Please note

The closing date and time for applications to this fund is 12 noon on Thursday 30 October 2014.

All applications must be sent to goodpracticefund@ecu.ac.uk

All applications will receive an automatic acknowledgment of receipt. If you do not receive an acknowledgment please contact Jonathan Gascoigne on 020 7438 1013.
Contents

1 Introduction 1
2 Eligibility 2
3 Applications 3
4 Project themes 4
   The public sector equality duty 4
   Identified themes 5
5 Project selection 6
   Outcome focused 6
   Evidence based 6
   Achievability 6
   Partnership working 7
   Value for money 7
   Avoiding duplication 8
   Institutional commitment 8
   Embedding good practice 8
   Sustaining good practice 9
   Spreading good practice 9
   Maximising the reach of the fund 9
6 Project support 10
7 Reporting and evaluation requirements 11
8 Dissemination requirements 12
9 Key dates and requirements 13
10 Payment 14
11 Contact details 15
Appendix 1: Guidance on mainstreaming and embedding equality 16
Appendix 2: FE data sources (England) 17
Appendix 3: FE data sources (UK-wide) 20
Appendix 4: Guidance and research on equality in the FE sector 22
Appendix 5: Tools to help with FE data collection 25
1 Introduction

The Skills Funding Agency and Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) are pleased to invite applications to the Equality and diversity good practice fund.

The fund, formerly known as the Equality and diversity innovation fund, will issue grants of up to £30,000 for projects that advance equality, diversity and inclusion for learners in the further education (FE) sector.

Since 2009 the fund has pioneered approaches to engaging underrepresented groups and delivering high-quality research into their requirements. In response to research by the Institute for Employment, the focus of this year’s fund will be embedding, sustaining and spreading good practice in supporting learners to participate and achieve in FE, and developing the capacity of the sector to meet the public sector equality duty.

Project delivery will take place between January and June 2015, with dissemination events held in July 2015.

Projects in receipt of a grant to the value of £9,999 or less will be subject to a lower level of reporting and monitoring than projects receiving larger grants.

This prospectus outlines:
- eligibility requirements for the fund
- the application process
- project themes for the fund
- how successful projects will be selected
- the support ECU will provide throughout the project
- reporting and dissemination requirements and timescales
- the payment schedule

The appendix contains sources of further information that applicants may wish to consider in developing their proposals.
2 Eligibility

The fund is only open to organisations directly funded by the Skills Funding Agency in the 2014/15 academic year, including the National Careers Service and offender learning.

Projects must be aimed at addressing equality issues faced by learners who are over 18 years of age and/or those of any age in Apprenticeships or Traineeships.

Project funding should not directly fund the delivery of education and training. This is the purpose of the adult skills budget. Capital costs and equipment purchases for use on the project should not exceed 10% of the overall project cost.

In order to maximise the benefits across the sector, applications are limited to one per lead provider.
3 Applications

Applications to the fund should be sent to goodpracticefund@ecu.ac.uk by 12 noon on Thursday 30 October 2014. All applications will receive an automatic acknowledgment of receipt. If you do not receive an acknowledgment, please contact Jonathan Gascoigne on 020 7438 1013.

The application form can be found at www.ecu.ac.uk/goodpracticefund. Alternative formats are available on request to goodpracticefund@ecu.ac.uk.

Applicants will be advised by 21 November 2014 whether their application has been successful. Successful applicants will then be given details of the time and venue for the inception meeting to take place on 11 December 2014 in London.
4 Project themes

The focus of the fund is embedding, sustaining and spreading good practice in supporting learners to participate and achieve in FE, and developing the capacity of the sector to meet the public sector equality duty.

