



Department
for Education

Local Skills Improvement Plans:

**Application Guidance for
Expressions of Interest for the
Designation of Employer
Representative Bodies**

May 2022

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1. Purpose of this document

This document invites employer representative bodies (ERBs) to apply through this expression of interest process to become the designated ERB for a specific local area. The designated ERB will lead the development of a Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) for that specified geographical area.

Expressions of interest must be prepared and submitted in accordance with this guidance and using the application form provided.

Selection under this expression of interest process will not constitute any commitment to funding from the department. For applicants who are successful in the expression of interest process, there will be subsequent processes to agree funding to support the development, implementation and reviews of the LSIP.

1.1 Expiry date

The deadline for submitting applications under this guidance is 23:59 on 6 June 2022.

1.2 Who is this publication for?

This guidance is intended for:

- ERBs wishing to submit an expression of interest application to be designated to lead the development of a LSIP for a specified geographical area.

This guidance may be of interest to:

- Other ERBs who may wish to support or be involved in the development of an LSIP without leading on the development and/or submitting an application.
- Individual employers who may be involved in the development of LSIPs.
- Providers of post-16 technical education and training including Further Education (FE) Colleges, Institutes for Technology, Sixth Form Colleges, institutions designated as being part of the further education sector (Designated Institutions), Independent Training Providers (ITPs) and Higher Education Institutions who will be involved in the development of LSIPs working with the designated ERB.
- Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs), Greater London Authority (GLA), Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and local authorities with an interest in the development of an LSIP in their area.

1.3 Introduction

The Skills for Jobs White Paper¹ set out an ambitious employer-led approach aimed at making FE provision more responsive to local skills needs and ultimately local economic needs. As part of this new approach, we are introducing LSIPs to give employers a stronger voice in shaping local skills provision working closely with FE providers and engaging effectively with local leaders and other stakeholders.

The aim is to forge a stronger and more dynamic partnership between employers and FE providers that will enable provision to be more responsive to skills needs of employers in local labour markets. LSIPs will do this by providing a clear articulation of future skills need and setting out the priorities for change in local provision that will help people develop the skills they need to get good jobs and increase prospects. Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) funding will be made available from financial year 2023-24 to support in making these changes within an area.

We need a more nimble and responsive skills system which can flex according to economic need to help tackle our low productivity compared with other major nations, driven in part by low workforce skills and falling employer investment in training. More recently, factors including the COVID-19 pandemic, have contributed to significant changes in the labour market with skills shortages emerging across a variety of sectors. Further changes are expected in the coming years, for example with the expansion of the green economy.

LSIPs have been piloted in eight Trailblazer areas as part of the Skills Accelerator programme. The resulting Trailblazer LSIPs developed by ERBs following a competitive selection process have been published.²

For the national rollout of LSIPs, we want to build upon the lessons learned from the Trailblazers, embed LSIPs within the reformed FE funding and accountability framework, as well as ensure they fit with plans for further devolution. Statutory guidance will be issued in the summer; however, we have set out as part of this expression of interest document the four stages we expect ERBs to take in developing LSIPs (see section 3.2).

¹ [Skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/skills-for-jobs)

² [Local Skills Improvement Plan trailblazers and Strategic Development Fund pilots - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-skills-improvement-plan-trailblazers-and-strategic-development-fund-pilots)

2. Call for Expressions of Interest

2.1 Background

The Skills for Jobs White Paper set out an ambitious plan to put employers more firmly at the heart of the skills system to help ensure businesses and people have the skills they need to thrive and progress. Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) are a key part of achieving this aim.

Led by designated ERBs, LSIPs will set out a clear articulation of employers' skills needs and the priority changes required in a local area to help ensure post-16 technical education and skills provision is more responsive and flexible in meeting local labour market skills needs. Whilst LSIPs are not intended to cover the entirety of local provision, in developing an LSIP there needs to be a good understanding of the local labour market and drivers of future demand. In doing so, ERBs and stakeholders will need to consider local and national priorities.

By placing LSIPs on a statutory footing through the Skills and Post-16 Education Act, which gained Royal Assent in April 2022, we have demonstrated our long-term commitment to giving employers a stronger voice in local skills planning. And, following the LSIP Trailblazers in eight areas in 2021-2022, we are now looking to rollout LSIPs across England.

