

## Government U-turn on ESOL funding

The government has done a U-turn over the funding of English classes for immigrants. But the bad news is that the timing leaves colleges in chaos

As the peak month for enrolments, September is always a busy time for colleges. But after a government U-turn on funding for English classes for immigrants (known as Esol), this year is proving chaotic.

Funding regulations announced in last November's skills strategy set out government plans to focus fully funded Esol courses on those actively seeking work, such as those claiming jobseekers allowance and employment support allowance. Learners claiming income support, working tax credits and housing benefit – who had previously been eligible for fully funded English courses – would have to pay at least half the cost of their lessons or have them funded by their employer. Many in the sector feared it could make education and training – and ultimately employment – inaccessible to those who needed it most, particularly mothers with young children, who represent a good proportion of those on inactive benefits.

But last month, just weeks away from the start of the new academic year, it emerged that the government had changed its mind. There was no big announcement; the news slipped out quietly via funding guidance documents published on the Skills Funding Agency's website.

And while the U-turn has been largely welcomed by the sector, since the news hit home at the end of August, staff in colleges up and down the country have been working flat out to manage the fallout.

Like many other institutions, London's City and Islington College had attempted to get round the proposed funding changes by devising replacement courses to attract funding from elsewhere.

The college, which generally has about 2,000 part-time Esol learners, created up to 60 new "functional skills" courses that combine vocational learning with basic literacy skills, for those who ordinarily would have done Esol courses.

Since last month's surprise announcement, the college has been trying to turn some of these new programmes back into Esol courses, but this has increased the administrative workload at an already busy time of year.

As Grant Glendinning, the college's

director of lifelong learning, explains:

"We've had to scrap all our original enrolment forms and invest in emergency training for our registry staff. We've also had to produce new forms for learners to declare they are actively seeking work – they need that to get the funding. It's been very time-intensive and a bit wasteful really."

But despite the hassle, he is keen to stress how pleased he is about the U-turn. What worries him most is that there may be students out there who have no idea that they are eligible for fully funded courses. "From June and July we were telling people they were not going to be eligible. How do we get the message to them that they are now eligible for Esol and get them to come back to us?" he asks.

Having found themselves in a similar predicament, staff at Bournemouth and Poole College have been pounding the streets to spread the word. Knowing that the new funding guidance would leave many students unable to pay for courses, Sue Sharkey, director of skills for life at the college, had reduced numbers for Esol classes by 75% and let go agency teaching staff (who used to make up 50% of the workforce) at the end of last term. Since the big U-turn she has been desperately trying to recruit new staff.

Over the last few weeks, teachers have been leafleting local shops, restaurants, cafes and children's centres. "At this stage in the term, we'd usually be planning lessons and drawing up class lists. Instead, we've been assessing and enrolling students from 10am to 7.30 every evening. There is a real need in the area, so we are willing to do this to expand our student numbers. But if only we'd known about it earlier ..."

Things are also chaotic at City College Brighton and Hove, which has replaced almost half of its Esol classes with newly created "functional skills". "We'd love to switch some of the new courses back to Esol, but doing that at this late stage in the day would be like turning round a juggernaut," says Simon Chandler, team leader for Esol at the college.

Chris Taylor, programme director at the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, is not surprised to hear colleges are feeling the pressure. "What we have now is a fairly confused picture, with many providers at different stages in terms of understanding the latest advice and

guidance," she says.

Glendinning says the timing of the U-turn is potentially damaging to colleges' credibility. "A lot of our students hear about courses via word of mouth so it could look like we've been telling them porky pies. And our planning – which was actually very good – looks a bit undermined."

A spokesman for the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills said: "The government has repeatedly taken action to lessen bureaucratic restrictions on colleges. The introduction of some additional flexibility for colleges to provide subsidised training for people on a wider range of benefits is a continuation of this process.

"English language training can be a vital step towards finding employment, and the government is committed to effective local provision."

But given the fact that an extensive campaign against the changes had been running since the start of the year, led by Esol teachers, what college staff really want to know is why it took the government so long to arrive at a decision.

*Source: The Guardian*

## Changes to Refugee Action's One Stop service in Manchester

From the week of 3rd October there will be some changes to the ONE STOP SERVICE at Refugee Action in Manchester. This is due to funding cuts to the service. Please note also that the RIES service has closed.

### DROP-IN REDUCTION

The One Stop drop-in will close on a Monday and Thursday. The drop-in will only be open on Wednesday from 9.30am.

### ADVICE LINE INCREASE

The One Stop advice line will be open for calls more often:

Monday : 9.30am-midday and 2-4pm  
Tuesday : 9.30am-midday  
Thursday : 9.30am-midday and 2-4pm  
Friday : 9.30am-midday

0800 917 2719 (free from landlines) or 0161 441 4141.