**The public sector equality duty**

The public sector equality duty requires those carrying out public functions to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The following protected characteristics are covered under the public sector equality duty:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership – but only in respect to eliminating unlawful discrimination in employment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race – this includes ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality
- religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
Identified themes

All projects should aim to advance equality, diversity and inclusion in the FE sector. In particular, proposals are welcomed that aim to:

- address underrepresentation and stereotyping by disability, race and gender in Apprenticeships and Traineeships
- enable careers advisers to challenge stereotyping and advise people with different protected characteristics
- advance equality for groups with different protected characteristics in offender learning
- address the recommendations from the Skills Funding Agency’s research into sexual orientation and gender identity equality in adult learning
- address the recommendations from the Skills Funding Agency’s research on learners’ views of religion and belief equality in adult learning
- support access, inclusion and progression for care leavers with different protected characteristics
- increase understanding of issues faced by learners with specific intersectional identities eg disabled black learners
- engage with employers to advance equality in workplace learning

Proposals that address alternative, clearly identified, equality issues will also be welcomed.
5 Project selection

All proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

### Outcome focused

Funded projects must aim to achieve a demonstrable impact for learners or potential learners.

Proposals should therefore include clearly defined outcomes for learners or potential learners, including how success in meeting these outcomes will be measured, and how the project will engage, involve, develop or support its intended beneficiaries.

### Evidence based

Funded projects will respond to national or local equality issues in the FE sector. Proposals should therefore include a needs assessment, using data and/or research to outline evidence of a clearly identified issue within the organisation or community.

ECU has developed a non-exhaustive list of national FE data sources to support applicants in developing their proposals, and a list of some research and guidance relating to equality issues in the FE sector. This can be found in appendix 2, 3 and 4. Case studies of previous projects can be found at Excellence Gateway and Equalities Toolkit.

### Achievability

Funded projects will aim to be achievable within the six month project timeframe from January to June 2015. This requires clearly identified deliverables, good project management, and clear reporting arrangements.

Proposals should therefore include details of:

- activities, milestones, deliverables and dates for completion and dissemination, including contributing to the national dissemination events in July 2015
Partnership working

Long-term equality and diversity requires a joined-up approach and so it will be important for projects to demonstrate partnership working (for example between different staff members and departments and/or between the provider and an employer or different provider).

Proposals should therefore include details of the relevant partners that will be involved, the role of each partner in delivering the project, and what improvement or change the partnership will deliver for learners.

Value for money

Funded projects will bring benefits for learners, individual providers and the wider sector.

Proposals should therefore include details of:

- how the project will raise the profile of equality issues within participating providers and within the sector
- how the project will deliver value for money, including a clear and detailed budget that justifies the amount applied for and identifies the value, source and timing of any potential or agreed match funding or in-kind support
- a commitment to collaboration with other projects and to sharing lessons learned with the wider FE sector
Avoiding duplication

Proposals should be informed by an understanding of previously funded projects and other existing good practice so that previous projects or other existing work are not duplicated. Projects that are too similar to previous projects are unlikely to be funded unless there is a good reason why the project is being proposed (for example it develops a previous project or explores how good practice can be embedded, sustained and/or spread).

Proposals should therefore include details of other work in the area and how the suggested approach develops this or adds something new. Proposals should also indicate whether the project has received funding from the Skills Funding Agency or elsewhere previously.

Case studies of previous projects can be found at Excellence Gateway and Equalities Toolkit.

Institutional commitment

Responsibility for advancing equality and diversity in a meaningful way must be undertaken by the whole organisation and not just by a few individuals. Proposals should therefore demonstrate senior management commitment (for example through match-funding or in-kind support, actions within the project being undertaken by senior managers, or outcomes being considered by senior management teams).

Embedding good practice

A key focus of the fund is embedding good practice. Proposals should therefore include details of the measures that will be taken to embed the project within mainstream activities and/or how the project will promote understanding of how to embed good practice.

ECU has produced a number of resources on embedding equality, including possible frameworks and reflective questions. Links to these resources can be found in appendix 1.
Sustaining good practice

While the purpose of these grants is to fund projects until July 2015, project proposals should demonstrate long-term ambition and sustainability. Proposals should therefore include details of measures that will be taken to sustain the benefits of the project beyond the funding period and/or how the project will promote understanding of how to develop sustainable good practice.