The purpose of the call for expressions of interest is to identify ERBs interested in and capable of being designated the lead for developing an LSIP in each specified geographical area. To do this, ERBs will need to demonstrate how they can represent the views of a range of employers in the specified geographical area, their ability to develop a plan impartially building on their capability and capacity, while clearly showing how they are going to respond to the challenge of playing a much stronger role in their local skills system.

2.2 Why should an ERB be interested in applying?

The rollout of LSIPs is an opportunity for ERBs to take a central role in ensuring the provision of skills is more aligned to the needs of their local employers. The role draws on ERBs' long-held experience of working closely with employers to understand and represent their skills needs.

By leading the development of an LSIP, the designated ERB will benefit local employers who will have increased access to the skills required to grow their businesses and increase their productivity. Helping to ensure employers are fully utilising the provision available and able to navigate the system. It should also drive more employers' engagement in the skills system and support learners, who will benefit by gaining the skills they need to secure well-paid employment.

In addition to rolling out LSIPs across the country, DfE is developing a number of measures that will ensure the LSIPs, developed by ERBs, have traction and lead to changes on the ground. These include:

- Rolling out new funding and accountability reforms (including a duty in the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022) that will require providers to have regard to local needs, including those set out in LSIPs.
- Introducing a new 'Local Skills Improvement Fund' from financial year 2023-24 to support providers to collaborate and collectively respond to priorities identified in the LSIPs.

While it is DfE's intention that LSIPs have traction, ERBs are not being asked to take a direct role in funding or commissioning skills provision. Those powers will remain with the ESFA and bodies with devolved powers, including MCAs.

2.3 Who can be designated as an ERB?

We are looking for a range of ERBs to apply to the expression of interest process. An eligible ERB is:

- a body corporate that is both independent of Government and not a public authority or undertaking the functions of a public authority; for this reason, we do not consider bodies established by the LEP (or indeed the LEP itself), MCA or GLA as ERBs;
- capable of developing and keeping under review an LSIP for the area, in an effective and impartial manner; and
- reasonably representative of employers in the specified area.

In determining designation of an ERB, the Secretary of State may also consider whether the body corporate is a business membership organisation, predominantly representing employers and businesses and is accountable to that membership.

The ERB will also need to be able to demonstrate that it can meet the criteria set out in detail in section 4.1 but summarised below.

- Criterion 1: ERB is reasonably representative of the employers operating in the specified area.
- Criterion 2: ERB's ability to work in partnership with colleges, Institutes of Technology (where applicable) and other providers
- Criterion 3: ERB's ability to work with MCAs/LEPs and engage with other stakeholders
- Criterion 4: ERB has the necessary strategic capacity, capability and leadership

2.4 What are the specified geographical areas?

The geography of a specified area for an LSIP will be largely based upon current functional economic areas that providers and other relevant stakeholders (including institutions with devolved powers) operate across to ensure LSIPs have traction and can fully achieve their aims. This means that in areas that already have devolution, LSIPs will mirror the boundaries of Combined Authorities, MCAs and the GLA.

In other areas of the country, the LSIP specified areas will follow existing LEP geographies except for the South-East region which will form three areas - Greater Essex (Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock), Kent and Medway and Sussex (East and West Sussex and Brighton and Hove). A full list of the LSIP areas is outlined at Annex B.

Following the recent publication of the Levelling Up White Paper, discussions are live and ongoing in many areas of the country regarding functional geography. As the geographies for the new MCAs and County Deals are agreed, the geographies of LSIPs will be aligned with them.

It is recognised that many employers and providers will have material interests in more than one LSIP area. They may engage with all LSIPs with which they have a material interest.

Greater London

It is recognised that Greater London is a functional economic area. Many businesses and indeed learners move across boroughs and certain sectors attract employees from across the capital and indeed beyond. As a result, there will be a single LSIP for the Greater London area and a single designated ERB.

However, the scale of London, even compared to other large combined authority areas, makes understanding the diversity of the capital challenging. As a result, this single LSIP should be supplemented by four sub-regional LSIPs which can provide more granular detail on the priorities specific to the different parts of the Greater London area. Recognising this extra complexity, the funding cap set out in section 2.7 may be higher for Greater London. London boroughs have largely organised themselves into four groupings across the capital (Central London Forward, West London Alliance, South London Partnership, and Local London). We would expect the designated ERB for Greater London to work with appropriate partner ERBs to ensure that they are able to capture the LSIP priorities at these sub-regional levels.

