

OUTSTANDING TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

**Developing Student-Staff Partnerships
to enhance digital capabilities – Pilot Phase**

Project Prospectus

October 2018



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INTRODUCTION

The Education and Training Foundation ('the Foundation')

The Education and Training Foundation is the government-backed, sector-owned national workforce and professional development body for the Further Education (FE) and Training sector. Its role is to support the continuing transformation of the technical and vocational education system by ensuring the sector has world-class leaders, teachers and trainers.

The Foundation does this through four key areas:

- Setting professional standards, running the sector's professional membership body
- Supporting sector change
- Leading workforce development for leaders, governors and practitioners
- Providing key workforce data and research

One of The Foundation's four main areas of work is Professional Standards and Workforce Development. The Outstanding, Teaching, Learning and Assessment Programme is led by the Professional Development team.

The Strategic Development Network ('SDN')

The Foundation has commissioned the Strategic Development Network to manage the programme. SDN also manages the OTLA 4 apprenticeship standards programme.

SDN specialise in FE, HE and apprenticeships, supporting training and education organisations to grow, adapt and improve their provision.

Background - Outstanding Teaching, Learning and Assessment (OTLA) programmes

The Foundation's OTLA programmes draw together activity to support practitioners to improve and develop their practice.

OTLA activity is driven by the values and expectations set out in the Foundation's Professional Standards for Teachers and Trainers; a drive towards Ofsted outstanding (and similar success with other metrics); a clear focus on proven methodologies; intelligent and purposeful use of learner data and the need to work collaboratively/across organisational boundaries/across a variety of provider types, to source the most effective teaching, and share this with the sector.

The two aims of the OTLA programme are to:

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the FE and training sector and;
- Support increased professionalism for practitioners in the sector.

The programme is made up of four strands: Collaborative Projects, Professional Exchanges, Support, Training and Resources, and the Practitioner Research Programme.

Collaborative projects focus on provider and practitioner defined problems, often linked to a current theme important to the sector. They centre on developing evidence-based solutions to improve teaching, learning and assessment to outstanding.

Professional Exchanges are locally organised groups who meet regularly. They identify practitioner focused issues, and support practitioners to reflect on their practice, and share, collaborate and develop solutions.

Training and support encompasses a wide range of activity from in-house training or regional and national training events, to holistic support packages for providers and the creation and dissemination of effective practice resources.

The Practitioner Research Programme provides opportunities for individual practitioners to carry out detailed research into the sector with expert support.

Over four previous phases of OTLA collaborative projects, a wide range of outputs has been produced. Many can already be found on the OTLA Exhibition site and more are due to be published soon.

DEVELOPING STUDENT-STAFF PARTNERSHIPS TO ENHANCE STAFF DIGITAL CAPABILITIES

A national research project to develop and examine models of student-staff partnerships focussing on the use of educational technologies, with the aim of sharing outstanding practice that will produce positive impact for further education and training sector workforce development.

What we are trying to achieve – aims, outcomes and outputs

The objectives of this work are to identify, explore, develop and disseminate, through four practitioner-led collaborative projects, effective approaches to developing student-staff partnerships to enhance staff members' digital capabilities.

We want to explore how students' digital capability could support teachers and trainers in developing their understanding and effective use of learning technologies.

These collaborative projects will allow providers to explore what works and how best to build staff skill and confidence in the development of student-staff partnerships and in the use of technology to support and enhance learning.

The intention is to deliver a short pilot with a fieldwork phase from January to March 2019 with a view to, subject to evaluation and funding, rolling out a wider programme in the following two years.

What will the projects explore – research questions

We are looking to commission projects to focus on three questions:

1. Can training organisations leverage students' digital capability to support teachers and trainers in developing their understanding and effective use of learning technologies?
2. What are the most effective and sustainable approaches?
3. What are the challenges and barriers?

What will the projects produce?