Refugee Action, 23-37 Edge Street, Manchester, M4 1HW.

### Funding

#### Boost Charitable Trust

Boost Charitable Trust gives grants of up to £500 to support disabled and disadvantaged people to overcome challenges through sport. To date they have supported a wide range of sporting projects. You can view some of these projects on their website to get an idea of what they may fund.

**Contact: Lucy Till, Boost Charitable Trust. Telephone: 020 7078 1955**

**Email: [lucy.till@boostct.org](mailto:lucy.till@boostct.org)**

**Website: [www.boostct.org](http://www.boostct.org)**

#### Hilton in the Community Foundation

The Hilton in the Community Foundation has a deadline coming up. Organisations that work with disadvantaged young people have the opportunity to apply for grants of up to £30,000 per year. The Foundation focuses on young people's education and health (from birth to 25), with particular emphasis on:

- Disabled children
- Children in hospital
- Homelessness
- Life-limited children in hospices.

For more information visit the Hilton in the Community Foundation here.

**Deadline: 5:30, 18 October 2011**

**Contact: Hilton in the Community Foundation**

**Telephone: 020 7605 7733**

**Email: [grant@hilton-foundation.org.uk](mailto:grant@hilton-foundation.org.uk)**

**Website: [www.hilton-foundation.org.uk](http://www.hilton-foundation.org.uk)**

#### Edgar E Lawley Foundation

The Edgar E Lawley Foundation current annual grants programme amounts to approximately £250,000 per annum with a typical grant being in the region of £1,200 to £2,000. The Foundation supports six broad areas including children and young people, elderly, community and disabled.

**For more information email [frankjackson1945@yahoo.com](mailto:frankjackson1945@yahoo.com) or call 01372 805760**

**Deadline 31 October 2011.**

#### Nationwide Foundation

Small grants can be applied for by registered charities working for the benefit of all older people, or survivors of domestic abuse, to improve their housing needs and address financial exclusion.

The Nationwide Foundation's Small Grants Programme makes grants every two months. Grants of up to £5,000 are available to registered charities with incomes of under £750,000.

The application process is very simple and grants will be processed quickly. If you would like to apply for funding and find out more about criteria, you should visit the Nationwide Foundation website.

#### Jennifer Thompson, Grants Officer,

**The Nationwide Foundation**

**Telephone: 01793 657 181**

**Email: [enquiries@nationwidefoundation.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@nationwidefoundation.org.uk)**

**Website: [www.nationwidefoundation.org.uk](http://www.nationwidefoundation.org.uk)**

**Website: [www.nationwidefoundation.org.uk](http://www.nationwidefoundation.org.uk)**

#### ScottishPower Energy People Trust

The final deadline for the ScottishPower Energy People Trust for this year is 18 October 2011. Charities and not-for-profit groups who are working to alleviate fuel poverty can apply for small amounts up to £50,000.

A maximum of 30 completed applications will be considered by the panel at any one meeting; they are considered on a first come, first served basis so if you are interested in this fund, you should apply as soon as possible. Eligible and complete applications which are not dealt with will be carried over to the next meeting.

**Deadline: 18 October 2011**

**Contact: The ScottishPower Energy People Trust**

**Telephone: 0141 568 3492**

**Email: [SPEnergyPeopleTrust@ScottishPower.com](mailto:SPEnergyPeopleTrust@ScottishPower.com)**

**Website: [www.energypeopletrust.com/content/default.asp](http://www.energypeopletrust.com/content/default.asp)**

**Website: [www.energypeopletrust.com/content/default.asp](http://www.energypeopletrust.com/content/default.asp)**

#### Church and Community Fund

The Church and Community Fund (CCF) has announced on its website that it is likely to be changing its application criteria soon. In view of this, applicants should aim to get their applications in before the deadline of 14 October 2011.

This deadline has been extended from the previous deadline of 30 September.

The fund currently offers grants of up to £10,000 to Anglican churches, or other organisations working in close partnership with the Church of England, for outreach projects in their communities.

Details of the new funding criteria and streams will be available by the end of October 2011. Keep your eye on the CCF website.

**Contact: CCF**

**Telephone: 0207 898 1541**

**Email: [ccf@churchofengland.org](mailto:ccf@churchofengland.org)**

**Website: [www.ccfund.org.uk](http://www.ccfund.org.uk)**

#### Vodafone World of Difference UK programme

Here's a scheme that's potentially useful for people looking for work experience in the voluntary sector, and for charities looking for someone to come and work with them for a few months...

The World of Difference UK programme from the Vodafone Foundation offers 500 people a paid placement with a UK-

based charity of their choice.

Placements are for two months full-time or four months part-time and can be with a charity you find on the World of Difference website, or with a charity that you already know about which is happy to participate in the scheme. Entries open in few days time. Charities are given £2,500 to pay the person doing the placement and to cover their NI costs and employers' tax liabilities, and are also given £250 to cover any additional expenses.

