Project Guidance (2018-20)

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# Overview of the Education Partnership Fund

The Universities of Birmingham and Nottingham has provided money through the Strategic Collaborative Fund (SCF) to support collaboration between the two institutions since the partnership was established in 2012. The joint UEB has agreed to run another round of the Educational Partnership Fund (EPF) with £250,000 available to fund collaborative educational enhancement projects that will run during 2018-2020.

Staff have the opportunity to bid for funding to undertake EPF projects as long as the bid is led by a member of staff from each institution. Applications can be submitted by a single pair of staff or a wider collaborative team. The call is open to both part- and full-time members of staff who are on the payroll of the University of Birmingham or the University of Nottingham.

Projects should investigate challenges that are faced by both universities, and lead to the development of innovative, evidence-based practices that will enhance student learning. We anticipate that we will support no more than four projects to run for up to two years, so applicants should develop projects of sufficient ambition, scale and potential impact. It is also a condition of funding that project outcomes include evidence-based recommendations that can impact on practice, and online ‘guides’ to help staff translate the findings.

We welcome bids that address one or more of the following priority topics:

## DeLIVERING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

One of the most important roles that universities play in helping their students to achieve their ambitions is to provide a genuinely inclusive university education, enabling every student to realise their intellectual potential and overcome any barriers to participation that they face on this journey.

Universities have a duty to promote student participation from all backgrounds, yet some students still remain under-represented across higher education. This suggests that, despite progress being made in terms of broadening and deepening student participation from a diverse range of backgrounds, much work is still to be done.

We are therefore seeking to fund projects that address the challenges we face in delivering inclusive education. By drawing together our experience and expertise across both institutions, projects will explore what an ‘inclusive education’ in a contemporary research-intensive university should look like and in doing so, understand and address the implications that arise from this exploratory work.

## AddRESSING THE UnderGraduate Attainment Gap

Developing a genuinely inclusive university education involves removing barriers to attainment, as well as participation, for all students. Whilst universities are keen to ensure that all students can take full advantage of the education on offer, there are attainment gaps for students who enter university from underrepresented groups in society indicating a waste of talent and potential.

Projects under this theme will be expected to investigate the question of how we explain and address UG attainment gaps at both institutions. Projects will not be expected to collect data that already exists on this subject as we already have attainment gap data available in both institutions. Instead, projects will be expected to look for new ways to better understand and close those gaps.

It is likely that proposals will touch on both themes, given the closely related nature of these areas of interest.

# 2018 applications timeline

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Activity | Time Period |
| Call for bids | 31 January 2018 |
| Deadline for Expressions of Interest | 6 April 2018 |
| Feedback to applicants | 24 April 2018 |
| Deadline for full submissions | 26 May 2018 |
| Outcomes to applicants | 22 June 2018 |

# How to apply

Download the Project Proposal form from the website: (<http://www.birmingham-nottingham.ac.uk/funding-opportunites/funding-opportunities.aspx> ) (email: [hefi.projects@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:hefi.projects@contacts.bham.ac.uk) if you have difficulties downloading it or have queries).

Consider your idea, research and consult as appropriate in order to complete the Expression of Interest form.

This process is being administered through the University of Birmingham, so please submit the completed Expression of Interest form to [hefi.projects@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:hefi.projects@contacts.bham.ac.uk) **by the deadline of 6 April 2018. Late submissions will not be accepted.**

If your Expression of Interest is approved in principle, you will be notified by 24 April, and invited to submit a detailed project plan by 26 May 2018.

# Preparing your Expression of Interest and plan

When preparing your expression of interest and, if that is approved in principle, your detailed project plan, you should bear the following criteria in mind:

## Expression of Interest

Ensure that your proposal will lead to clear outcomes and measurable and sustained impact that benefit both of the Universities as a whole.

Your proposal must show clearly that the project will provide:

* Collaborative working between the two institutions;
* Clear deliverables with the potential for tangible benefit to students beyond your particular cohort/home department/programme of study;
* Measurable and sustainable impact on the student experience;
* Value for money.

