



MLA Informal Adult Learning Challenge Fund – supporting partnerships between museums, libraries and archives and self-organised groups of learners.

Guidance notes for making an application

Before you complete the application form please read through this document. All applications to the MLA Informal Adult Learning Challenge Fund 2009-2010 must be made on the application form available on the MLA website www.mla.gov.uk. Hard copy only submissions will not be accepted.

Context

The Learning Revolution White Paper was published by Government in March 2009. The White Paper describes a new vision for informal learning for the 21st century and how Government will help informal adult learning flourish. It can be downloaded at: http://www.dius.gov.uk/skills/engaging_learners/informal_adult_learning/white_paper

The Learning Revolution recognises that people are increasingly learning in new ways and in particular notes the growth in the number and range of self-organised groups of learners coming together to pursue common interests and learn from each other.

What we are looking for

We are looking for innovative bids that identify new ways of using the spaces and resources in our sector to support people to organise their own learning.

How do you define informal adult learning?

The Government defines it as learning for its own intrinsic value. The term covers a huge variety of activities; it could include a self-organised reading group in a village hall, a music class in an FE college, researching the National Gallery collection on-line or taking part in a volunteer project to record the living history of a particular community.

The MLA Informal Adult Learning Challenge Fund grant programme

The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) is running a small grants programme open to museums, libraries and archives in England. Museums, libraries and archives may apply for grants of up to £5000 which meet the key aim and objectives listed below. The minimum that you can apply for is £500.

How to apply

Local authorities can put in applications from different venues e.g. library, archive or museum. However, priority will be given to projects that are working together. If you are from a local authority service and are thinking about putting in a bid for an Informal Adult Learning Challenge Fund grant, please check with other services in your authority before making an application.

Applications for the grant programme open on the 8th June 2009 and close on the 17th July 2009 at 12 noon.

Eligibility

Before completing your application please check your eligibility and consider the following:

- You must be a museum, library or archive venue in England
- You must have demonstrated your commitment to the new informal adult learning movement announced in the Learning Revolution White Paper by signing the Learning Revolution pledge. To sign up to the pledge visit the DIUS website
http://www.dius.gov.uk/skills/engaging_learners/informal_adult_learning/pledge
- The MLA will check that your organisation has supported the pledge
- Your proposed project must match the main aim and objectives of the MLA Informal Adult learning innovation fund
- You must be able to evidence in your application some partner contribution either cash or in kind
- You must use the correct application form
- You must be able to deliver by end of March 2010

Remember MLA will not fund:

- Informal adult learning programmes developed and managed by museums, libraries and archives themselves
- Projects that are outside of the main aim and objectives for the programme as detailed above
- Projects with applications from non museum, library or archive organisations
- Museums who are not Accredited or not working towards Accreditation
- Community archives unless in partnership with their local authority museum, library or archive
- Projects which cannot complete by March 2010

If you would like to check your eligibility or have any specific queries regarding your eligibility or the application process, please contact Chris Fardon
chris.fardon@mla.gov.uk

Filling in the Application Form

Section A- Contact Details

The purpose of this section of the form is for us to get an idea of who you are and if you are eligible for this grant fund from MLA.

Remember funding can only be given to museum, library or archive organisations in England.

Please complete this section fully as we may need to contact you about your application. The contact person that you put in this section should be the person that we can call if we need to discuss anything.

Section B- Summary Project Details

The purpose of this section of the form is for us to get an idea of who you will be working with, timescales and the themes of your project.

Q10. Identify which self-organised group/s you will support through your project. As we will use this wording in press releases, it should be a concise statement or sound-byte on what your project is about. Please identify if the self-organised group you are supporting is a new partnership for your museum, library or archive or continued support for a self-organised group that you already have a relationship with.

Section C: Your Project

This is your opportunity to sell us the idea of your project and how your plans fit with the aims and priorities of the MLA Informal Adult Learning Challenge Fund . We are looking to see that you have a suitable approach, clear partnerships in place, capacity to deliver and a solid understanding of what you want to use the money for.

Note on appendices

If you would like to attach appendices please ensure that these are related to your answers in the boxed sections e.g. you may have done some consultation prior to the project and may wish to include details of that work. All appendices must be easily identifiable with the organisation name detailed on the file name.

Q15. Evaluation

The MLA Programmes Team will manage a national summative evaluation and if awarded funding, you will be expected to contribute to this, but in addition to this you will be expected to carry out an evaluation of your own project.

When thinking about evaluation you should be able to tell us:

- How you will demonstrate what happened as a result of your project?
- What information will you collect to enable you to do this?

You can mention here any evaluation methodologies that you may use for this. e.g. Generic Learning Outcomes (Inspiring Learning or Generic Social Outcomes or both, see www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk for further details.

Q16. **Budget**

Please include a full breakdown of costs and an explanation of how you have worked these out - include a breakdown of any fees including salaries. If backfilling posts, please tell us the number of days and the rates used to calculate this.

Please note that administration costs should not exceed 25% of the overall project cost. This sum does not include work with artists or people who may be employed to deliver workshops or training. It refers to the actual administration costs of your project. In this section applicants will be assessed on;

- how clear the budget is
- whether the project is financially viable
- if costs are representative of the level of activity planned
- whether the organisation has made a commitment to the project
- whether the budget is appropriate
- whether the project represents good value for money
- whether or not the partnership with the self-organised group/s of learners will be sustainable beyond the funded period to March 2010.