See the World of Difference website at: **<http://worldofdifference.vodafone.co.uk>**

and/or deprived areas of Greater Manchester

- Have been in existence for less than 12 months and who are working towards formalising the group/organisation
- Do not have access to a professional fundraiser and experience difficulty in attracting funding from other sources
- Encourage involvement of local residents in improving, designing, identifying and implementing community activities
- Promote voluntary participation and social inclusion as well as community involvement and self-help
- Meet and demonstrate an emerging or immediate need and serve to build the community's awareness
- Do not duplicate an existing provision or service

**For further information and to apply, contact 0161 214 0940, or email: [enquiries@communityfoundation.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@communityfoundation.co.uk).**

**Deadline: Applications can be submitted at any time**

#### Woodward Charitable Trust deadlines

The Woodward Charitable Trust has announced deadlines for its General Grants and Summer Playscheme 2012 programme.

General Grants: Applications will be accepted from 1 September 2011. The fund offers grants of up to £5,000 through their small grants scheme and around 5 grants of over £5,000 are made through the large grants scheme. Large grants are mainly given to charities already known to the Trustees. Please note that applications for large grants will automatically be rejected unless they are discussed with the administrator prior to submission.

Applications can be made by UK registered charities working with or in the following areas:

Children and young people who are isolated, at risk of exclusion or involved in anti-social behaviour

- Minority groups including refugees, gypsies and travellers. Projects that

promote integration and community cohesion will be favoured

- Prisoners and ex-offenders. Projects that help the rehabilitation and resettlement of prisoners and/or ex-offenders are supported as well as requests to help prisoner's families
  - Disability projects which can include rehabilitation and training for people who are either physically disabled or learning disabled, as well as help to improve employment prospects
  - Homelessness, especially affecting young people and women, and covering facilities such as women's refuges
  - Arts outreach work by local groups for the benefit of disadvantaged people
  - Environmental projects, especially with a strong educational element.
- The Trust is very interested in small-scale, locally based initiatives. Funding is primarily for one-off projects, but the Trustees are willing to consider funding running costs (including core cost and salaries).

Summer Playscheme 2012: The scheme is open to organisations whose income is £100,000 or less per annum. Grants of £500 - £1,000 are available with around 30 grants being made each year. Further information is not currently available on the website, however in recent years, the summer playschemes have been for young people aged 5 - 16, who are from disadvantaged backgrounds. Contact the Woodward Charitable Trust for more information or keep an eye on the Trusts website.

**Deadline:**

**General Grants: 30 November 2011**

**Summer Playscheme Grants 2012: 26 March 2012**

**Contact: Woodward Charitable Trust**

**Telephone: 020 7410 0330** (the website says only if you think your project falls within the criteria should potential applicants telephone the Trust)

**Email: contact@**

**woodwardcharitabletrust.org.uk**

**Website:**

**www.woodwardcharitabletrust.org.uk**

### Grimple's Green Grants

Grimple's Green Grants, from The Green Insurance Company, is accepting applications for environmentally friendly projects in the UK. The £40,000 grants scheme offers grants up to £2,000 for small environmental projects from non-profit organisations. There is also one £10,000 grant available for a project voted for by the public.

Examples of project themes supported last year include a solar panel project, a gardening project, allotment projects, a community conference to promote local food growing activities, a car sharing scheme and recycling IT equipment

project. You can read about the successful projects on the Green Grants website.

For more information, including how to apply, visit the Green Grants website here.

**Deadline: midnight, 30 November 2011**

**Contact: Grimple's Green Grants**

**Email: greengrants@**

**greeninsurancecompany.co.uk**

**Website: www.greeninsurancegiving.co.uk/grants.php**

### Football club to give money to local charities

Two organisations that work with young people and families will receive grants of up to £50,000 each!

Manchester City Football Club has announced it is looking for two new local charity partners for 2012, both of which will receive a grant worth up to £50,000. The club intends to form one-year partnerships with two small charities, ideally with annual turnovers of less than £1m, one of which works in Manchester and one in east Manchester. The grants will be made in January.

The partners will benefit from player appearances and will feature in the club's media channels, it said in a statement.

The club said it was looking for charities or not-for-profit organisations whose work benefited young people and families in Manchester "through community cohesion, skills and enterprise schemes and urban sports programmes".

The grants will be for specific projects the charities are running in their local areas or to achieve certain outcomes. Sarah Lynch, head of social responsibility at Manchester City FC, said it was not intending to fund core costs. "It's about additionality," she said. "It's about being creative and addressing the needs of young people and families in Manchester."

