

Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities Guidance 2010/11- Requirements for Funding

June 2010

Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities

Guidance for Providers
2010/11

Introduction

1. This guidance gives advice to providers on the process for managing the 'Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities' (NLDC) fund in 2010/11. NLDC is one of the four Adult Safeguarded Learning Programmes for adult and community learning. There are no substantial changes from last year.
2. The total funding associated with the Safeguard is £210 million. This comprises £153 million for Personal and Community Development Learning, £25 million for Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy programmes, £20 million for NLDC (revenue) and £12 million for Wider Family Learning.
3. NLDC programmes should target groups of learners according to levels of prior achievement to widen participation and encourage progression, especially to Level 2. NLDC is linked to other key strategies including Skills for Life, Working Together, Change for Children, Regeneration and Community Cohesion, Citizenship and Skills for Jobs.
4. The purpose of the fund is to support local voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations to develop their capacity to deliver learning opportunities for residents of disadvantaged neighbourhoods.
5. This is done by:
 - enabling local areas to make a full contribution to the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal and Civil Renewal through community based often informal, learning and to build capacity of communities to respond to these agendas either through local VCS Learning and Skills Consortia or other mechanisms that can be maintained
 - improving the quality of the learning provider base, including the development of small, local and voluntary community organisations
 - the provision of learning and supporting learning through neighbourhood, civil renewal and active citizenship skills and knowledge.

Safeguarding Learners

6. Although the Department for Education has overall responsibility for child protection policy, the Skills Funding Agency has a legitimate interest in health and safety and child protection in the education sector that it funds, as part of its statutory duties to secure proper and reasonable provision for education and training.
7. All Skills Funding Agency funded providers are required to provide a safe, healthy and supportive learning environment and to comply with the Skills Funding Agency's general funding terms and conditions. The Skills Funding Agency's general terms and conditions require providers to adopt recruitment processes that comply with the law and will ensure that young and vulnerable learners are protected.
8. Providers should register with the Criminal Records Bureau if they have employees that may have regular contact with learners under 18 or other vulnerable learners. They must make sure that the appropriate checks are made to ensure that employment which involves regular contact with young people under the age of 18 is not offered to, or held by, anyone who has been convicted of certain specified offences, or anyone whose name is on lists of people considered unsuitable for such work that are held by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.
9. We would like to draw your attention to a publication on this particular issue: '[Safeguarding Children: Safer Recruitment and Selection in Education Settings](#)'.
10. Other useful links include:

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)	www.crb.gov.uk
Safe Learner Website	www.safelearner.info
Child Protection	www.teachernet.gov.uk
Health and Safety Executive	www.hse.gov.uk
BIS Guidance and Publications	www.bis.gov.uk/publications

Funding Criteria

11. For 2010/11, £20m has been allocated for NLDC. The allocations to providers have been made by the Skills Funding Agency.

Important note on capital allocations: providers are asked to note that no capital funding is being made available and no new projects can be agreed from the NLDC capital budget during 2010/11.
12. Providers should read this document in conjunction with the Adult Safeguarded Learning, Formal First Step and Family Learning Impact Funding Guidance 2010/11.
13. Funding can be used to support the recurrent expenditure requirements set out below. These lists are not exhaustive or prescriptive.

NLDC - Recurrent

- Enabling VCS Consortia to deliver training and education opportunities for learners in their communities
- Encouraging innovative, accessible 'first step' learning in local communities (e.g. by extending successful outreach activities from neighbourhood learning and community centres, VCS organisations and UK online centres)
- Encouraging the acquisition of neighbourhood, civil renewal and active citizenship skills, knowledge and behaviours
- Training or retraining local people to develop roles in community leadership or as "community champions" for local people
- Building up local expertise and supporting those individuals working or willing to work as community tutors in gaining a range of relevant qualifications, e.g. as teachers or assessors
- Developing new ways of delivering relevant curriculum to attract excluded and under-represented groups into learning, including working with target groups to develop meaningful and engaging learning contexts
- Supporting the development of VCS training providers through a capacity building programme to enable them to meet the Skills Funding Agency provider assessment criteria (this includes providing volunteer staff training)
- Providing staff development, including secondments, for example for Learning Partnerships
- Working with other local providers and stakeholders to map existing neighbourhood centres to ensure good coverage of local learning opportunities at appropriate venues - the mapping should use the template first set out in the document *Neighbourhood Learning in Disadvantaged Communities - Guidance for Practitioners*.