The Programme will be made up of 4 Collaborative Projects

Each Collaborative Project will be made up of

- at least 3 **participating education and training organisations**
- a project team of at least 10 individuals involved in practitioner-research and in output development drawn from the 3 participating organisations

Each Collaborative Project will produce

- practical outputs ¹
- 5 mini-case studies from student-staff CPD partnerships. ²
- research outputs: a final summative evaluation report in April 2018 and participation in the overall review of the pilot in April 2018

Each Collaborative Project will

- involve 100 additional indirect participants using cascading and CPD ³
- participate in a practice sharing webinar, for practitioners across the sector

Each participating education and training organisation will have

- at least 5 student-staff partnerships involving at least 10 individuals. Partnerships could be pairs, trios or other larger configurations
- students and staff from their partnerships actively involved in on-line Communities of Practice and CPD with others from across the 4 projects

1. Practical project outputs could include for example
 - a. Student partner role descriptions
 - b. Models to incentivise and encourage student participation
 - c. Recruitment processes for student partners
 - d. Specifications for student partner CPD
 - e. Guidelines for practitioner involvement

Your application should provide outline concepts for the practical project outputs you will produce and how they will be created.

2. 5 mini-case studies from student-staff CPD partnerships. We are open to ideas about the media you might use. Possible formats could include video, podcast, written. Your application should include initial proposals for how you can gather content for and produce case studies.
3. Involvement of 100 additional indirect participants within participating providers using cascading and CPD. Your application should contain specific details of how you will cascade the outputs of the project and programme within your organisation, including target numbers of staff to be briefed or trained.

Programme-level outputs

The programme will deliver the following consolidated outputs:

1. A toolkit for the sector drawing together individual project resources and case studies
2. A final programme report integrating learning from all 4 projects, and framed within previous OTLA evaluations, summarising activity and evaluating the pilot, including recommendations for further phases of activity
3. 1,000 broadcast participant downloads, views and webinar participants

These will be produced centrally by the SDN core programme team, based on inter-project collaboration between the four projects.

The research framework

All projects within this phase of the programme will sit within an overall framework that has three elements **collaborative practitioner-led research, research process and impact measurement**.

Collaborative practitioner-led research

The projects will be supported to use a collaborative inquiry model. The features of the model that projects will need to adopt will:

- Be evidence-based, drawing on actual experiences
- Develop new knowledge and understanding
- Produce solution-focused and practical outcomes that can be widely shared across the sector as a catalyst for generating outstanding teaching, learning and assessment practice
- Allow a safe space to test out new approaches: allowing practitioners freedom to define and trial methods with a variety of possible outcomes, without fear of failure
- Be realistic and deliverable, within the timeframe of the programme and within the delivery context that the participants are working in
- Be democratic, with all project members having the right to express their own thoughts and values in the conduct and results of the inquiry
- Be measurable, relating directly to the impact measures set out below
- Be supported, with an SDN project mentor throughout the research

Research process

We want all four projects to adopt a similar process and timetable:

November 2018	November and December 2018	January to March 2019	April 2019
Application and Commissioning	Set Up	Partnership Activity and Research	Review and Evaluation
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Applications by Friday 9th November 2. Grants awarded 19th November 3. Project leads development day on Monday 26th November 4. First contact with project mentor 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Form a project team of practitioner-researchers 6. Define a model for student-staff partnerships to test across the participating provider organisations within each of the four projects 7. Recruit student-staff partnerships to begin work in January 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Deploy and pilot the model 9. Reflective practitioner-led exploration of the research questions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Review the pilot 11. Evaluate outcomes, emerging impacts and the research process 12. Adjust the model producing practical project outputs for dissemination 13. Contribute to programme level outcomes and dissemination

Impact measurement

The range of outcomes and impact that we are aiming to achieve through the programme are set out below.

Overall longer-term impacts

- Develop staff confidence and commitment to digital change in FE and training sector organisations
- Embed educational technology into teaching, learning and assessment
- Strengthen student-supported CPD for staff in the use of educational technology

Practitioner outcomes and impact

Pilot, test and develop practical models for student-staff partnerships leading to larger-scale deployment across the sector.

Models will:

- enhance peer support between staff and students
- break down barriers to technology deployment for learning
- develop a sharing and supportive culture through collaborative partnerships between practitioners and students within and between different types of providers
- be reviewed for:
 - ... efficiency in raising staff digital skill levels and confidence
 - ... effectiveness of embedding within the curriculum
 - ... efficiency and practicality in terms of staff time for CPD
 - ... usefulness for organisations' eLearning teams
 - ... sustainability at organisation and sector levels

Applicants should define indicators for expected outcomes and impact of their project, and how they intend to measure them.

It is likely that you will need to particularly focus on qualitative evidence arising from "stories" and case studies, using techniques such as research diaries and structured interviews. You should also give consideration to the use of quantitative measures e.g. defining indicators and scales measuring confidence amongst teachers (before and after) and the usefulness of the approach to teachers.

