



Policy paper

National retraining scheme: associated projects

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Overview

In preparation for the national retraining scheme, we are running a number of pilots and associated projects.

Pilots to boost participation in adult learning

In the autumn budget 2017, the government announced up to £40 million for pilots and testing. This has been used to test approaches with adults:

- with low to intermediate skill levels
- who are likely to be in low paid work

This money is being used to deliver the cost and outreach pilots and the flexible learning fund.

Cost and outreach pilots

The cost and outreach pilots are designed to test:

- which approaches to outreach are most successful in engaging adults in learning
- whether offering a course fee subsidy makes a difference to the uptake of learning

The pilots are testing how we change perceptions or attitudes to learning through:

- outreach work, exploring the importance of which messages attract adults to courses
- examining the role that face-to-face information, advice and guidance can play in encouraging adults to retrain

The pilots also test the impact of subsidising the cost of learning on participation. The focus is on learning that's economically valuable to learners and the local economy.

There are 5 geographical areas involved in the pilot, including:

- greater Lincolnshire
- heart of the south west
- Leeds city region
- Stoke and Staffordshire (LEPS)
- the west midlands combined authority

The flexible learning fund

The flexible learning fund is testing the design and provision of flexible and accessible methods of learning for working adults with low or intermediate skills. There are 30 projects participating in the fund, which are led by a range of organisations including further education colleges and local councils.

Most of the projects offer accredited functional skills qualifications. However, some projects are also testing the delivery of non-accredited basic skills such as CV writing.

The majority of projects make use of technology, with most offering blended learning, which combine online and face to face learning.

All projects have completed a development phase, including:

- developing new course content
- converting content to make sure it's suitable for online training

Pilots are being provided nationwide. Local pilots are also available in:

- London

- the East Midlands
- the North East
- the North West
- the South East
- the South West
- the West Midlands
- Yorkshire and the Humber

The construction skills fund

The construction skills fund, launched in June 2018 aims to:

- increase the number of people trained in construction
- reduce the construction skills shortage
- help build the homes and infrastructure England needs
- inform the development of the national retraining scheme

Funding in excess of £20 million has been awarded to 26 projects in England to support and encourage innovative and employer-led approaches to training with on-site training.

The construction skills fund is:

- funded by the Department for Education (DfE)
- administered and implemented by [Construction Industry Training Board \(CITB\)](#)

The projects are proposing to deliver at least 13,000 employment-ready individuals by March 2020.

Construction hubs are being built in:

- London
- the East of England
- the Midlands
- the North West
- the South East
- Yorkshire and Humber

The adult learning technology innovation fund and technology in

education

The government is investing £5 million in this [initiative](#), which will be managed by innovation foundation Nesta.

This fund will provide funding and expertise to encourage businesses and education providers to use new technologies, such as:

- artificial intelligence (AI)
- information about how the local economy is operating

The fund will be used to develop personalised and engaging online training opportunities, and career guidance services for adults.

This is supported by the DfE's [EdTech strategy](#).

We will launch details of the fund and a call for expressions of interest in autumn 2019.

It will follow an initial research and development period where we will work closely with the technology sector and online learning experts so that funding is prioritised in the right areas.

Through Nesta, the winning organisations will also have access to the charity's development expertise in addition to government investment.

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