2.5 What does designation mean in practice for an ERB?

The Skills and Post-16 Education Act does not place legislative duties on designated ERBs, however it does set out general provisions for LSIPs, which will impact the way in

which designated ERBs should undertake the role of developing the LSIP. It outlines an LSIP as a plan that:

- is developed by a designated employer representative body for a specified geographical area;
- draws on the views of employers operating within the specified area, and any other evidence, to summarise the skills, capabilities or expertise that are, or may in the future be, required in the specified area; and
- identifies actions that relevant providers can take regarding any English-funded post-16 technical education or training that they provide so as to address the requirements mentioned above.

In addition to producing and submitting the LSIP to the Secretary of State for approval and publication, the plan will need to be kept under review. Furthermore, the following would also be considered necessary to carry out the role:

- Publishing a conflicts of interest policy
- Publishing a register of interests
- Regular monitoring and reporting to DfE

Further information on the content of an LSIP and the process that designated ERBs would be expected to undertake to develop an LSIP is set out in section 3 of this document and will be further developed in statutory guidance that will be published in summer 2022.

Timetable for LSIP development

June 2022	Expressions of Interest Closes
Autumn 2022	First tranche of ERBs designated
Summer 2023	LSIPs from first tranche of designated ERBs to Secretary of State for sign off
By Spring 2024	First annual review and update of LSIPs completed to ensure LSIP are still current
By Spring 2025	Annual review and update of LSIPs completed to ensure LSIP are still current

2.6 What are the expected timelines?

We expect to be able to designate ERBs for specific areas of the country from early autumn 2022 onwards.

We expect by summer 2023, most of the country will have an LSIP developed and approved by the Secretary of State.

Periodically, the department will run a redesignation process. At this point there will be a review of the geographies.

2.7 Will there be any funding available?

To support their activities during the development, implementation and reviews of the LSIP, designated ERBs will be able to apply for up to £550,000 for the period up to March 2025. An application will need to be made after designation setting out the anticipated costs, which will be assessed by officials and a final funding figure agreed. Funding will then be paid in arrears upon submission of evidence of actual costs incurred. There will be £50,000 start-up funding available immediately upon designation. This will be deducted off the final agreed total funding.

Further guidance on eligible cost will be made available to ERBs once designated, but such costs are likely to include, but not be limited to:

- Supporting employer mapping, engagement, and relationship management to ensure the LSIP is employer-led.³
- Engagement with providers.
- Supporting engagement of key local stakeholders including LEPs, MCAs and their SAPs (noting the role of the SAPs function mentioned).
- Building the capacity of ERBs to deliver LSIPs including staff resource.

The funding will be awarded as a grant and will be subject to the DfE Standard Grant Funding Terms & Conditions.⁴ ERBs will be expected to complete an Annual Certificate of Expenditure certified by an independent auditor to confirm that the funds have been spent in line with the terms of the grant offer letter.

³ In the financial year 2022-23 broader labour market analysis will be undertaken by the local Skills Advisory Panel function within MCAs and LEPs and provided to ERBs. Once an ERB has been designated to lead an LSIP for an area, the LEP/MCA will be required to agree with the ERB the focus of the analysis funded via the SAPs grant. Any activity that duplicates the work funded via the SAPs grant will not be eligible for funding via LSIPs.

⁴ DfE Grant Funding Agreement Terms and Conditions
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/856705/DfE_GFA_TC_s_FINAL_012020.pdf

3. Local Skills Improvement Plans

3.1 What is an LSIP?

An LSIP is a process for change as well as a report. In developing the LSIP, ERBs should engage all the relevant local stakeholders including local employers, providers, MCAs, GLA, LEPs and other agencies.

3.2 The LSIP Development Process

It is important that the LSIP is embedded firmly into the local skills landscape and its priorities are in turn embedded into those of providers⁵ but also the wider agencies such as Jobcentre Plus and Career, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) providers. The LSIP needs to be developed in line with the statutory guidance, which will be published before the designation of ERBs.

The development of an LSIP is comprised of four stages:

Stage A: Considering the broader economic context

The role of the ERB in stage A should be around developing a clear understanding of how LSIPs can best add value by providing a distinct employer perspective on local skills needs and priorities for change that creates synergies with existing strategies and plans. ERBs should draw primarily on existing macro analysis and data of the local labour market as well as the drivers of future demand such as new investment and the impact of new technologies.

