

## Frequently Asked Questions

Funding

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Funding:

**When does the funding run until?**

Funding runs up to 31 December 2023. All funding must have been incurred by this date and cannot be claimed after this date has passed.

**If we are successful in securing funding, when can we make a claim?**

All projects will need to be able to initially cashflow their project. Only incurred costs can be claimed with claims made quarterly in arrears.

**Can the funding be used for training participants?**

The funding cannot be used to fund a training course/qualification for an individual. However, the costs of arranging the training can be funded.

**Is match funding required?**

No match funding is required, European Social Fund (ESF) monies have been matched with West of England Combined Authority Investment Fund monies.

**What State Aid implications are there for projects?**

State Aid most often applies where money is being used to directly stimulate growth in an organisation. We anticipate that state aid will not affect most of the projects funded through Workforce for the Future however it could apply to some projects.

There are exemptions for state aid (e.g. de minimis) and these are applied on a case-by-case basis. We are unable to assess the potential for state aid without seeing your detailed plans for your project, so you must seek independent State Aid advice in advance of your Full Application submission. We recommend that you obtain a formal legal opinion in order to ensure your project is State Aid compliant.

**Which flat rate for indirect costs should we use?**

This is the choice of the bidding organisation(s). There are two options:

- Option 1: using a calculation of 15% of staff costs to calculate indirect costs; and then adding all other direct costs.
- Option 2: uses a calculation of 40% of staff costs only to calculate direct and indirect costs (not adding in any other direct costs).

You must clearly state within your financial breakdown which option you intend to use. This must be adopted throughout the entirety of your project and cannot be changed.

### **Consortia:**

#### **Do all consortia organisations need to be based in the West of England region?**

No not all consortia need to be based in the West of England region, nor do all participants (learners/those seeking placements in SMEs). SMEs however should have an operational (doesn't have to be registered office) base in the West of England region.

### **Application Submission:**

#### **Why has the submission date been extended past 6 April for Call 1?**

In light of Coronavirus and it's impact on SMEs and their priorities as well as many organisations seeking to submit funding bids the decision was taken to extend the submission deadline to:

Expressions of Interest - Friday 17 April 2020

Full Application - Tuesday 2 June 2020

#### **Why have organisations been urged to submit an Expression of Interest, Eol, in advance of a Full Application?**

It was always the intention that organisations submit an Eol initially where they were seeking partners or where the project still required some defining. However, in light of the submission deadline revisions it was felt that submissions of Eols for all projects would help to better inform the 'matchmaking' process (the joining up of similar projects) and would give a better insight into where full applications may be submitted.

### **Project Delivery:**

#### **Do all projects need to run for the three years of the programme?**

It is anticipated that only the Backbone Service will run continuously for the three years of the programme. As the funding is time limited and there are expected to be three Calls we anticipate that the project's being delivered will run for shorter periods than three years, this will allow lessons to be learned and improvements made to the way projects are delivered and engage with SMEs and participants (learners/those seeking placements in SMEs).

**What geography does the programme cover?**

The programme needs to be delivered within the geography covered by the West of England Combined Authority's constituent Council's of Bath and North East Somerset Council, Bristol City Council, South Gloucestershire Council and North Somerset Council.

**Can an application be submitted which outlines a multiple staged project?**

Yes, applications will be considered where a project is to be delivered in various stages. It is suggested that the application should outline the complete project from start to finish with each stage clearly outlined. This will allow the application to be considered in full whilst establishing whether funding a stage(s) would be the most appropriate way to proceed as a 'proof of concept' with further funding released after the initial stage(s) have demonstrated results.

**SME organisations:****Do all SMEs need to be based in the West of England Region?**

Yes, all SMEs involved in the programme should have an operational base in the West of England region, though their registered office doesn't have to be.