The SDN mentor will work with project leads at the start of the project, to agree the process for capturing robust information which also links into wider programme evaluation.

Research and evaluation outputs

Each project will need to:

- produce concise monthly monitoring to a standard template on the last working day of each month
- produce a final summative evaluation report in April 2018 including qualitative and quantitative outcome and impact data collected by the project with agreed indicators and methods
- participate in the overall review of the pilot in April 2018

Process outcomes and impact

- “Outstanding” practice identified and making a significant contribution to TLA
- Contribution to the OTLA body of knowledge
- Embedding new knowledge and practical approaches
- Embedding Professional Standards
- Collaboration with other elements of the OTLA programme
- Effectiveness of the research-based approach in generating knowledge and resources
- Collaboration between peers within and across providers
- On-going collaborative working
- Commitment of senior leaders in participating organisations to create sustainable impact from projects
- Transfer of effective practice between providers

For process indicators we will conduct evaluation with each project participant at the end of the project. This will be a combination of interview and survey data gathering.

Participant incentives

We are keen to test models to incentivise and encourage student participation

We have several possible options:

- setting out the benefits of participation in terms of:
 - new skills and knowledge
 - exposure to new technologies
 - involvement in broader communities
- links to and evidence for future career development and progression
- (non-accredited) certification of participation by the Foundation
- financial incentives.

Your application should include proposals for innovative approaches to using the funding and other approaches to incentivise participation, and how your approach might be sustainable.

Professional Standards and the Professional Digital Learning Framework

Our aim is for the Foundation's Professional Standards (in particular Standard #15) (<https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/support-practitioners/professional-standards/>) and the new Professional Digital Learning Framework (<http://www.sero.co.uk/etf-edtech/>) to become naturally embedded into practitioner thinking and practice and provide an ongoing framework in their day-to-day role as dual-professionals.

The new framework provides a good platform for projects to consider:

- their understanding of pedagogic digital capability in the education sector and,
- how student-staff partnerships can improve the capability of practitioners to use digital technology to enhance the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.

The framework is made up of 7 facets which map against the relevant parts of the Digital Competence Framework for Educators (DigCompEdu), the Education and Training Foundation Professional Standards (PS) and to Jisc's six Digital Capabilities (Jisc).

Under this OTLA project we are particularly interested in PS 15: "Promote the benefits of technology and support learners in its use." We would like to understand the impact on development and progression of student-staff partnerships and individuals using some of the competency framework and the competency levels assigned to this.

This will require completion by project participants during the project of:

- a confidence scale of PS 15
- a confidence scale against the specific elements of the new educational technology competency framework which map to PS 15

We will work with projects to develop this approach during the programme.

Communities of Practice

During the programme we want project participants, both students and staff to actively participate in on-line collaborative communities.

For Project Leads

- We will start with a face-to-face event on Monday 26th November which Project Leads will be required to attend. We would also welcome representatives from other providers participating in each project.
- We will hold on-line practice sharing sessions during the programme offering critical friend support to challenge thinking to support reflective practice.
- We will host an on-line space to share materials from us to projects and between projects. Materials shared may relate to both the content and conduct of the research.

For Project Participants – Staff and Students involved in partnerships

With the support of the Project Leads we want each partnership to be involved in:

Blogs / Vlogs

- All project pairs / groups will be required to create and update a blog throughout the project
- Other project participants will be invited to comment, question or contribute
- We see this as an activity record; as an opportunity for active engagement with a type of online learning they may not use already; and as a research output in its own right

Show and Tell

- Each of the four projects will nominate at least one pair / group to deliver a live, recorded webinar sharing details on their partnership work, the technology they have been using and the lessons learned in relation to the programme aims

MAKING A PROJECT PROPOSAL

Submitting your application

The application form can be downloaded as a separate document, alongside the prospectus here: www.strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk/services/otla. Each section of the form directly relates to the assessment criteria. Please keep within the word limit – any words over the limit will not be taken into consideration. No additional attachments or annexes are permitted.