14. The NLDC fund can be used for match funding, for example with the European Social Fund (ESF) or the Single Regeneration Budget, but care should be taken where there are inter-providers to avoid double funding.

15. Providers allocated NLDC funds must ensure that they return accurate data within the timescales set by the Skills Funding Agency and the Information Authority.

NLDC - Skills for jobs

18. Regionally funded Skills for Jobs (or successor programmes) is an umbrella term for a range of different Skills Funding Agency activities that aim to link skills development to sustained employment. The target group is low skilled adults aged 19 and over who are not currently in employment, but who want to work. Within this broad category, meeting the needs of local disadvantaged communities (such as identified ethnic minority groups) and individuals facing specific barriers and significant disadvantages (including people with disabilities, lone parents and people over 50) are a priority.

19. The aim is to have greater impact on individuals by raising their skills levels and increasing their chances of gaining sustained employment. This will be achieved through activities providing both pre- and post- employment training and support. Skills for Jobs activities will engage low-skilled individuals who are not working and support them into both employment and continued up-skilling, particularly through

Train to Gain, Apprenticeships (work-based learning) and part-time further education opportunities.

20. For 2010/11 within the principles of the Safeguarded £20m revenue allocation for NLDC, funding is available to focus on pre-employment activity for workless people in deprived areas.
21. Up to 75% of the NLDC fund can be used to align with the Skills for Jobs initiative to fund activity to support workless people. This should primarily involve pre-employment activity through VCS organisations as the main providers.
22. Providers intending to consider bids from a range of organisations interested in delivering this type of provision should ensure that the overall participation of VCS providers is not significantly reduced as a result.
23. In agreeing to refocus up to 75% of NLDC on Skills for Jobs activity the intention is to better use existing budgets targeted at the Skills for Jobs client group in a more effective and integrated way. The aim of the NLDC budget is to target the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods/client groups (many of whom are workless) therefore there is consistency with Skills for Jobs proposals and as such there should be better alignment of the programmes. Ministers have agreed that in using the NLDC budget, the Skills Funding Agency must ensure that it fulfils its commitments to the Adult Safeguard and that the types of organisation that currently benefit from NLDC are able to continue to bid for use of this funding within the broader context of Skills for Jobs.
24. It is not the Skills Funding Agency's intention to competitively tender for NLDC provision as a result of the changes to include a focus on Skills for Jobs. NLDC funding was put in place to ensure that VCS providers had the opportunity to contribute to neighbourhood renewal activity and learning in deprived areas. These providers are often small and with fewer resources so would not normally be expected to compete for contracts on the same basis as other larger organisations.
25. While NLDC funding can be refocused on employability and Skills for Jobs activity, the targets set for Skills for Jobs learners **do not apply** to NLDC learners. The only data requirement for NLDC learners who are also badged as 'Skills for Jobs' is a headcount which is reported in the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) and the paper return. None of the other targets apply to such learners. The existing reporting arrangements for NLDC (the ILR or the NLDC paper return) **take precedence** over Skills for Jobs reporting.

