EQUIP Grants - Frequently Asked Questions

Contents

If your query isn't answered here please submit your queries HERE.

Last Updated: May 16, 2022

a) Can student organisations apply?

Yes, as long as you are properly constituted, and you have less than 49 employees on payroll and an annual turnover, equal to or under, €10million.

b) My organisation is based outside of London/boroughs listed under Central and West London; can I apply for the EQUIP Grant?

You may apply for the grant if you plan to deliver your project in the listed boroughs. For example, if your organisation is based in Birmingham and would be able to deliver in Westminster, you may apply and through the application, demonstrate an understanding of the communities within West and/or Central London.

For those who plan to apply but are unable to deliver in the listed Central and West London boroughs, please check online for your local community grant distribution.

c) I don't have a company bank account. Can I still apply?

No.

d) Does the organisation have to be situated in one of the delivery boroughs?

No, the organisation must show on the application that they will be delivering in one of the specified boroughs (in Central or West).

e) Can I apply if I am self-employed?

As long as you are properly constituted – yes.

f) We are a small organisation and don't have a counter signatory, can we still apply?

Yes, the organisation will be required to produce as part of your constitution your company signatory.

g) Do we need to be a charity? / What does it mean to be a small organisation?

No. Small Organisations with 49 full-time equivalent staff or less and with an annual turnover of less than €10 million can apply.

h) How do you verify that my organisation has 49 FTE?

We work based on trust however we could check this by requesting evidence of number of employees on payroll and check companies house.

i) Can we submit more than one bid per borough but supporting different customer groups?

You can only make one application in each Lot. If the project your delivering is across the different Lots (Central boroughs or West boroughs) then you will need to make separate applications, however if they are in the same Lot but different audiences, you will need to explain why within the one application.

j)   I don't have audited accounts due to the size of my organisation, what else can I provide?

In some cases, we may consider tax returns or statement of accounts.

a) If the number of starts/outcomes are not achieved fully, will we be penalised financially?

If there is serious underperformance PDT reserves the right to terminate, clawback or reduce the contract.

b) If successful, will we have an allocated support adviser?

Yes. You will be introduced to your Grant Support Officer upon Grant Agreement meeting.

c) Will we have training on collecting participant evidence?

Yes, training material will be provided for successful applicants.

d) What are the reporting requirements?

You will be required to report on finance (deferral of expenditure, i.e. showing payments leaving your bank account), participant/learner eligibility, participant/learner activities and participant/learner output (into training or job). This is all completed via an online portal that is created for securely uploading confidential information. There will be training provided for applicants who have been successful.

e) Will you come out to audit my project?

No but you will be required to send evidence of spend and outputs.

f) If the project is based in a given borough, can we support customers from neighbouring boroughs?

Yes, as long as the delivery borough is in the Lot, the participants/customers can come from anywhere in the 33 London Boroughs.

g) Can I apply to help people who are employed, on zero hours contracts, low income or are on the furlough scheme?

No, eligible participants must not be in work, this includes long-term and short-term unemployed, those who classify as economically inactive and those on benefits. See guidance for full criteria.

h) Can you define what you mean by Economically Inactive and how is this evidenced?

Economically Inactive = An unemployed person who is not ready to work within the next two weeks due to a type of barrier (i.e childcare, work limiting health condition, caring responsibility etc). Evidence of this can be a third-party verification or a self-declaration, further information and training will be provided after applications have been successful.

i) How long can my project run for?

July 2022 to January 2023.

j) Does an apprenticeship count as a job output or a training output?

An apprenticeship counts as a job output.

k) What is considered a 'Training Output'?

Must be a higher level than what the participant's qualification at enrolment. Ideally a minimum of 20hrs.

l) Can I count training on my project as a Training Output?

No. Activities described in the application as part of project delivery, cannot be counted as a progression, however, projects can refer to their own in-house provision. For example, your EQUIP project is to deliver Functional Skills. Jack is a participant you enrolled, and he has completed Functional Skills and would like to progress into Entry Level IT, which also your organisation delivers outside of EQUIP. Therefore, the Functional Skills is considered activities on the project and IT would be the progression to training.

m) My participant(s) progressed into training after leaving my project and also started a new job, can I claim both of these?

