



OPEN CALL FOR FUNDING APPLICATIONS

FOR

MITIGATING AGAINST EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE FUND

Guidelines for Education and Training Boards

17 November 2020

V1.1

INTRODUCTION

Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund (MAEDF) aim is to provide funding to support educationally disadvantage learners in accessing and participating in community education.

These guidelines provide the following:

- The overarching principles of the Fund
- Conditions of Funding
- Application process and requirements
- Eligibility criteria for support
- Allocation of funding
- Reporting requirements

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES OF THE FUND

The purpose of the Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund (MAEDF) is to assist Education and Training Boards to increase their capacity and that of community education providers to address the decline in participation of disadvantaged learners particularly those on literacy and basic skills programmes at NFQ levels 1 to 3. The Fund places a strong focus on community education as a mechanism to continue to support and engage with disadvantaged learners. In addition, there is a focus on enabling the investment in building the digital infrastructure of providers and their capability to ensure that online learning can be delivered in a way that meets the complex needs of all learners.

CONDITIONS OF FUNDING

Governance

Education and Training Boards (ETBs) are responsible for the administration and management of funding allocated by SOLAS to the ETB under Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund. ETBs must satisfy themselves that any onward grants comply with all statutory, European Union and other obligations that apply.

Documentation

The attached documentation must be used (ETBs may use additional documentation if they wish). All related documentation associated with this fund including applications not recommended for funding to be retained for audit purposes. SOLAS may request individual project initiative applications to be submitted.

Expenditure

Approved funding allocation for any activity under the MAEDF must;

- (a) Be used for specific purpose intended.
- (b) Be expended for by 2020 year-end.
- (c) Not be used for any pay costs or costs of a recurring nature.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

ETBs to invite Managers of Community Education Provision (either internal to the ETB or external Community Education Providers to make application under the criteria above.

Provider Application Process

Appendix 1 contains the '*Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund Application Form*' this form must be used by external applicants for funding under this grant. Appendix 2 contains the application form to be used for internal funding of initiatives under the MAEDF.

Review of Applications

Each ETB to review applications received using the criteria for this funding to determine which applications ought to be funded. Successful applications recommended by the ETB for funding must also be prioritised for funding consideration by SOLAS. To ensure a fair disbursement of funding the prioritisation will be used by SOLAS where funding requests exceeds the funds available. The following factors should be considered when reviewing applications for funding

1. Does the project/initiative have a clear and demonstrable educational outcome?
2. Would funding this project result in the duplication of the work and funding of agencies whose specific remit is community development?
3. Would funding this project duplicate other SOLAS funding to the same organisation for the same purpose and same group of learners?

4. Can you demonstrate you have reviewed the project applications using set criteria?
5. Can the project/initiative outcomes be linked to beneficiaries on PLSS?
6. Have you satisfied all governance requirements and assurances on how this funding would be spent if approved?

Each ETB when reviewing MAEDF applications should consider from a good practice perspective using an internal review group.

Submission of MAEDF Funding Requests to SOLAS

All MAEDF submissions made by an ETB must meet the funding criteria for this fund and the SOLAS 'Terms and Conditions of Funding' as set out in its letter of 1st January 2020. MAEDF funding requests as recommended by ETBs are submitted to SOLAS using the attached spreadsheet form 'MAEDF RFFF' (Mitigating Against Educational Disadvantage Fund Request for Funding Form). Completed forms to be submitted via email to fetplanning@solas.ie on or before the closing date.

Closing Date for MAEDF Funding Requests

SOLAS closing dates for receipt of MAEDF funding requests are:

Round 1: 20th November 2020

Round 2: 4th December 2020

Requests from ETBs to be submitted using form 'MAEDF RFFF' to fetplanning@solas.ie

ELIGIBLE FUNDING CRITERIA

Listed as follows are four categories eligible for funding consideration. Applications should be considered for any one or more than one of the following

- 1) Digital Technologies
- 2) Learner Assistance Fund
- 3) Reach-out and/or Mentoring
- 4) COVID-19 Exceptional Circumstances

1) Digital Technologies

Supply of devices where deemed to be a barrier to learning. Consideration to be given to:

- The use of a laptop loan scheme (similar to that used by the HEA)
- A managed device service to ensure IT supports are available to providers to maximise the mitigation of barriers and ICT resourcing at local level
- Secure relevant software and systems to facilitate high quality learning and delivery.
- Secure CPD training as required.

Note please capital threshold is based on the cost of any item in excess of €1,000 including VAT. Capital items **cannot be funded** through this grant.

2) Learner Assistance Fund

The Learner Assistance Fund is available to help where appropriate with costs such as:

- books and class materials

- rent and other utility bills
- food
- essential travel
- childcare costs
- medical costs

The above list is not exhaustive however, it is important that the nature and appropriateness of the expenditure for which assistance is being provided is clearly identified.

3) Reach Out and/or Mentoring

Re-engagement with Learners through Outreach, Engagement and Mentoring Fund is designed to assist with costs associated with activities such as:

- Awareness raising
- Services to promote re-engagement

The above list is not exhaustive however, it is important that the nature and appropriateness of the expenditure for which assistance is being provided is clearly identified.