In doing so, ERBs may consider the relevant strategies and plans set by local leaders (such as MCAs and LEPs), as well as national priorities where these are relevant to the area. However, these strategies and plans will also need to be considered alongside the evidence from employers. In developing an LSIP, ERBs should consider the skills needed to help deliver on the government's net zero target, adaptation to climate change, and other environmental goals (see section 3.4).

The output of this stage should be a clear set of objectives for the LSIP based on a strong understanding of the local labour market and sources of future comparative advantage that is recognised by local leaders, providers and other stakeholders.

⁵ Providers include Further Education (FE) Colleges, Institutes for Technology, Sixth Form Colleges, institutions designated as being part of the further education sector (Designated Institutions), Independent Training Providers (ITPs) and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Stage B: Articulating employers' needs

The core strength of the ERBs, which is articulating the employer demands, forms the second stage. It is through direct engagement with employers that ERBs can articulate mismatches between the supply and demand for skills. This is not about simply matching qualifications to in-demand occupations, important though that is, but understanding the actual skills needs of employers in the workplace for these occupations.

It is this insight that is often missing. ERBs can add real value by articulating the specific skills components and jobs that employers need, and how they are expected to change due to technological and organisational innovation. Given the level of granularity required, the LSIP itself is likely to identify areas for this further, more detailed engagement between employers and providers.

It should focus on priority skills needs considering both current and future needs, understanding the impact of changing demand on key sectors in the area, with a particular focus on SMEs. The LSIP Trailblazers have successfully reached a range of employers not usually engaged in conversations around local skills provision, including SMEs, using a range of different and innovative approaches.

The output of this stage should be a clear articulation of unmet employer demand for skills that is robust and meaningful to providers, MCAs as commissioners of adult skills provision and other stakeholders such as LEPs, local jobcentres and CEIAG providers.

Stage C: Translating employer demands

Once the skills needs of employers have been articulated, it will be for the ERB to bring together providers and employers to understand the causes of these skills mismatches in the context of the wider analysis set out in stage A. Together they will need to identify the necessary changes to the skills provision on offer locally. The resulting high-level priorities for change in local provision should be framed in ways that FE Colleges, Institutes of Technology and other providers can act upon without being prescriptive around the roles each should play; for example:

- expanding provision in certain subjects and curricula to meet growth in demand (and potentially scaling back where evidence of employer demand is lacking)
- modernising the content, approach and technical experience of training offers to keep pace with industry needs
- more accessible, flexible provision to meet needs for upskilling and retraining
- investing more in transferable skills

FE Colleges, Institutes of Technology and other providers should set out how they plan to address these priorities in their strategic plans⁶ and reflect them in the new accountability agreements. Where there is need for upfront investment to deliver changes, from 2023-24, providers will be able to bid into the LSIF to collaborate and collectively respond to priorities identified in LSIPs.

Whilst all “post-16 technical education or training” is in scope, we expect the focus will be on technical education (i.e. core funded 16-19 provision, adult skills, loan funded level 4 and 5 and apprenticeships). For adult skills provision in devolved areas, the involvement of the MCA will be important.

The output of this stage should be a set of high-level priorities for change that FE Colleges and other providers can act on, including by bidding for LSIF where necessary, and can be held to account for doing so through, for example the new FE accountability framework.

Stage D: Addressing learner demand and employer engagement

The final stage of the process recognises that improving the supply of skills needs to be accompanied by demand side measures. In undertaking this stage, ERBs will want to engage with local leaders including MCAs and LEPs.

ERBs should draw on the analysis undertaken in stage C to identify relevant demand-side issues that need to be addressed, for example putting on new provision to reflect employer need will only work if learners then choose to go on those courses. Such measures could include:

- ensuring employer needs are fed into the provision of careers information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) in ways that enable learners to make more informed choices.
- helping local jobcentres offer training to people looking for work and those in work on Universal Credit in the skills employers need most.
- encouraging employers to support learners through placements, apprenticeships and curriculum design.

ERBs should also consider steps to help improve employer engagement and investment in skills such as:

- ensuring that employers are fully utilising the provision already available and are able to navigate the local skills system.

⁶ This includes the reviews of their education and training provision in relation to local needs required under Section 5 of the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022

- supporting SMEs to better articulate their skills needs and aggregate demand in a way that translates into stronger demand signals for providers.
- encouraging employers, particularly SMEs, to adopt new and emerging technologies, processes, and knowledge, through partnerships with FE providers and others, which would increase productivity and the demand for higher skills.