Your proposals should be made using the project application document which has the following sections:

1. **Eligibility:** confirmation that you are an eligible organisation
2. **Partners:** details of the individuals who will be involved in the project team or in output production
3. **Context:** description of the organisations in which the project will be conducted, and details of the students and staff that will be involved in partnerships
4. **Model:** your proposed model of student-staff partnerships you intend to pilot, including for example participant recruitment, partnership roles and activity, participant support and CPD; and how your project will tackle the research questions.
5. **Outputs:** the tangible practical outputs your project will produce
6. **Outcomes and impact:** How will the project contribute to the outcome and impact indicators set out in this prospectus? How will you provide evidence or measure them?
7. **Dissemination:** your proposals for case studies and for wider cascade or CPD within your organisations
8. **Collaboration and Management:** how you plan to work collaboratively as a group, and how the project will be managed
9. **Project Plan and Budget:**

Applications must be submitted to otla@strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk and must be received by **(12 noon) Friday 9th November 2018**. Any applications received after this time/date will not be assessed.

All questions about the programme and application process can be submitted to: otla@strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk. We will aim to answer questions within 48hrs. All questions and answers will be anonymised and published as an open-access downloadable document here: www.strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk/services/otla. Deadline for questions is (5pm) Friday, 2nd November 2018.

Building your Project Consortium

Proposals could originate from existing partners who have previous experience of collaborative projects, from individual organisations, from networks of organisations and from individual practitioners with a strong area for investigation looking to work with others. However, all projects must have a “home” with an eligible lead organisation.

To help individual practitioners to network and start to form project groups we are holding three online webinars 0930 and 1530 24th October and 0930 30th October. These are not compulsory. You can register for these here: www.strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk/sdnevents

In addition, a recording of the webinar briefing will be published here www.strategicdevelopmentnetwork.co.uk/services/otla

Eligibility

The project lead must be an organisation in receipt of Education and Skills Funding Agency funding. Regional networks working on behalf of providers can be project leads but contracting must be through an eligible provider.

Each collaborative project must include at least ten practitioners from at least three organisations.

Practitioners will be from FE colleges, independent providers, employer-providers, specialist colleges, universities, third sector organisations, local authority providers, end-point assessment organisations, or other related organisations.

Each participant in the collaborative project must be directly involved in (or support) the front-line delivery of training or assessment. (*By front-line delivery, we mean those who have a day-to-day role in directly supporting, training or assessing learners e.g. tutors / trainers / teachers / coaches / on-programme assessors*)

Eligible practitioners / organisations may be involved in more than one application if they are materially different. If there is found to be a duplication of the same application, focus or activities, this is likely to disqualify all such applications from further review. It is unlikely that multiple applications from a single organisation or consortia would be approved as we want to achieve maximum spread, impact and value for money.

Assessment criteria and process

All applications will be assessed by an assessment panel, made up of representatives from the Foundation, SDN and JISC (who are independent of the programme). All applications will be reviewed and scored by at least two assessment panel members, before being moderated and final decisions being made.

The Assessment Panel will use the following assessment criteria to guide their scoring decisions: (Numbers in brackets relate to sections in the application form)

Criteria	Maximum score	Weighting
Eligibility (1)	<i>Qualifying criteria</i>	
Partners and Context (2) (3)	5	4
Model (4)	5	6
Practical Outputs (5)	5	4
Research (6)	5	4
Outcomes and impact (7)	5	4
Dissemination (8)	5	3
Project Management (9)	5	3
Value for money (10)	5	3
Balance Will the project sit alongside other high-scoring projects to help achieve a programme that tests a range of models whilst at the same time producing significant impact?		

It is important that the successful projects form a well-balanced programme overall, that achieves the research objectives as well as outcomes and impact for the sector. Scores in themselves will therefore not determine the final success or otherwise of the application.

Where your application is unsuccessful, we are happy to provide feedback on why this has been the case. Applicants however will not be able to appeal the decision or ask for a re-assessment.

Timetable

Activity	Date
Prospectus issued	19 th October
Webinar briefings	24 th & 30 th October
Deadline for questions	Friday 2 nd November
Proposals to be received no later than	(12 noon) Friday 9 th November
Assessment and appraisal of proposals	15 th November
Grants awarded / project lead and mentor contact commences	19 th November
Project leads development day (please hold this date for the project lead who will be required to attend. We would also welcome representatives from other providers participating in each project)	26 th November

MANAGING YOUR PROJECT

Project roles

The key roles in each project will be:

Project Leads

- project management
- lead the team and maintain momentum during the project
- arrange face-to-face meetings and regular online catch-up points
- monitoring and reporting
- grant and project budget management
- be a practitioner researcher

Project Team Members

- coordinating practitioner partnerships in participating organisations
- practitioner researcher (i.e. a member of a student-staff partnership)
- output production
- providing peer support within the project
- reflect on their role as practitioner researchers

As a minimum, we would expect all participants to meet face-to-face at least four times throughout the project, with regular contact throughout (e.g. online meetings, email exchanges, surveys, Foundation portal).