Spreading good practice

The fund encourages providers with good equality and diversity practices to share resources and expertise with others. Proposals should therefore include details of how learning will or could be transferred to other providers (for example how approaches and models could be applied in other contexts).

Maximising the reach of the fund

To ensure the maximum reach of the fund, qualifying proposals will be selected to ensure a spread by:

- geographical area in England, including all regions in England and the rural/urban mix
- type of training organisation, including colleges, private, third sector and employer providers
- type of post-19 provision, including (but not limited to) Apprenticeships, offender learning, the National Careers Service and Traineeships
- protected characteristic and equality issue being addressed
6 Project support

ECU provides an advice service for colleges in Scotland and higher education institutions in the UK. The advice service will be extended to all those providers participating in the grants programme for the duration of the project.

The advice service will provide support to providers on:

- meeting the Equality Act
- embedding and mainstreaming equality
- instigating culture change
- collecting, analysing and benchmarking quantitative and qualitative data
- project management and evaluation
- disseminating and communicating

Further support requirements will be discussed with participating providers at the inception meeting. Support will be provided through two further events held in February/March 2015.

Project closure support may also be provided between July and September 2015.
7 Reporting and evaluation requirements

Successful applicants will be expected to:

= monitor and analyse the impact of projects on intended beneficiaries

= share regular updates about progress with project managers of other funded projects

= produce a final case study report, using a template ECU will provide, to be published on www.equalitiestoolkit.com in June 2015

Projects in receipt of larger grants (more than £9,999) will be required to submit an interim report (roughly equivalent to four sides of A4), using a template ECU will provide, in February/March 2015.

Some projects will be required to participate in follow-up monitoring and evaluation activity. This will help to establish the difference projects have made and their impact on organisations, localities or communities.

Full details of the reporting required will be provided to successful applicants.
8 Dissemination requirements

All successful applicants will be expected to:

= present their findings at one of two national dissemination events to be held in July 2015

= submit and share with the wider sector any outputs via local and national dissemination activities and events
## Key dates and requirements

The table below summarises the key dates and requirements for providers in receipt of the small and larger grants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Small grants (£9,999 or less)</th>
<th>Larger grants (more than £9,999 up to £30,000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inception meeting</td>
<td>11 December 2014</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interim report</td>
<td>February/March 2015</td>
<td>Not required</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support events for project leads (2)</td>
<td>February/March 2015</td>
<td>Optional</td>
<td>Optional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final online report, case study and materials or resources produced as part of the project</td>
<td>June 2015</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National dissemination events (2)</td>
<td>July 2015</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National/local dissemination activities</td>
<td>July to September 2015</td>
<td>Required</td>
<td>Required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10 Payment

Successful projects will receive funding in the form of a grant payable in instalments.

For projects in receipt of a grant to the value of £9,999 or less, 75% will be payable once the project funding has been approved. The rest will be paid on receipt of a satisfactory final report/case study by the end of June 2015 and participation in the national dissemination events in July 2015.

For projects in receipt of a grant of more than £9,999 (up to a maximum of £30,000), 50% will be payable once the project funding has been approved. The rest will be paid in two instalments:

- 25% on receipt of a satisfactory interim report by March 2015
- 25% on receipt of a satisfactory final report/case study by June 2015 and participation in the national dissemination events in July 2015

In the case of project under spend or non-completion of the project, ECU and the Skills Funding Agency will reduce the size of the award.
11 Contact details

If you have any questions, please email goodpracticefund@ecu.ac.uk.

Any queries should clearly reference the appropriate paragraph in the documentation and, to the extent possible, should be aggregated rather than sent individually. The deadline for submitting substantive queries is 12 noon on 27 October 2014.

ECU will respond to all reasonable requests for clarification within five working days. Please note that, depending on the nature of the query, responses may be posted on ECU’s website (without identifying any party), therefore queries should not contain any details which are confidential.

