

SOCIAL INCLUSION FUND

Application form

Please complete the form with the requested information.

Please return completed forms to communities@oxford.gov.uk or send by post to: Communities and Neighbourhoods, Oxford City Council, St Aldate's Chambers, 109-113 St Aldate's, Oxford OX1 1DS

For support in completing this form, or to request a hard copy form, please contact Communities and Neighbourhoods on 01865 252828 or at communities@oxford.gov.uk

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1. **Councillor 1:** Cllr Bev Clack

Councillor 2: Cllr Graham Jones

2. **Date of submission:**

3. **Ward(s) to benefit:**

Cowley, Cowley Marsh, Lye Valley, Churchill, Rose Hill and Norhfield Brook are the wards with the highest percentage of population of people who cannot speak English or cannot speak it well (source English Proficiency by Ward). Wards in East Oxford are among those with substantial numbers of recent arrivals. Thus in St Clements Ward, East Oxford Primary School has 70.5% of children in school have English as a second language (source: Raise-on-Line).

1 in 6 Oxford Residents has a main language other than English and 1 in 50 Oxford residents cannot speak English well (source: Oxford City Council, Statistical Chart of the Month, April 2013).

Oxford is an ethnically diverse city. 22% of residents were from a black or minority ethnic group in 2011, compared to 13% in England. An additional 14% of residents are from a white but non-British ethnic background. Ethnic diversity increased between 2001 and 2011. The largest non-white ethnic groups represented in Oxford are Pakistani, Indian, Black African, 'other Asian' and Chinese ethnic groups. The child population is considerably more ethnically diverse than the older population, which is one reason why the population is expected to become even more ethnically diverse in the future. In 2010 almost half the life births in Oxford were to mothers born outside the UK (source: Oxford City Council, Statistical Chart of the Month, January 2012).

4. **Amount requested:** £10,000

5. **Length of project (months):** 12 months

If the approach above is successful it is envisaged that the courses will be delivered and evaluated and used as a showcase for future funding.

6. **Project title and brief outline:**

The 'ESOL Bridging the Gap' project aims to:

- Improve the language skills of those people in Oxford who cannot speak English or not speak it well so that they can access training and employment opportunities and improve their life chances.
- Bridge the gaps between providers and volunteers.
- Bridge the gaps between different communities and improve social cohesion.
- Improve the coordination of services and build upon the capacity of local communities to deliver the services that they need.

The ESOL ' Bridging the Gap' project will fund support to these specific identified gaps:

Coordination of the Providers Forum

- Having a key point of contact and single point of enquiry
- Ensuring the mapping of provision is maintained and updated via a self- access website.
- Facilitating and supporting meetings
- Maintaining an overview and to avoid duplication of services

Identifying the gaps in provision and working with providers to fill them.

- Providing support to the development of informal learning groups, including women's groups.
- Commissioning the design and delivery of a pilot course to support to Volunteers who provide classroom support to community groups in delivering ESOL courses.
- Commissioning the design and delivery of a pilot course to enable bridging or access to vocational training (for example catering or retail).

To attract match funding and continuation funding to:

- Ensure the design and delivery of courses that fill the gaps in provision
- Ensure the coordination work is sustained through the Providers Forum.

Match funding for the design and delivery of courses will be sought from the Oxfordshire Skills Board, Oxford Strategic Partnership LAA Reward Funding, Oxfordshire Skills LAA Reward Funding Group and other sources of funding that may be available.

It is proposed that the courses outlined above be commissioned through a competitive bidding process managed by the project steering group. Agencies will be invited to bid for this work and they will be asked how they would best meet these objectives and what added value they can bring (it may be that some training providers could design and deliver the courses as added value sources).

If this approach is successful it is envisaged that the courses will be delivered and evaluated and used as a showcase for future funding.

Background to the development of these proposals

The Oxford Strategic Partnership commissioned OCVA to undertake some research into ESOL provision in Oxford. A report on this work was circulated in October 2012. The report identified that ESOL provision was far from meeting needs of people wishing to learn to speak English and that this position was likely to get worse over the next few years. The report set out the potential implications and impacts on individuals not reaching their full potential. Also, that there was an opportunity to increase social cohesion.

The research highlighted that there is a groundswell of volunteers and community groups that are doing what they can to plug the gaps in provision but that there were opportunities to strengthen this work through improved coordination and support.

Since the OCVA report was written some further work has since been undertaken, including consultation with the ESOL Providers Forum and small community groups who deliver ESOL. This proposal has been designed as a result of this consultation.

The ESOL Providers Forum

The ESOL Providers Forum was established as a result of the OCVA Report. Members include:

Asylum Welcome
Oxfordshire Mind
CRISIS

Adult Skills and Learning Service (Oxfordshire County Council)
Ethnic Minority Business Service
Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action
Councillors from Oxford City and Oxfordshire County Councils.