While ERBs will necessarily look at issues through the lens of meeting employer skills needs, the solutions to those needs can deliver wider benefits. For example, unlocking the untapped potential of people from disadvantaged and under-represented backgrounds or those with special educational needs and disabilities can be part of the solution to employer skills shortages.

The output of this stage should be a clear understanding of where demand and supply side measures can be mutually reinforcing so the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

Who should be involved in developing LSIPs with the designated ERBs?

To develop credible and well evidenced LSIPs, ERBs will need to:

- draw on the views of a wide range of employers and across sectors, other employer representative and sector bodies to articulate their skills needs.
- work closely with providers and in particular, FE colleges and Institutes of Technology, to understand the opportunities and challenges they face in meeting the changing skills needs of employers and the local economy, recognising the important roles played by all providers.
- engage constructively with local leaders who have responsibility for local economic development, a strong understanding of local context, including local labour market analysis and an ability to bring together local stakeholders. MCAs/GLA also have direct responsibility for commissioning adult skills provision through devolved funding streams.
- recognise the important role other organisations can play in delivering effective solutions to employers' skills needs such as local jobcentres and CEIAG providers as well as innovation networks such as Catapult Centres and knowledge transfer networks around emerging skills needs.

The success of LSIPs will depend upon sustained and effective engagement between local employers and providers, supported by local leaders and other stakeholder organisations around emerging skills needs and shared goals.

3.3 The LSIP Report

The resulting product of the process set out above is the LSIP report. This is a strategic document that provides a clear articulation of employers' skills needs, the priority changes required and the actions needed by providers, employers and other stakeholders to address them. Whilst it is not intended to cover the entirety of local provision, there needs to be a broad consideration of local skills needs and changing demand (including increases or decreases). In doing so, ERBs and stakeholders will need to consider local and national priorities.

It is expected that the LSIP should be succinct and not normally exceed 30 pages (excluding annexes)

It is expected that the LSIP report should broadly follow the approach set out below. The statutory guidance will provide more detailed information for each of the parts and will draw on the learning from the trailblazer LSIPs.

Approach for developing LSIP report

Part	Content
Strategic Overview	Sets out the focus and objectives of the LSIP Describes the strategic context and underpinning rationale for the focus and objectives outlined in the LSIP
Specification of employer skills needs	Provides a clear articulation of the current unmet and future skills needs of employers which is meaningful to providers
Priority changes in local provision	Sets out the priority changes to local provision to better meet the specification of employer skills needs
Actions for delivering change	Evidences the barriers to change that require collective action to overcome them and suggest actions related to: What providers can to do to effect change What employers can to do to effect change What other stakeholders including combined authorities, GLA, LEPs, Jobcentre Plus, CEIAG providers and others can do
Methodology	Further information on the methodologies/processes used to ensure: the evidence of skills need is robust, recognisable and meaningful to providers and other stakeholders the underpinning "problem diagnosis" for the mismatch between skills need and provision e.g. root causes, provision gap analysis

3.4 How will LSIPs be approved and published?

LSIPs will be approved and published by the Secretary of State. The approval of the LSIP by the Secretary of State will require them to be satisfied that a robust process of evidence collection and local stakeholder engagement has taken place in line with the statutory guidance in the course of developing the plan. This will include confirming ERBs:

- drew on the views of a wide range of employers operating in the area, and any other evidence, and through this understood the priority skills needs both current and emerging future skills needs;
- engaged with relevant providers and key local stakeholders;
- identified actions that relevant providers can take regarding post-16 technical education or training to address the identified skills needs.

The Secretary of State will also need to be satisfied that in the development of the LSIP due consideration was given to:

- the skills, capabilities or expertise required in relation to jobs that directly contribute to, or indirectly support the net zero target, adaptation to climate change and meeting other environmental goals (such as restoration or enhancement of the natural environment).
- where the LSIP's specified area is within an area covered, all or in part, by an MCA or the GLA, the Secretary of State will need to be satisfied that in the development of the plan due consideration was given to their views.

How this will operate will be further set out in the statutory guidance.

4. The Application Process

4.1 Process for applying to be a designated ERB

Specified Area

The ERB will need to indicate via the application for which specified local area it is applying. If applying for more than one specified local area, the ERB will need to make a separate application for each specified local area.