It is also important that each participant has senior management permission / buy-in to collaborate in this way.

Student-Staff Partnership Members

- participating in practitioner partnerships in participating organisations
- contributing to Communities of Practice, case studies and evaluation

SDN Project Mentors

providing advice and guidance to the project lead with:

- understanding research and project processes
- defining project-specific evaluation indicators
- project set-up
- attending the initial meeting of the project team to provide briefing and support with methodology, requirements and professional standards
- providing input on further education and educational technology issues
- monitoring project progress
- project output production

Project mentors will not be available for project administration or delivery.

Project initiation

All successful applicants will be notified on Monday 19th November. The project lead will be contacted soon after this date by your assigned project mentor.

In some cases, your application may be approved subject to amendments. These will be agreed with the project lead, before any agreements or payments are issued.

Contract agreements will be issued to each project lead and signed (by both parties), along with a payment schedule.

Project leads development day

We will hold a project leads' development day on Monday 26th November, to

- share your approach with other projects
- brief you on programme and project management
- brief you on the research process and outputs
- discuss the Professional Standards and how these could be embedded
- meet your project mentor, and agree outcome and impact indicators

The development day is compulsory for all project leads - it is important you are available to attend this day, before submitting an application. We would also welcome representatives from other providers participating in each project)

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Foundation and SDN are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion.

We expect each collaborative project to consider the equality, diversity and inclusion implications for practitioners, apprentices and employers, as part of their line of enquiry. We will ask you to reflect this in all outputs and reports. This will be taken into account when assessing applications and, as noted above, EDI-focused project proposals are welcome.

All participants will be requested to complete the Foundation's Equality and Diversity survey, unless they have already done so as part of another project.

It is important that all project participants, and in particular project leads, consider the varying needs of people from all protected characteristic groups in all aspects of project delivery. This, for example, means:

- Sourcing meeting venues that meet minimum accessibility standards and are able to make reasonable adjustments
- Providing materials, papers or discussion points in advance, and in different formats, where requested
- Using accessible online meeting / teleconference platforms

It is also important that all project materials and outputs:

- are written in plain English
- conform to readability guidelines (e.g. uses accessible font sizes/colours)
- are suitable, where possible, for screen-readers
- reduce perceived / actual barriers e.g. using examples / images that represent diverse groups

Value of grants and financial management

The grant value available for each collaborative project is up to £12,000 (including any VAT).

It is expected that the core purpose and activities conducted by each project group will sit outside of VAT requirements, and will therefore be treated as grant funding. If you think that any particular costs are likely to incur VAT, it is important that you make this clear in your budget when applying. Any such costs will need to sit within the total budget (maximum of £12,000).

Guidance on VAT rules can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vat-notice-70130-education-and-vocational-training/vat-notice-70130-education-and-vocational-training>

It is the responsibility of the lead organisation to ensure all VAT and State Aid regulations are complied with by all those in receipt of funding, including De Minimis Aid Regulations: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/state-aid>

It is important that project leads have agreement from all project participants that they are happy with the budget split submitted in the application form (as well as their activities and level of commitment).

Contract agreements will be issued to each project lead and signed (by both parties), along with a payment schedule.

Data Protection and Cyber Security

Protocols will be in place for programme data handling (electronic and physical) in accordance with the data protection legislation.

All project leads (and anyone else within the project who is required to store and/or share data from the project) will need to ensure appropriate security and password protections are in place for all servers, computers/devices, documents and software being used to host or share data. Back-up copies should be made and no project data should be shared with any organisation or participant outside of the programme, unless express permission has been given by those concerned.

We also expect you to have all relevant cyber security software and internal monitoring checks in place.

This will be reflected in the contract agreements signed with all project leads.

Terms and Conditions

- It is the project lead's responsibility to ensure all members of the group are in agreement with the proposed budget split submitted to us as part of the application, along with their role, level of commitment, outputs and timescales. It is also important that each participant has senior management permission / buy-in to collaborate in this way.
- All grant funding must be used solely for the purposes of the collaborative project
- The project lead organisation must have good financial health, and may be required to provide evidence (such as audited accounts) to prove this is the case