When preparing the proposal, you should determine:

* If anything similar has already been piloted or delivered to students and, if so, how your project might build significantly upon or differs notably from any such project;
* To what extent your project idea will bring added benefit beyond normal programme development activities;
* How you will determine the success of your project and its dissemination within and beyond the Universities.

You should consult with key people/stakeholders as appropriate.

## Detailed project plan

If your Expression of Interest is approved in principle, you will be requested to submit a detailed project plan by 26 May. You will then need to:

* Discuss and obtain support from the relevant Heads of School, the College Director of Education (Birmingham) and Faculty Associate PVC for Education and the Student Experience (Nottingham).
* Consult with appropriate people/stakeholders. Typically, these might include:
  + HR (for staff) and/or Worklink/Unitemps (for students) if you intend to employ someone to carry out any work on the project;
  + Finance or your School Operations Manager, to ensure that your planned spending is accurate and permitted under both Universities’ procedures;
  + IT Services if your project involves any IT or network involvement;
  + Any other relevant departments/people:
    - Birmingham stakeholders may include the TEL Hub, Academic Skills Centre, Careers Network, Guild of Students;
    - Nottingham stakeholders may include the Transforming Teaching Programme (TTP), Careers and Employability Services, LRLR, Students Union.
* Provide other relevant information, which will include:
  + Clear milestones;
  + Detailed budget plans, showing when funds will be spent during the course of the project;
  + An assessment of risks;
  + Consideration of any ethical issues associated with the project;
  + An evaluation plan;
  + A strategy for communication and dissemination.

## Budget guidance

Funding may be requested for:

* Staff costs. This could include funds to release staff time from teaching, research or administrative duties, recruiting staff to carry out administrative, technical and/or evaluation work on the project. Please note that where the recruitment of project staff applies, regulations governing the employment of temporary staff must be adhered to – see the relevant HR website for details.
* Student costs. Please note that procedures and regulations governing the employment of students must be adhered to – contact Worklink/Unitemps (as appropriate) for details.
* The purchase of training or services.
* Materials (e.g. promotional materials).
* Travel and subsistence (but not international travel).

Funding cannot be allocated for:

* Tuition fees or stipends (e.g. for a PhD or masters course).
* International travel.
* Attendance at conferences (with the exception of the Project Lead or a team member presenting the project).
* Ongoing software or licences.

Requests for items of equipment are considered though not encouraged. For any such requests the applicant must be able to demonstrate that the item is both absolutely necessary and not available from other sources. Funding will not be approved for equipment that would normally be provided for the pursuit of teaching practice or other work (e.g. laptops).

# The Education Partnership Fund (EPF) project criteria

EPF project funding will be allocated according to the extent to which proposals meet the following criteria:

**Projects should clearly demonstrate alignment** with the universities’ strategies and the themes of inclusion and UG attainment gaps.

**Projects should be innovative and evidence-based.** They should develop expertise in key areas of academic life and demonstrate clear pedagogical benefits to students.

**Projects must be able to demonstrate breadth and depth of impact** on students’ educational experiences across both institutions.

* This must include impact beyond the host Schools (or other University unit); projects with University-wide impact are particularly encouraged.
* It should also include a clear plan for evaluating impact and be sustainable with the potential to attract external funding.

**Project proposals should demonstrate clear value for money.** For example, project initiatives/activities should benefit a significant number of students either in the lifetime of the project or through subsequent dissemination.

**Projects should seek to involve students** in a meaningful way, for example through participation on the project team, steering groups, and/or be employed to work as Project Officers.

# Key contacts and information

Further information and guidance:

* [www.birmingham-nottingham.ac.uk/funding](http://www.birmingham-nottingham.ac.uk/funding)
* Birmingham: [hefi.projects@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:hefi.projects@contacts.bham.ac.uk)
* Nottingham: [Sarah.Speight@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:Sarah.Speight@nottingham.ac.uk)

Ethics review:

* Birmingham: <https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/finance/Financial-Services/Research-Support-Group/Research-Ethics/index.aspx>
* Nottingham: <http://workspace.nottingham.ac.uk/display/ResEth>