Eligibility Check

The features of an organisation which would meet the criteria of being designated an ERB are set out in section 2.3. The eligibility check will consider whether the application is from a body corporate that is both independent of Government and not a public authority or undertaking the functions of a public authority. Any applications from corporations not meeting this criterion will be deemed ineligible for the designation and will not be considered further.

Assessment Criteria

If eligible, applicant ERBs will need to demonstrate that they are building from a strong starting point in terms of their capability and capacity. This may be as a long existing ERB or as a more recent ERB with an experienced team. They will clearly show how they are going to respond to the challenge of playing a much stronger role in local skills systems.

Applicant ERBs will be assessed against the following criteria:

Selection Criteria

Criterion	Evidence required
Criterion 1: ERB is reasonably representative of the employers operating in the specified area	The ERB can demonstrate that it is reasonably representative of the employers operating in the specified geography. By: describing how the body is reasonably representative of employers operating in the specified area including how the characteristics of the body's membership compare to the overall employers in the specified area demonstrating the degree of experience (including evidence of impact) of either the ERB itself or the experience of the leadership of the ERB in engaging with employers and representing their views in local policy development as well as working with other ERBs for common objectives;

	<p>demonstrating the strength of its plans to engage effectively with the range of employers and sectors (including hard to reach SMEs) in the specified area and reflect their views impartially;</p> <p>demonstrating the breadth of knowledge of its local economy and labour market.</p>
<p>Criterion 2: ERB's ability to work in partnership with colleges, Institutes of Technology (where applicable) and other providers</p>	<p>The ERB can demonstrate that with respect to local providers,</p> <p>its breadth of knowledge of the local provider landscape;</p> <p>the degree of experience (including evidence of impact) of either the ERB itself or the experience of the leadership of the ERB in engaging with providers to achieve common aims; and</p> <p>the strength of its plans to engage effectively with the range of providers delivering in the specified area, in an impartial manner.</p>
<p>Criterion 3: ERB's ability to work with MCAs/LEPs and engage with other stakeholders</p>	<p>The ERB can demonstrate that with respect to local leaders and other stakeholders,</p> <p>the degree of experience (including evidence of impact) of either the ERB itself or the experience of the leadership of the ERB in engaging with leaders and other stakeholders to develop and deliver to local priorities;</p> <p>the strength of its plans to engage effectively with leaders and other stakeholders.</p>
<p>Criterion 4: ERB has the necessary strategic capacity, capability and leadership</p>	<p>The ERB will need to demonstrate that it:</p> <p>has the degree of leadership and governance experience to deliver a significant change programme in the specified area;</p> <p>strength of the plans to deploy sufficient resource and capability to manage the LSIP programme across both the active development phase and the annual update phase, as well as ensure the benefits are fully realised.</p>

Selection Process

All eligible applications will be assessed by DfE against the criteria and scored. Applications with a score below satisfactory, on any criterion, may be rejected as being of insufficient quality. There will be moderation of the scoring. The scoring will be based on the following:

Scoring criteria

Score	Description	Criteria
0	Nil response	A response has not been provided.
1	Weak	The response clearly and significantly fails to meet the criteria and has significant omissions. It provides inadequate or no relevant supporting evidence to support the response.
2	Satisfactory	The response mostly meets the criteria with some minor omissions. Some relevant evidence is provided to support the response, but this may lack in detail in some areas.
3	Good	The response meets the criteria, explains how the applicant will satisfy the criteria in full. Relevant evidence is provided to support the response.
4	Very Good	The response demonstrably meets all the criteria. It may offer additional, significant, relevant, and clearly recognisable benefits and/or desirable features over and above the level required. Full and relevant evidence is provided to support the response.

Where there is more than one eligible and quality application for a specified area, the application with the highest score against the criteria will be the ERB to which the designation will be offered.

4.2 How to apply

The application, including all supporting documentation, should be submitted by the deadline of 23:59 on 6 June 2022. The department will not accept bid applications submitted after the deadline has passed.

Applicants will be required to submit the bid application via email to LSIP.Programme@education.gov.uk.

Communications and frequently asked questions will be posted through the department's Jaggaer portal. Please register at <https://education.app.jaggaer.com/web/login.html>. Questions will not be answered via email or on an individual basis.

Omissions and discrepancies

It is the applicant ERBs' responsibility to check their applications and ensure that all required information has been submitted and correct.

If it becomes apparent that there are any omissions, applicant ERBs will be notified via email. The department will then allow two full working days for missing information to be submitted. The absence of any such notifications, for whatever reason does not indicate, nor must it be assumed, that an application is complete. If the missing information is not submitted, then the application will be assessed on the basis of the information that has been provided.