4) COVID-19 Exceptional Circumstances

COVID-19 Exceptional Circumstances Fund for Community Education to address educationally disadvantaged learners.

ALLOCATION OF FUNDING

Requests for funding will be reviewed by SOLAS and to ensure a fair disbursement of funding the prioritisation detailed on the funding request will be used by SOLAS where funding requests exceeds the funds available. To facilitate timely allocation of funds two rounds are set for receipt of applications;

Round 1: 20th November 2020

Round 2: 4th December 2020

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

ETBs will be required to report on how the funds were utilised, the expenditure incurred, the benefits derived, and the number of learners that benefited from the funding. SOLAS will issue a report template for ETBs to complete by the end January 2021.

Appendix 1.

MITIGATING AGAINST EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE FUNDING APPLICATION FORM

This form is for external groups proposed initiatives

Note please initiatives to be completed by 2020 year-end

Section 1. Community Group/Project Information

(Part 1 to be completed by all applicants, Part 2 – if applicable, where the ETB does not have the up-to-date details relating to Tax Clearance and Bank Account).

Section 1 - Part 1			
Community Group/Project Details			
Name of Community Group:			
Title of Project Initiative proposed:			
Details of Contact Person			
Contact Person:		Role in organisation	
Address:			
Email:		Telephone	
Funding			
Have you received Mitigating against Educational Disadvantage Funding from another source?			Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please answer the following questions			
Source(s) of this funding:		Intended purpose of this funding:	

Section 1 – Part 2	
Tax Clearance (Please attach details of your current Tax Clearance Access with this application)	
Tax Registration Number:	
Tax Clearance Certificate Number:	
CHY Number (if applicable):	

Bank Details			
Name of Bank:			
Address of Bank			
Sort Code:		Account Number:	
IBAN:			

Section 2 – Financial Details			
Financial Details of Project Initiative			
Cost of Project:	€		
Grant Request (the grant amount sought)	€		
If the total cost of the project is greater than the amount of the grant sought, please outline where and how the balance of funding will be secured:			
Estimated costs for each of the following:			
Digital Technologies	Learner Assistance Fund	Reach out/Mentoring	COVID-19 Exceptional Circumstances
€	€	€	€

Section 3 - Proposal Details

Statement of proposal

Please provide a synopsis of the **target group** and under which category you are applying for this funding:

Digital Technologies

Learner Assistance Fund

Reach out/ Mentoring

COVID-19 Exceptional Circumstances

Please include any additional information regarding the target group(s) you wish to add to support this application:

Please provide information demonstrating how this funding intends to mitigate against educational disadvantage for the cohort you are working with:

Please clarify how this funding will support your learners to achieve positive outcomes as a result of this support:

Section 3 - Proposal Details - continued

How will the benefits of this funding be measured?

Please provide information on how this project represents value for money and indicate what steps the project has taken to ensure avoiding duplication with existing services in the area:

Section 4 – Submission Details

I declare on behalf of: *insert organisation name*

That I have the appropriate authority to make this submission for funding. This request for funding form is fully completed and the information provided is a full and accurate account of how the funding (if allocated) will be used in 2020.

Signature

Print name

Position in organisation

Date

Applications to be submitted to:

(ETB to provide this detail)

Closing date for receipt of applications:

(ETB to provide this detail)

APPENDIX 2.

MITIGATING AGAINST EDUCATIONAL DISADVANTAGE FUNDING APPLICATION FORM

This form is for Internal ETB proposed initiatives

Note please initiatives to be completed by 2020 year-end

Section 1 – Project initiative

Title of project initiative	
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Section 2 – Project initiative – Financial details

Cost of project	€
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Grant Request (the grant amount sought)	€
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If the total cost of the project is greater than the amount of the grant sought, please outline where and how the balance of funding will be secured:

Estimated costs for each of the following:

Digital Technologies	Learner Assistance Fund	Reach out/Mentoring	COVID-19 Exceptional Circumstances
€	€	€	€

Section 3 – Project proposal details

Statement of proposal

Section 3 - Proposal Details - continued

Please provide a synopsis of the **target group** and under which category you are applying for this funding:

Digital Technologies	
Learner Assistance Fund	
Reach out/ Mentoring	
COVID-19 Exceptional Circumstances	

Please include any additional information regarding the target group(s) you wish to add to support this application:

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Please provide information demonstrating how this funding intends to mitigate against educational disadvantage for the cohort you are working with:

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Please clarify how this funding will support your learners to achieve positive outcomes as a result of this support:

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Please indicate how the benefits of this funding be measured:

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Section 3 - Proposal Details - continued

Please provide information on how this project represents value for money and indicate what steps the project has taken to ensure avoiding duplication with existing services in the area:

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Application submitted by

Signature _____

Print Name _____

Position in ETB _____

Date _____

Completed applications to be returned to:	<i>(ETB to provide this detail)</i>
Closing date for receipt of applications:	<i>(ETB to provide this detail)</i>