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## Higher Education Funding Council for England

Title Local Growth Academy: Invitation to participate  
To Heads of HEFCE-funded higher education institutions  
Heads of HEFCE-funded further education colleges  
Reference Circular letter 02/2017  
Publication date 23 January 2017  
Enquiries to Hannah Ashley, 0117 931 7120, email [h.ashley@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:h.ashley@hefce.ac.uk)

Dear Vice-Chancellor or Principal

### Local Growth Academy: Invitation to participate

1. HEFCE is working with Universities UK, the Local Government Association, the NHS Confederation and other partners on a new development programme, the 'Local Growth Academy'. I am writing to invite you to nominate a member of your senior team to take part in the programme. The deadline for nominations is 1700 on Tuesday 14 February 2017.

2. Universities and colleges play important roles as 'anchor institutions' in their local communities, driving economic growth and social innovation in partnership with businesses, local authorities, and other partners. A number of recent trends and developments – the increasing pace of devolution, the changing structure of investment finance, the Government's renewed emphasis on local economic growth – are requiring institutions to think differently, and to engage with external stakeholders in new ways.

3. The purpose of the Local Growth Academy is to support anchor institutions in navigating this fast-evolving environment, and to build operational capacity in order to maximise their contribution to local growth. Benefits will include:

- building the individual and collective capacities of universities and colleges to act as more sophisticated clients when developing large-scale collaborative projects
- an increase in the number and value of projects which attract new forms of investment finance
- strengthening and sustaining collaborative capacity across different institutions
- sharing innovation and best practice.

4. We have planned four regional groupings. Each will include similar content to help spread best practice. Each grouping will meet twice, with each module consisting of two successive working days (with an overnight stay). These will be held between April 2017 and the end of October 2018 in venues around the country. Priority will be given to venues in close vicinity to train stations with good accessibility to other places. The proposed programme is set out in the FAQ at Annex A available alongside this letter at [www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2017/CL\\_022017/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2017/CL_022017/).

5. We would like to invite you to nominate a member of your senior team to take part in the Academy. Ideally they should be an aspirant future leader or a senior member of your team with responsibility for external stakeholder management, for raising external finance, or for co-

ordinating local infrastructure developments with other local or regional partners. They must be willing and able to commit to participating in the programme as fully as possible.

6. Places will be limited and will be allocated on the basis of 'first come, first served.' There will be a charge of £399 (plus VAT) which covers costs of venues, refreshments and dinner (but not travel and accommodation).

7. More detail is at Annex A. If you would like an informal conversation, please contact Kevin Richardson (tel 07795257383, email [k.richardson@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:k.richardson@hefce.ac.uk)).

8. Please email your nomination to Hannah Ashley ([h.ashley@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:h.ashley@hefce.ac.uk)) by **1700 on Tuesday 14 February 2017**. All that is required is their name, position with responsibilities, and contact details: we do not need any further information at this stage.

Yours sincerely

Professor Madeleine Atkins

Chief Executive