Freedom of Information and Data Protection

Please note that the information provided may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the relevant legislation⁷ and will be stored in accordance with the Department for Education's retention policy and procedures. If a request for disclosure of the information that applicant ERBs have provided is received, the department would consider any request for release very carefully. Such requests will be considered under the relevant legislation. Therefore, the department cannot give an absolute guarantee of confidentiality to applicant ERBs. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by applicant ERBs' IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the department.

4.3 Next Steps

The preferred ERB for each specified area, selected by the criteria above, will be notified in writing and provided with any terms and conditions as well as details on funding. The department's decision is final.

Once an ERB has been informed of the decision to designate them, the ERB will need to consent in writing to the designation and any terms and conditions. This response should be made in writing by the required date.

The Secretary of State will publish a notice of the designation on gov.uk outlining the name of the body, the specified area, the effective date of designation as well as the terms and conditions to which the designation is subject.

⁷ Freedom of information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018 and the Data Protection Legislation Act 2018

If applicant ERBs are not content with the way in which the bid application has been handled by the Department for Education, then applicant ERBs should use the Department for Education's complaint process.⁸

⁸ [Complaints procedure - Department for Education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Annexes:

Annex A: Glossary

Glossary

Term	Explanation
CEIAG	Careers, Education, Information, Advice and Guidance
The department	The Department for Education
EOI	Expression of Interest
ERB	Employer Representative Body
GLA	Greater London Authority
Jaggaer	Department's procurement system which will be used for FAQs for the EOI.
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LSIF	Local Skills Improvement Fund
LSIP	Local Skills Improvement Plan
MCA	Mayoral Combined Authority
SDF	Strategic Development Fund

Annex B: LSIP Geographical Areas

Local areas

LSIP area	Functional Economic Area	Differences
Combined Authorities and Greater London Authority		
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	
Greater London Authority supplemented by four sub-regional LSIPs based on the following four groupings that London boroughs largely organise themselves into: Central London Forward, West London Alliance, South London Partnership, and Local London.	Greater London Authority	
Greater Manchester	Greater Manchester	
Liverpool City Region	Liverpool City Region	
North-East	North-East	
North of Tyne	North of Tyne	
South Yorkshire	South Yorkshire	
Tees Valley	Tees Valley	
West Midlands (with Warwickshire)	West Midlands	Warwickshire included as part of the LSIP area
West of England (with North Somerset)	West of England	North Somerset included as part of the LSIP area
West Yorkshire	West Yorkshire	
LEP areas		
Buckinghamshire	Buckinghamshire	
Cheshire and Warrington	Cheshire and Warrington	
Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly	Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly	

Cumbria	Cumbria	
D2N2 (Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire)	D2N2 (Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire)	
Dorset	Dorset	
Enterprise M3 (including all of Surrey)	Enterprise M3	The four district councils from Surrey (Epsom and Ewell, Mole Valley, Reigate, and Banstead, Tandridge) should be covered as part of LSIP application for the Enterprise M3 LSIP area
Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock	South East LEP	Reflecting learning gained from the Trailblazing phase of the LSIPs, the rest of the area will be divided north and south of the Thames.
G First (Gloucestershire)	G First (Gloucestershire)	
Greater Lincolnshire	Greater Lincolnshire	
Heart of the South-West	Heart of the South-West	
Hertfordshire	Hertfordshire	
Hull and East Yorkshire	Hull and East Yorkshire	
Kent and Medway	South East LEP	Reflecting learning gained from the Trailblazing phase of the LSIPs, the rest of the area will be divided north and south of the Thames.
Lancashire	Lancashire	
Leicester and Leicestershire	Leicester and Leicestershire	
New Anglia (Suffolk and Norfolk)	New Anglia (Suffolk and Norfolk)	
Oxfordshire	Oxfordshire	
Solent	Solent	

South-East Midlands	South-East Midlands	
Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire	Stoke on Trent and Staffordshire	
Brighton and Hove, East Sussex, West Sussex	Coast to Capital/ South East LEP	
Swindon and Wiltshire	Swindon and Wiltshire	
Thames Valley Berkshire	Thames Valley Berkshire	
The Marches	The Marches	
Worcestershire	Worcestershire	
York and North Yorkshire	York and North Yorkshire	



Department
for Education

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