Explanation of terms:

Total Amount Requested- is the amount you are asking MLA for

Total Partners Contribution- is your own or any partners contribution to the project, this includes in-kind support.

Total Project Cost- is the overall cost of your project

Section D: Declaration

Sign the declaration section so we can process your application, the signature should be that of the person named in Section A.

Section E: Submission of form

All applications should be completed and submitted electronically. This means that the form should be downloaded, completed and submitted to us as an attachment via a valid email address.

Applications must be submitted in word format, we CANNOT accept scanned pages saved as Jpegs, gifs or any other format.

Applications to the fund must be sent to the following address grants@mla.gov.uk . Please ensure your application is named Adult Learning Fund – submission from *followed by the name of your organisation*.

All applications must be signed. If you do not have an electronic signature that you can use (this is a copy of your signature scanned into a word document that you can

cut and paste into your application) a signed hard copy should be sent. Hard copy only submissions will not be accepted.

Address:
Grants and Procurement
Museums, Libraries and Archives Council
Grosvenor House, 14 Bennetts Hill
Birmingham , B2 5RS

Receipt of all applications will be acknowledged by email.

A decision on applications will be made by 3 August 2009. Applicants will be informed of the decision 31 August 2009.

Additional Notes

Payment Schedule

Grant awards will be paid in advance up to a maximum of 75% of the full award on receipt of the Memorandum of Agreement Document that will form the basis of our funding agreement with you.

Within this funding agreement we may also put additional terms and conditions on your grant.

The balance of 25% will be released retrospectively on MLA being content that all conditions of award have been satisfied and that a FINAL REPORT FORM has been completed by the organisation.

Data Protection and Freedom of Information

Publicity

Full listings of all the grants we award are published on the MLA website. We also publicise some awards in our Information Bulletins and through press releases.

You will be required to acknowledge MLA and DIUS in all publicity for your project (if successful you will receive full details explaining how to do this). Failure to credit the MLA and DIUS will affect payment of your grant.

Images should be submitted in support of your project (e.g. final report or case study) and they may be stored electronically by us. Before you submit images you must ensure that you have the correct permissions for their use from the participants and that these photographs have the relevant permission forms to back these up. Please refer to your own organisation's guidelines on how to do this.

Openness and accountability

Information supplied by you will be held in electronic files. It will then be summarised and details transferred to a computer-based grants management system. Reports from the information you supply within your application and from comments made on your application by external assessors and staff members and will be held in computer-based systems. The information you supply will be made available to those assessing your grant application. By submitting your application you agree to these terms and conditions.

Freedom of information

Data held on our grants management system is used for the following purposes: statistical reporting, application assessing, accounting purposes and for contacting you. If you are successful, details of your application (including the project scope, amount awarded, title of project, participant numbers) may become public information.

We are committed to being clear to applicants on how we assess and make decisions. We are happy to provide you with copies of the information we hold on you including our assessment of your application.

We are also listed as a public authority in the Freedom of Information Act 2000. By law, we may have to provide your application documents and assessment information to a member of the public if they ask for them under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. However, we will not release those parts of the documents covered by one or more of the exemptions under the act. For information on the exemptions and freedom of information generally, please visit www.foi.gov.uk.

An exemption in this case would be, your personal details (the name of person applying for the grant on the application form) which will be held within our grants management system and our paper files and accessed only by our staff, appointed auditors and individuals or organisations who may help us assess or monitor grants.

We view your signature on your application form as acceptance of the use of your data as outlined above.

General Conditions of MLA Informal Adult Learning Challenge Fund awards

The grant award will include, though not exclusively, the following general terms and conditions:

- Funding is applied solely and exclusively towards reimbursement of costs incurred by grantee organisation on activities in accordance with the approved purpose of the grant /project activity
- A deadline for the completion of project activity is agreed with the MLA and the grantee which will also be the date by which funding is to be expended; the unexpended balance is to be repaid to the MLA
- Concise progress reports are to be submitted by the grantee to cover project activity throughout its life
- A final report is to be submitted to the MLA at the end of the project you will not be able to receive your final 25% of funding without completing this
- The grantee is to submit to the MLA one month after the completion of project activity a complete statement of expenditure detailing how the funds were used to support the project activity
- MLA Council and DIUS are to be acknowledged in all written and electronic publications in line with established Logo, Support Mark and Visual Identity Guidelines (a copy of which can be downloaded from the MLA website). This includes all promotion, publicity, press and marketing materials relating to the project activity
- All institutional beneficiaries of grant awards made by the MLA are required to demonstrate their active commitment to eliminate discrimination against employees, suppliers or users on the basis of colour, disability, ethnic origin, gender or gender re-assignment, race, religious belief or sexual orientation

- Grant awards will be paid in advance up to a maximum of 75% of the full award. The balance of 25% will be released retrospectively on MLA being content that all conditions of award have been satisfied
- In the instance that the conditions of the funding agreement are not met the MLA reserves the right to cancel the agreement and in the event of such cancellation require the grantee to repay all or part of the funds at its discretion such discretion not to be exercised unreasonably
- We may also put additional terms and conditions on your grant.