Please consult www.ecu.ac.uk/goodpracticefund for any updates and frequently asked questions.
Appendix 1: Guidance on mainstreaming and embedding equality

- ECU (2012) *Mainstreaming equality at the heart of FE*
  Guidance on how to mainstream equality across functions.
  www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/mainstreaming-equality-at-the-heart-of-higher-education-final-report

- ECU (2012) *Quality assurance: embedding equality within colleges practices and processes*
  Guidance on mainstreaming equality while also enhancing quality assurance practice and processes for colleges in Scotland. Although developed with and for colleges in Scotland, the guidance may be helpful to colleges in England.
  www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/quality-assurance-embedding-equality-colleges

- ECU (2013) *Building capacity for equality impact assessment in colleges: handbook for trainers*
  Training materials to help build college-wide knowledge, understanding and expertise that contribute to both the delivery of the specific duties to assess and review policies and practices and to mainstream the public sector equality duty in Scotland. Again, although developed with and for colleges in Scotland, this resource may be helpful to colleges in England.
Appendix 2: FE data sources (England)

Skills Funding Agency
FE data library

The FE data library offers data and information on learners, learning programmes and learner achievement. The Skills Funding Agency incorporated the individualised learning record dataset from the Information Authority website when it closed in spring 2014.

www.gov.uk/government/collections/fe-data-library

- FE data library: FE and skills
  Statistical data set with information on learners, learning programmes and learner achievement.

- FE data library: Apprenticeships
  Statistical data set with information on Apprenticeships through a number of reports broken down by starts, achievements, sector, framework, geography, gender, age etc.

- FE data library: workplace learning
  Statistical data set that covers a broad range of workplace training, from basic skills to level 2, level 3 and other higher-level skills such as leadership and management. Excludes Apprenticeships.

- FE data library: other statistics and research
  Includes data on Traineeships (will be available from October 2014).

- FE data library: equality and diversity
  Participation/success rates of Apprentices and adult learners by ethnicity, gender, disability and age.

Apprenticeship success data


Equality and diversity data report 2009/10 to 2011/12 (2013)

Adult learner and all age Apprenticeship participation and success rates by ethnicity, gender, disability and age.

Ofsted data dashboard
Ofsted provides data dashboards for schools and FE and skills providers. The dashboard contains information on how effectively FE sector providers are performing and how they compare against national averages. Specifically, the FE and skills dashboard includes data on:
- the number of learners completing qualifications, including those undertaking academic, vocational and Apprenticeship-based courses
- the destination of learners once they complete their qualifications
- the priorities of local enterprise partnerships
http://dashboard.ofsted.gov.uk

Ofsted data dashboard guidance
This document provides guidance on the measures used to populate the further education and skills data dashboard. Specifically, it provides information on the definitions used, the limitations of the data, and any changes in methodology that may have impacted on the data.

Official statistics: further education and skills inspections and outcomes (2014)
This page has statistics on the inspection of FE and skills providers.
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)

- FE statistics collection
  This series of documents includes BIS statistics on FE.
  [www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/further-education)

- Further education and skills report – statistical first release (2014)
  This release presents information on adult (19+) government-funded FE (excluding schools and higher education) and all age (16+) Apprenticeships in England, between 2008/09 and 2012/13.

Department for Education (DfE)

- DfE publishes official statistics on education and children, in accordance with the code of practice for official statistics. There is a range of commentary, tables and data.
  [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education/about/statistics)

- NEET (young people not in education, employment or training) data

- Outcomes for children looked after by local authorities in England – statistical first release
  This release provides national and local authority level information on the outcomes for children who have been looked after by local authorities in England continuously for at least 12 months as at 31 March 2012.
Appendix 3: FE data sources (UK-wide)

**Association of Colleges**
A list of external FE data sources (includes SFA, BIS and DfE sources).
www.aoc.co.uk/about-colleges/research-and-stats/data-sources
- **Key FE statistics**
  www.aoc.co.uk/about-colleges/research-and-stats/key-further-education-statistics
- **Surveys and research**
  www.aoc.co.uk/about-colleges/research-and-stats/surveys-and-research

