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**Multiply:**

**Business Grant Specification**

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1. **About Multiply**

The overall objective of [Multiply](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multiply-funding-available-to-improve-numeracy-skills) is to increase the levels of functional numeracy in the adult population across the UK. Government have identified the following success measures for the whole programme at a national level:

* More adults achieving maths qualifications courses (up to, and including, Level 2 – with GCSEs and FSQs as the qualifications of choice in England – or equivalent) and an increase in participation in numeracy courses. We expect local areas to evidence improvements in functional numeracy, rather than solely participation in Multiply interventions.
* Improved labour market outcomes e.g. fewer numeracy skills gaps reported by employers, and an increase in the proportion of adults that progress into sustained employment and / or education.
* Increased adult numeracy across the population – this overall impact, which goes beyond achieving certificates or qualifications, will track both the perceived and actual difference taking part in the programme makes in supporting learners to improve their understanding and use of maths in their daily lives, at home and at work - and to feel more confident when doing so.

Multiply will support governments Levelling Up mission to ensure that by 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the United Kingdom. To support this, they have committed that the first priority of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, will be a 3-year programme focused on improving functional numeracy skills.

Further information can be found in the [Multiply Investment Prospectus](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1068822/Multiply_Investment_Prospectus.pdf)

1. **Scope/Specification**

As set out in our latest [Local Skills Report](https://beta.wmca.org.uk/media/admnhtlo/wm-local-skills-report_final.pdf), our focus is on securing stronger and more inclusive regional growth. Put simply, we want to deliver a better match between the skills of the people in our region and the current and future needs of our businesses, to accelerate productivity and deliver economic growth. We want to make sure more people have the skills they need to progress in work.

Research clearly shows that improving maths skills helps adults progress at work, and improve their earnings. Since the creation of the WMCA it has been a strategic priority to reduce the number of residents with no or low qualifications

Consequently, the focus of the WMCA Investment plan is to deliver Multiply Interventions to working adults across the region, supported by flexible delivery models which can be accessed outside of the traditional working hours and settings. WMCA has set out four distinct approaches:

* **Financial Literacy** delivered via our Local Authority Partners
* **Universal Credit Claimants** in Work delivered via West Midlands Colleges
* **Delivery through employers** delivered via Independent Training Providers
* **In work residents learning online with tutoring** delivered via Higher Education Partners

An overview of the WMCA regional focus of Multiply can be found on the [WMCA website](https://www.wmca.org.uk/documents/ukspf/ukspf-presentation/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-presentation-june-2022/multiply/focus-of-regional-activity/).

The West Midlands Combined Authority are now seeking proposals for small grants (minimum 15k) from employer intermediaries who work directly with West Midlands employers to support the engagement of employed residents with the Multiply Programme.

We are looking to work with Employer Intermediaries who have strong relationships with employers, in particular SME’s to support and enable businesses to engage with skills provision. The intention is that this would support their employees to develop numeracy skills and to support employee sustainment and in work progression. The target group is those who are in work and in lower paid jobs.

The ‘Employer Intermediaries’ would be accountable for working with business members and leaders to identify the signs of numeracy challenges within their business, tackling low level numeracy skills and creating a safe space for employees to “let down their mask.” They would act as an advocate for the Multiply programme, supporting employers to engage with their staff in regards the Multiply offer. The successful organisations would provide a Multiply taster session to employees (one to two hours), which should be inclusive of an overview of multiply and incorporating an initial numeracy assessment.

Following initial engagement, the intermediary would then facilitate a warm handover to one of the WMCA commissioned Independent Training Providers to facilitate employee enrolment onto a Multiply course.

The intermediary would be responsible for the introduction and relationship development between employer and training provider. Employer intermediaries should consider the engagement they will need to provide, working with employers and training providers to ensure a seamless journey for the employee.

The expectation is that any activity would be completed by 31st July 2024, with a potential further opportunity to access additional grant funding for August 24 to January 25.