There is a hope that FELLOW and some of the other smaller community groups putting on courses will also be able to attend the Forum meetings.

The ESOL Providers Forum is keen to be as self-sufficient as possible and it has been agreed that providers will update the database of provision themselves. However some support is required for the Forum, in arranging meetings, venues and to maintain the programme of work.

A key element of the proposal is to strengthen the capacity of this Forum so that they will be able to take forward this work in the future. Therefore OCVA have agreed to manage and oversee this project on their behalf.

The ESOL Providers Forum felt that the focus for funding should also be on the development and delivery of courses which would meet some specific needs and where there are currently gaps in provision.

7. Name and contact details of recipient of spend (individual/organisation):

Name: OCVA

Address: Floyds Row, St Aldates, Oxford, OX11SS

Telephone: 01865 251946

Email: e-mail: Alison.Baxter@ocva.org.uk

Steering Group

The project will be overseen by a small Steering Group, including representatives from OCVA, Oxford City Council, the ESOL Provider Forum and a beneficiary group.

There will be reports made to the Oxford Strategic Partnership, Stronger Communities Group and the Oxford City Council, Stronger Communities Corporate Board.

8. How much funding are you applying for? (Minimum £1000, maximum £10,000):
£10,000

9. How will the proposed project meet the criteria of the Social Inclusion Fund?

The project will target those people who are unable to speak English or can only speak a little English. These people are disadvantaged in being unable to access education, training and employment opportunities and therefore are likely to be living in poverty. This also affects their ability to access a range of services which affect their life chances, such as housing and health services.

There is a continuing need to provide ESOL training to the more established ethnic minority communities, especially women. However, numbers and type of ethnic minorities, seeking ESOL training continually changes as new groups of migrants arrive. For example currently, anecdotally, there are a large number of Spanish speaking people looking to access ESOL classes and who are seeking work. These rapid changes and developments are likely to continue into the future.

This proposal will improve life chances of those people with who can speak little or no English. It will increase opportunities for these people to access skills and employment and improve their life chances. It will improve social cohesion in our neighbourhoods.

The basis of the proposal is to build the capacity of local community groups to help themselves and their communities. These groups are ideally placed to understand the needs of their community and they are currently actively involved in delivering ESOL classes to them. However, they need coordination and support in order for this work to develop and become sustainable.

10. What will be the benefits of the proposed project to residents?

The ESOL Providers Forum

It is envisaged that the project will strengthen the capacity of the ESOL Providers Group who will be able to take this work forward in the future.

Small ethnic minority community groups

FELLOW and some of the other smaller community groups putting on courses will also benefit through additional support and improved links with other similar groups, volunteers and key providers (estimated support to 12 groups).

Individuals

Support to informal learning groups, including women's groups will build people's self-confidence to access courses and in other spheres of their lives.

The Vocational bridging course will enable those who have completed basic ESOL training to undertake vocational training, for example in food hygiene or retail, where their current level of English would not permit them to access this thus increasing their chances of gaining employment in these areas (1 pilot course designed and delivered).

Volunteers

The course for ESOL Volunteers will help them to improve the quality of the support that they provide, as well as developing their own skills and employment opportunities. In particular the volunteers will support non-English speaking mothers who will then be better able to support the educational attainment Of their children. (1 pilot designed and delivered).

Other potential outcomes include:

- Improved support to women's groups and links to improved educational attainment for children and young people.
- Improved links to schools and community centres, for example through the existing Saturday Schools.
- Promotion and links to the job clubs on our estates.
- The potential to reduce child poverty from the population group targeted.
- Improved health and well-being of people who can communicate more effectively with housing and health services
- Promoting cohesion by equipping recent arrivals to find a voice in contributing to the communal and civic life of the city
- Increasing the number of those eligible to vote.
- Easing the work of the police and justice system.
- Encouraging more volunteers for translation service training.

11. Have you discussed the proposed spend with the Communities and Neighbourhoods Team?

Yes

12. **If yes, which officer have you discussed it with:**

Name of Officer: Julia Tomkins and Angela Cristofoli

13. **Have you obtained any other officer advice?**

Yes

14. If yes, please provide the name of the officer and summarise the advice given:

Name of Officer: Val Johnson, Partnership Development Manager

Summary of advice:

- To build upon the work previously undertaken by OCVA .
- To consult on the development and design of the proposal with the ESOL Providers Forum.
- To consider ways in which additional resources could be levered in to support the project.
- To consider how the project can be made sustainable in the longer term.

Val Johnson has also agreed to sit on the proposed Steering Group to overseeing the delivery of the work.

12. **Do you have a personal interest in the proposed spend?**

Yes No

13. **If yes, please state nature of interest:**

14. **Is that interest also prejudicial?**

Yes No

15. Signed by Councillor

Please submit form to communities@oxford.gov.uk by Friday 17th May 2013