Examples of Skills for Jobs activities could include:

- Signposting and referral to specialist provision
- Individual skills diagnostic and assessment
- Employability and occupational training tailored to individual needs
- "Softer" skills development e.g. assertiveness, anger management and motivation
- Learner mentoring and support services

26. **It is important to note the following key points relating to Skills for Jobs and NLDC:**

- **There will not be a compulsory requirement for NLDC providers to achieve job outcomes as a result of their programmes. NLDC Skills for Jobs activity is not part of the main Skills for Jobs employment targets.**
- **The Skills Funding Agency is not seeking to initiate Open Competitive Tendering in order to implement Skills for Jobs policy as part of NLDC provision.**
- **The Skills Funding Agency expects providers to review their provision and to consider any enhancements to current provision they may wish to introduce. Such reviews would aid understanding of the contribution they already make or are developing in order to support individuals and to maximise opportunities for progression and employment during 2010/11**
- **The amount of NLDC funding that can be refocused is 'up to 75%' and does not have to be exactly 75%.**

Funding Allocations

Recurrent allocations

27. For 2010/11 the total funding for NLDC revenue will be allocated on the same basis as the 2009/10 allocations.
28. Academic year budgets are issued to the Skills Funding Agency on the basis that two-thirds (8 months) of this budget is for the period August 2010 to March 2011 and the remaining third is for the 4 month period April 2011 to July 2011. This effect on financial years needs to be taken into account when making allocations from this budget.
29. It is essential to ensure that allocations and payments agree with academic **and** financial year budgets.
30. It should also be noted that funds unallocated from August 2010 to March 2011 cannot be retained or carried forward for use in the following financial year.

Supporting Information

31. The priority recipients of this fund are VCS organisations engaged in direct delivery of learning or working in partnership with a range of providers that are offering learning through VCS Learning and Skills Consortia.
32. The Skills Funding Agency wishes to particularly promote partnership working. However, where a partnership is not established as a legal entity then the Skills Funding Agency will have to enter into an agreement with one of the partners as a lead accountable body or all of the partners on a 'joint and several basis. Skills Funding Agency managers should take advice on any procurement implications if a contract for services is being awarded.
33. Providers should be assessed for eligibility for funding in accordance with local practice, taking account of local thresholds for provider financial viability. The basic criteria for assessment should be financial viability, probity and other legal requirements.
34. There are no upper or lower thresholds for funding individual projects. The Skills Funding Agency should ensure that funding is used to benefit people in the appropriate geographical location(s). It is feasible for the entire allocation to be used in a single project, if this meets the needs of the local community in the context of the priorities of the NLDC fund.
35. NLDC funds must not be used for administrative purposes by the Skills Funding Agency. Any queries should be directed through informaladultlearning@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk
36. NLDC funds may be used for support activities that are directly associated with frontline service delivery.

Sustainability

37. Organisations funded through the NLDC should not rely on NLDC money for their long-term survival.
38. The Skills Funding Agency may only make payments to providers on a payment profile. NLDC can be used to prepare and begin certain activities; in this context the Skills Funding Agency can agree a payment profile based on these circumstances and their needs as long as they meet government accounting regulations. This advance funding should normally only apply to non-incorporated organisations in the community or voluntary sectors and should only be used to fund clearly defined set-up costs so that project activity can begin.
39. An appropriate payment profile can be created by the Skills Funding Agency.
40. It is vital to achieve value for money and make best use of Agency resources, but NLDC projects must make every effort to secure funding from other sources to work alongside NLDC funding.
41. In striving towards constant innovation, an element of 'risk' is accepted as a feature of this type of programme but this must be managed effectively.

Priorities and Target Groups

42. The priority aim is to seek new providers and build their capacity to offer appropriate learning, whilst not discouraging existing providers. The emphasis is on attracting voluntary and community sector providers seeking to supply effective learning and to get to 'hard to reach' learners.
43. NLDC funding is entirely for learners aged 19 and over. Providers have the option of providing for younger learners (aged 18 years and under) through family learning type projects. All other programmes exclusively for younger learners should be funded from other sources.
44. Skills Funding Agency managers and providers should agree expected learner numbers against individual contracts.
45. Wherever possible:
 - preference should be given to partnership projects or projects with significant partnership working or partnership potential
 - providers should seek to demonstrate how they will encourage and provide progression opportunities, and to say how they will encourage learners to progress

Commissioning Projects

46. NLDC funded activity will be agreed subject to ensuring that it complies with the Public Contracts Regulations 2006. The award of all contracts must be the subject of fair and open competition and in some cases, depending on the type of service and the value

of the contract, it may be necessary for a procurement exercise in compliance with the regulations to be carried out.