1. **Aims and Mandatory Delivery Requirements**

For your proposal to be successful you will need to be able to fulfil both the aims of the programme, and the mandatory requirements as set out below:

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| COHORT: | Under-represented groups working at Employers (particularly SME’s) |
| AIMS: | 1. A clear approach to working with members and business leaders to identify the signs of numeracy challenges within their business, tackling low level numeracy skills and creating a safe space for employees to “let down their mask.” 2. A clear approach on employer engagement, focusing activity on employers who positively promote working with under-represented groups. 3. A range of named employers they currently work with and those who they will target including why they believe the employer could benefit from workforce development around numeracy. 4. A clear approach to referrals into Multiply Substantive Learning provision set out in the specification above. 5. How the identified employer would be engaged and how they would support their employees to access workforce development. |
| REQUIREMENTS  \* | 1. The development of a coherent employer engagement strategy focused on accessing underrepresented groups. 2. Evidence of employee engagement at the taster events, this may include a register of attendees (including Name, Date of Birth and Home Postcode). 3. A current numeracy level of all engaged employees 4. Detail of progression through to Multiply Training Provider 5. Bidders must be confident in their submissions and ensure that they have the capacity, capability and strategies in place to deliver the Multiply Taster sessions from day 1. 6. Bidders must ensure their proposed activity does not duplicate any current or future activity being undertaken by Local Authority Multiply projects. 7. The service must comply with the contract and the performance management rules published by the WMCA. 8. The project must comply with all Multiply branding guidelines. |

*\* We accept that some of these mandatory requirements will depend on the intervention proposal and may not be applicable to all.*

1. **Measuring Success and Reporting**

Data will be submitted to WMCA via an established data platform, in addition to a monthly monitoring form.

The key indicators for this programme are:

1. Number of employers engaged with to support numeracy workforce development
2. Number of employers engaged with taster sessions.
3. Number of people (employees) engaged (including demographics) in outreach / engagement focused provision attending Multiply taster sessions
4. Number of eligible people referred into and starting substantive learning via a Multiply training provider
5. Increased number of adults participating / acquiring and evidencing skills through non qualification provision or towards a qualification including online learning
6. **Funding and Target Groups**

The total funding available for year 1, alongside priority groups, are outlined below:

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| --- | --- |
| Funding Available | Target Groups |
| Minimum subsidy available 15k for which the successful applicant must demonstrate associated costs. Maximum funding available £75k | Delivery across the WMCA 7 Local Authority geography.  Residents 19+ in employment from underrepresented backgrounds earning under 30k.  For a minimum of 15k the successful applicant should engage with and deliver Multiply taster sessions to a minimum of 60 employed residents. Any funding requested in addition to the 15k should reflect a maximum unit cost of £250 per resident engaged. |

1. **Mobilisation**

Employer Intermediaries must be able to demonstrate that they are able to commence delivery by 1st February 2024 and complete delivery by end of July 2024. To evidence this the business case will include a section on delivery.

1. **Payments Schedules**

This activity will be funded from the WMCA Multiply allocation and managed in line with the WMCA funding rules. Employer intermediaries will receive payment on a monthly basis, based on their performance against profile up to a contract specified maximum amount.

Due to the nature of the grant funding, all payments must be underpinned by eligible costs as reflected in the Conditions of Grant document. An eligible cost profile must be submitted as part of the application process which demonstrates delivery costs. This should be detailed in Section 4.0 of the Grant Application Form.

1. **Response**

The completed small grant application form (Employer Intermediaries Grants) must be returned via email to [MultiplyProgramme@wmca.org.uk](mailto:MultiplyProgramme@wmca.org.uk) by **10th January 2024, 5pm.**  Applications received after this time will not be considered.

1. **Timelines**

Indicative timelines are shown in the table below and may be subject to change

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| --- | --- |
| Application closes | **10/01/24 5pm** |
| Assessment period | **11/01/2024 - 29/01/2024** |
| Award Notifications | **30/01/2024** |
| Project Mobilisation | **01/02/2024** |
| Round 1 project completion | **31/07/2024** |

**End.**