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Guidance

Apply to the MAT Development and Improvement Fund

From:
[Department for Education](#)

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Applies to:
England

The Multi-academy trust (MAT) Development and Improvement Fund (MDIF) aims to provide additional funding to trusts in order to improve schools and increase social mobility.

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MDIF grants will be awarded for activities starting before 31 March 2018 and will usually be between £50,000 and £100,000.

The funding can be used to:

- set up or expand your academy trust and its organisational structures, including covering legal costs
- establish robust reporting mechanisms to monitor pupil performance and identify specific development gaps
- provide continuous professional development training for the trust's leadership team
- pay for teaching and leadership staff to work across the trust

- provide accountancy, finance, business management or HR advice

Successful applicants have to report their activity and the effect it's having on the school for 12 months from the point they receive their funding.

This is a finite award and you must be able to show how you will sustain any activity paid for by the award after the funding period.

If your application amount is outside of the range above please contact the MDIF team to discuss your circumstances.

Who can apply

All trusts (including those awaiting sponsor or trust approval) are eligible to apply.

If you wish to apply, you must plan to do one of the following within the next 12 months:

- take into your trust and improve at least 2 additional schools
- form a new MAT of 2 schools or more and improve them

You must be an approved academy sponsor to take on sponsored academies. You can apply to [become an academy sponsor](#) at the same time as you apply for this funding.

You can apply for a MDIF grant if you are receiving funding from the Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) but your application must show how this funding will be used to achieve different outcomes to that of your SSIF grant.

[Regional Schools Commissioners \(RSCs\)](#) will prioritise applications from trusts carrying out activity in specific geographical [priority areas](#) and those who are planning to do either of the following:

- take on and improve schools that need help raising attainment for disadvantaged pupils
- take on and improve Ofsted 'inadequate' and 'requires improvement' schools and/or underperforming schools (those schools not meeting the floor standard at either primary or secondary)

Priority will be given to applications that meet the above criteria, but in exceptional circumstances RSCs will consider applications that do not.

Assessment criteria

When assessing your application, RSCs will consider:

School improvement

- your overall school improvement model and how it will improve the quality of education at every school within the trust
- how your plans will improve the attainment outcomes and opportunities for disadvantaged pupils
- evidence you can provide of capacity building – for example development of people and leadership, governance and accountability, teaching and CPD, and how these changes will achieve improvement in underperforming schools currently in the trust and those joining

- your performance monitoring procedures and your lines of accountability
- how you assess teaching staff and how you spread best practice across your trust

Evidence based work

- your knowledge of the individual needs and requirements of the geographical area you will be working in and how you will address these
- how and why your school improvement practices will work, the evidence that underpins this and/or your experience and track record of improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils

Value for money

- if your application represents good value for money
- if you can carry out the work without the award
- if this the most effective way of achieving positive outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in your trust and if alternatives were considered
- the successful improvements you've made using funds from previous grant awards and the additional outcomes you expect to achieve if your application is successful

Ability to carry out the activities

- your ability to complete agreed activities
- risks you have identified and how they will be mitigated
- how activity will be monitored and improvements assessed

Sustainability

- how this improvement will continue once the funding has finished
- how you will monitor the effect of the activity and what sources of evidence you will use to show that changes have been made

How to apply

All applications from approved academy trusts must be submitted using our [online form](#).

If you are awaiting for your trust to be approved you can submit an [offline version](#) of your completed application to the MDIF mailbox below.

A trust can only submit one application. If you wish to carry out activity across more than one RSC region you may submit supplementary information to the MDIF mailbox.

You can also contact your [RSC office](#) or the MDIF team using the mailbox below before applying.

MAT Development and Improvement Fund mailbox

Email: MATDevelopment.ImprovementFund@education.gov.uk

Deadline for applying

The deadline for submitting applications is 23:59, 26 November 2017.

RSCs may assess and approve applications as they receive them.

They will tell applicants the outcome of their application no later than 31 March 2018.

Terms and conditions of grant funding

Please ensure you have read, understood and can comply with the [Department for Education grant funding agreement terms and conditions](#) before submitting your application.

If your application is successful, we will send you a grant offer letter that will include:

- the specific terms and conditions of the grant
- key performance indicators of the grant that you must report

You will be required to sign and return this grant offer letter to receive payment of your grant.

If you are waiting for approval to be an academy sponsor, or for other conditions to be met, we will only send you the grant offer letter after the relevant RSC has agreed that it is appropriate to do so.

Priority areas

RSCs will prioritise applications from trusts carrying out activity in the following areas.

East Midlands and Humber RSC Region

- Amber Valley
- Ashfield
- Barnsley
- Bolsover
- Broxtowe
- Chesterfield
- Derby
- Doncaster
- East Lindsey
- East Riding of Yorkshire
- Erewash
- High Peak
- Kingston upon Hull

- Leicester
- Lincoln
- Mansfield
- Newark and Sherwood
- North East Derbyshire
- North East Lincolnshire
- Nottingham
- North Lincolnshire
- Sheffield
- South Derbyshire
- South Holland

Lancashire and West Yorkshire RSC Region

- Blackpool
- Bradford
- Burnley
- Halton
- Kirklees
- Knowsley
- Liverpool
- Oldham
- Pendle
- Rochdale
- Salford
- Sefton
- St. Helens
- Tameside
- Warrington
- Wirral

North RSC Region

- Allerdale
- Carlisle
- Eden
- Middlesbrough
- Northumberland
- Scarborough

North East London and East RSC Region

- Babergh
- Braintree
- Breckland
- East Cambridgeshire
- Fenland
- Forest Heath
- Great Yarmouth
- Huntingdonshire
- Ipswich
- King's Lynn and West Norfolk
- Mid Suffolk
- Norwich
- Peterborough
- St Edmundsbury
- Tendring
- Waveney

North West London and South Central RSC Region

- Bracknell Forest
- Corby
- Daventry
- East Northamptonshire
- Kettering
- Luton
- Milton Keynes
- Northampton
- Reading
- Stevenage
- Wellingborough

South London and South East RSC Region

- Arun
- Ashford
- Basingstoke and Deane
- Crawley
- Gosport

- Gravesham
- Hastings
- Havant
- Isle of Wight
- Lewes
- Medway
- Portsmouth
- Thanet
- Worthing

South West RSC Region

- Swindon
- Torrington
- West Somerset
- Weymouth and Portland

West Midlands RSC Region

- Cannock Chase
- Coventry
- Dudley
- East Staffordshire
- North Warwickshire
- Nuneaton and Bedworth
- Sandwell
- South Staffordshire
- Stafford
- Staffordshire Moorlands
- Stoke-on-Trent
- Tamworth
- Telford and Wrekin
- Walsall
- Wolverhampton
- Wychavon
- Wyre Forest

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