Payments

47. For 2010/11 **all NLDC revenue allocations** (except VATable charges) **should be paid on profile**.
48. The only exception to profiled payments will be VATable charges. **VAT cannot be processed via the payments system**. Separating VATable administration charges and programme budgets is essential for accounting purposes.
49. Every effort should be made to fully spend the agreed allocations in 2010/11. It may be possible to re-distribute funds away from areas that anticipate an under spend in 2010/11 to others where there might be greater demand. Any provider that cannot make full use of its allocation in 2010/11 should advise the Skills Funding Agency immediately.

Contracts

50. NLDC conditions of funding schedules will be made available in the early summer of 2010.

Performance Indicators and Quality

51. Providers of NLDC programmes should consider using a quality system such as Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA) or a similar system to ensure quality.
52. For 2010/11 providers should record their NLDC learners and provision on the Adult Safeguarded Learning (ASL) ILR. A flag has been inserted in field A58 (national learning aim monitoring) sub field 02 which must be used to indicate that a learner is participating in an NLDC programme. This will enable the Skills Funding Agency to properly record and report back on delivery.
53. The option of recording and returning NLDC data on the paper form as in previous years will still be available for those providers for whom it is too difficult to collect sufficiently detailed information to complete an ILR record for NLDC learners. The Skills Funding Agency encourages the use of the ILR where possible to enable more accurate data to be collected on these learners. Providers returning an ILR should not also submit a paper return.
54. A learner should only appear on the ILR return of one Skills Funding Agency funded provider for each programme (unless one of the providers flags the learner as exclusively funded from another source).
55. **The paper return (NLDC Data Collection Form 2010/11) which is located at http://www.theia.org.uk/downloads/ilrdocuments/201011_guidance.htm should**

be completed and returned by the dates highlighted, throughout the year. Learner numbers and organisations should be cumulative at each point, building upon the numbers included in the previous return. For example, the second return should include the figures returned in the first return plus the figures for the second return.

56. The submission dates for the ASL ILR (and the NLDC paper returns) are as follows:

Return Number (file extension)	Reference date	Return date	Year of return	Type of return
ILR SL01- or Paper Return	01 November 2010	01 December 2010	2010/11	ASL format ILR up to 01 November
ILR SL02	01 February 2011	21 February 2011	2010/11	ASL format ILR – up to 01 February
ILR SL03	01 May 2011	16 May 2011	2010/11	ASL format ILR – up to 01 May
ILR SL04 – or Paper Return	31 July 2011	05 September 2011	2010/11	ASL format ILR – all year activity
ILR SL05 – or Paper Return	31 December 2011	16 January 2012	2010/11	ASL format ILR – all year activity including achievements

Please note that the numbers of paper returns will be kept to 3 per year to minimise bureaucracy.

57. Further information on using the ASL ILR can be found in the ASL Provider Support Manual for 2010/11 which is available to download from the Information Authority website. www.theia.org.uk

58. For those providers who wish to continue to use the paper form to return data on NLDC, a copy of the form can be found at the link above. This form should be submitted three times for the academic year to coincide with the submission dates for the 2010/11 ASL ILR.

59. Where the Skills Funding Agency is using NLDC fund money as a match for co-financing, providers will need to submit an ILR.

Evaluation

60. There will be no central evaluation in 2010/11 for NLDC. The Skills Funding Agency may set up its own arrangements where it is deemed necessary. It is not expected that any significant amounts of funding should be diverted into evaluation.