No. You cannot claim both outputs, it is either one or the other.

Application

a) Can I access a downloadable version of the application form?

No, the application is not available for downloads.

b) Do I have to complete the application form in one go?

No, if you wish to complete parts of the form or continue it at another time, you can click the 'Save' button and it will take you to the last section of the form.

Next, fill in the CAPTCHA test, click 'Save' again and it will generate a personalised URL which you must keep safe, and you can go back to it when you are ready complete your form.

c) How many times can I apply for a grant?

In a single round, an organisation can only apply once, per Lot Area, under one charity or company registration number.

d) My organisation has different arms, can we apply once for each arm?

If an organisation has many branches, each with a different registration numbers, then applications can be made per branch in one round. If the registration number is the same, then no.

e) Can I apply for Central AND West London grants simultaneously?

Yes, but you must make two separate applications for the boroughs listed for Central London and boroughs listed for West London.

f) What is the minimum & maximum grant amount?

The minimum is £5,000 and the maximum is £20,000 per round, per project, per Lot.

g) What is the deadline for submission?

Friday 10th June 2022 at 11:59pm

h) What if I need to edit the amount applied for after I have submitted?

Once a grant application has been submitted it will be assessed based on the amount applied for. It will not be possible to make amendments at that stage.

i) How long before we know if we have been successful or not?

All organisations will be notified by 13th July 2022.

j) Do I need to provide any documents at application stage?

No, all information that is required will be collected from the application form.

k) I'm having technical errors regarding the application form.

Please contact equip@pdt.org to discuss the issue.

l) Do I have to put a secondary contact on the application?

No, but it's helpful to have on record if we cannot contact the primary person about the application.

m) If my grant isn't approved, how will I know, and can I apply again?

No, unfortunately this will be our last round of EQUIP as we are reaching end of our ESFA Contract. There will be no appeals process for this round – all decisions will be final.

n) Can I make any amendments after I submit the application?

No.

o) Can the local authority provide a reference?

Yes, please make sure it is a direct contact and not a general enquires email/phone number.

p) What can I write in the project budget?

EQUIP funds 100% project costs, from staffing to equipment and beneficiary costs. It is advisable to ensure within your application you demonstrate a justification for all your project costs. An example budget is included in the Guidance Document.

a) **Can the grant be used for the following: to purchase refreshments for learners, or for room hire?**

Yes, here are a few examples of the things the grant can be used for; venue costs; stationary, laptops, beneficiary costs, tutor costs and refreshments. It cannot be used for religious purposes.

b) **Is there an indicative maximum cost per participant for this grant?**

No, this is a full cost recovery project not payment by result therefore we have not set any boundaries for cost per participant.

c) **I have been approved part of but not all my requested grant.**

You will have feedback from the appraisal panel which will detail reasons why there has been an alteration to your request. You can choose to accept or decline this alteration.

d) **How long after I have been approved before I receive my first payment?**

Each organisation will have an arrangement set out after the grant agreements have been signed.

e) **Should funding cover all programme costs in its entirety?**

We only require to submit the budget that EQUIP is funding.

f) **If I don't spend all of the Grant, do I have to return it?**

Yes, the EQUIP Grant is subject to an Article 125 and/or Article 127 audit from ESF and as such and all project expenditure **must be** defrayed.

a) **Are there minimum performance levels e.g. percentage of starts commencing employment?**

For the EQUIP project overall, yes. But for your individual projects, no, as it depends on the nature of your project.

b) **What happens in the case of a full lockdown?**

We want projects that have proven capabilities of delivering face to face as well as online projects.

c) **Job opportunities are very sporadic due to Covid-19 impact, will I still have to deliver on this?**

Yes

d) **How do we deliver remotely and verify documentation and activities?**

A Covid-19 Continuity plan is in place to support projects delivering remotely which outlines the processes for the remote project management. Further details will be shared with successful applicants.