take place, capital costs, such as the purchase of equipment, as well as costs for staff and volunteer training. **It is expected that most spend will be on the delivery of learning activities and provision.**

The outcomes intended to be achieved from the funding are:

- Adult learners shape and inform decisions on the diverse opportunities and support they need to help them recover from the impact of COVID-19 and re-engage in learning.
- Increased engagement, re-engagement and support for adult learners and communities who need it most, including those disproportionately disadvantaged by COVID-19.
- Increased access to face to face learning opportunities with a focus on supporting educational, social and emotional recovery and renewal.
- Increased digital inclusion through the development of digital skills and the improvement of digital infrastructure for learning.
- Improved support for adult learners' mental health and well-being.
- Increased opportunities for adult learners to improve their health and well-being.

- Stronger social connections between adult learners, their communities and wider networks to tackle isolation and loneliness.
- Improved partnership working across providers which supports the delivery of education recovery and renewal.
- Improved outcomes for adult learners through, for example, the achievement of qualifications and the provision of positive pathways that build confidence and develop skills for learning, life and work.

All investments should meet one or more of the above outcomes.

## 5. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

The £1.7 million funding is being paid to TSIs through an offer of grant letter which will be accompanied by a reporting template. Information received from the reporting template will provide Scottish Government with information on delivery and reach of the funding, as well as help inform future policy and practice. The reporting template should be completed and returned to [SGCLD@gov.scot](mailto:SGCLD@gov.scot) by **30<sup>th</sup> April 2022**.

Integrating opportunities to learn and adapt throughout project delivery is encouraged and will help inform reporting and next steps. Crucially, we are looking to understand who this funding reached and the impact it has on adult learners.

## 6. National organisations

Alongside the £1.7 million being made available to TSIs for targeted provision of activities, a national offer is also being developed. This £0.3m million investment will help support community-based adult learning activities.

It will be important that TSIs engage with other local partners to ensure coordination, and align provision with joined-up communications.

## 7. Investment Plan

TSIs will be expected to submit an investment plan (3 pages maximum) outlining how their allocated funding will be spent to [SGCLD@gov.scot](mailto:SGCLD@gov.scot) by **Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2021**. The investment plan must include:

- a) What the priorities are in your local authority's recently published CLD Plan that you will invest this fund on;
- b) What your allocated investment fund will be spent on;
- c) Which of the outcomes for this fund will be met by this fund investment;
- d) How you intend to measure success against the outcomes;
- e) Agreement from your local authority CLD/Adult Learning Lead for the investment as described in the Investment Plan.
- f) An indication as to whether the investment will target any of the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan of lone parent families, minority ethnic families, families with a disabled adult or child, families with a younger mother (under 25), families with a child under 1, and larger families (3+ children).
- g) Confirmation that you will gather and report back on equalities data of the beneficiaries of the investment.

Once submitted, the Investment Plan will be reviewed and approved by the Scottish Government within two working days. TSIs and local partners should not issue external communications regarding their proposed plans until after their Investment Plan has received Scottish Government approval.