**Data.gov.uk**
- **FE resources**
  http://data.gov.uk/data/search?theme-primary=Education&q=further+education

**Education and Training Foundation (ETF) Excellence Gateway**
The gateway provides a searchable database of case studies and other sources of sector-based evidence.
- **Research resources and support**
  www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/17885
- **Sector based evidence**
  www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/17889

**Learning Plus UK**
Learning Plus UK is a non-profit organisation providing support to the education sector. Their website includes information about planned data releases relevant to the post-16 sector.
www.learningplusuk.org/data/post-16
UK national statistics publication hub

= Research publications on children, education and skills

= Research publications on school and college attainment and behaviour
Appendix 4: Guidance and research on equality in the FE sector

- Apprenticeships Unit (2012) *Creating an inclusive Apprenticeship offer*
  A survey of data and evidence relating to the participation and success of young people who declare learning difficulties and disabilities in Apprenticeships.

- Equality and Human Rights Council (2011) *What equality law means to you as an education provider: further and higher education*
  This guide is one of a series written by the commission to explain what you should do to meet the requirements of equality law.

- Institute for Employment Studies (2014) *Evaluation of the equality, diversity and inclusion grants*
  This research assesses the impact and value of the 2010-2013 grants, including good practice case studies.
  www.employment-studies.co.uk/pubs/report.php?id=sfa0914

- Institute for Employment Studies (2012) *Good practice evaluation of the diversity in Apprenticeship pilots*
  A good practice evaluation of 16 pilots which aimed to increase demand for, and supply of, Apprenticeships among underrepresented groups.
  www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Partners/Policy/~media/Documents/NASEvaluationofDiAPilotsFinalReport%202.ashx
= Learning and Skills Improvement Service (2010) Promoting transgender equality in further education
This guidance provides a greater understanding of transgender issues and the relevant law and good practice in relation to transgender employees and learners.

= National HE (higher education) STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) Programme (2012) Guidance booklet for teaching and professional staff in HE and FE: encouraging gender equality in STEM
This guide has been designed to be used as a starting point for teaching and professionals in HE and FE institutions by providing ideas to support, attract and retain female staff and students in STEM disciplines.
www.hestem.ac.uk/sites/default/files/guidance_booklet_for_he__fe_staff.pdf

= NUS (2010) Putting the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans) into FE
This toolkit includes ideas, hints and tips for students and student officers who want to start their own LGBT group. It includes research and information about homophobia and transphobia in FE, and case studies describing how different colleges have gone about setting up groups, including information about difficulties they have encountered and how they overcame them.
NUS (2011) *Race for equality*
A report on the experiences of black students in FE and HE. 

Skills Funding Agency (2011) *Research into sexual orientation and gender identity equality in adult learning*
This report aimed to understand how well the FE sector is meeting the needs of LGBT adult learners. 

Skills Funding Agency (2012) *Religion and belief in adult learning: learner views*
This report explores the impact of learners’ religion and/or belief on their experiences of adult learning. 
Appendix 5: Tools to help with FE data collection

- ECU (2011) Effective equality surveys
  This practical guidance outlines a step-by-step process of designing and using surveys to gather qualitative and quantitative data. Although tailored to the higher education sector, it has broader applicability to FE.
  [www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/effective-equality-surveys](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/effective-equality-surveys)

  Statistical report that focuses on colleges in Scotland. It may be of use to colleges in England as a guide for analysing and presenting FE equality data.

- ECU (2014) Measuring progress on equality: qualitative evidence
  This guidance sets out five steps to gathering, analysing and using qualitative evidence to measure progress on equality and determine the impact of specific initiatives. Again, although designed for the higher education sector, it has broader applicability to FE.
  [www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/measuring-progress-qualitative-evidence](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/measuring-progress-qualitative-evidence)