**Charities that want to apply should go to MCFC's website. The closing date for applications is 25 November.**

## Job Opportunity

**Library Theatre Company & Cornerhouse are seeking: Storybox Project Co-ordinator £21,473 pro rata for 3 days a week (3-year fixed term contract)**

**Based: Manchester City Centre**

The Library Theatre Company are looking to appoint a highly motivated, passionate and experienced individual to deliver an exciting and innovative arts workshop programme for older people living with Alzheimer's & dementia.

An excellent track record of leading and delivering participatory arts and/or theatre-based workshops in formal and informal settings is essential, with experience of working with older people preferred.

Under supervision of the Library Theatre Company's Community & Education Director, the Storybox Project Co-ordinator will be responsible for the planning, delivery and administration of an agreed programme of activity in day care, residential and clinical settings across Greater Manchester.

Workshop participants will be older people living with all forms of Alzheimer's & dementia. Please note this role is being offered as a three-year fixed term contract.

Applicants must hold a Enhanced CRB or be willing to undergo an Enhanced CRB check.

Download the application pack using the downloads section on this page

**<http://www.librarytheatre.com/about-us/work-opportunities-and-casting/recruitment/>**

**or request a hard copy requested by calling 0161 234 1913 or emailing**

**ltcadmin@manchester.gov.uk**

**Deadline for applications is 5pm on Friday 14 October 2011**

**Interviews will take place w/c 24 October 2011**

**Preferred start date January 2012**

**Please contact Liz Postlethwaite for more information:**

**l.postlethwaite@manchester.gov.uk or (0161) 234 1922**

### PRE-RECRUITMENT SERVICE – Intensive Support Project

Do you have Anxiety, Depression or any other mental health issues?

Are you worried about forthcoming benefit changes?

On the 'Intensive Support Project' we aim to help and support you overcome barriers and setbacks.

- Job search / CV workshops.
- Pre-recruitment courses in specific occupations.
- Cope better with barriers and setbacks.
- Access to Holistic activities.
- 'GOALS' confidence / motivational course.
- Voluntary work / training opportunities.

All our advisors, are qualified to provide confidential advice in an informal setting, to support you in planning your future.

To be eligible you must be 18 years old + and over 2 years on IB, reside in specific postal wards of Benchill, AbbeyHey/Gorton, Collyhurst/Harpurhey, Cheetham Hill, Ardwick

**Call 0161 202 8305 for more information or to book an appointment in your local area.**

## New addition to MRSN team:

The Refugee & Migrant Forum at MRSN has recently appointed a new part time staff to assist the Forum Development Worker. His name is Nadim and with this appointment hopefully forum's activities will run even more smoothly. The Project Development Worker Elinah said that with this appointment will mean an efficient admin support for the project giving her a chance to focus more on development of the forum. Nadim's working days are Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday but can change as required.

## Community Leadership Training:

The ten weeks programme is underway and participants have just completed their sixth week. There are eighteen participants on the programme this time and so far feedback has been very positive.

One participant said

*"The programme has made me understand the community leadership in the community"*

Another commented

*"I got confidence of the programme"*

Participants have completed their registration with MMU and now are able to use many facilities available at the university including library.

## Training/ Workshops

### Training Opportunity – CSV Bright Futures Foundations

CSV are delivering an NLDC funded project in the Wythenshawe area to help its residents move closer to Employment, Education or Training called Bright Futures Foundations. We are able to provide both Accredited and informal learning to residents which includes sessions such as:

- Basic construction skills
- First Aid
- Home maintenance
- Healthy living
- Community events
- Food Hygiene
- Volunteering
- Career advice
- Education advice
- Self employment advice
- Internet training

As part of creating an Individual Learning Plan, learners will be able to pick form a 'menu' of training courses and sessions provided by a network of specialist training providers to help move them closer to their goals. We are constantly adding new courses and training and we will proactively source opportunities suggested by our learners.

We want learners on average to be involved in around 30 hours of training over 6 weeks, so shouldn't interfere with any other responsibilities such as childcare or other employability courses. We can work with any Wythenshawe residents 19 years or older in receipt of Jobseekers allowance, Income support, Incapacity Benefit and those on the Work Related Activity Group stage of Employment Support Allowance.

We are currently welcoming referrals from any organisation engaging with potential learners or any training

organisation who may have a service to add to our portfolio of training.

**If you have any questions or wish to make referrals please contact Shaun on 07514 012 358 [swhaites@csv.org.uk](mailto:swhaites@csv.org.uk) or Matthew on 07585 706 134 [mbeckett@csv.org.uk](mailto:mbeckett@csv.org.uk).**

## Volunteering opportunity

### Opportunities at Refugee Action

Refugee Action exists to enable refugees to build new lives, through advice and information, community development, enhancing opportunity, and campaigning for refugee rights.

Refugee Action are currently recruiting for 4 volunteer roles.

#### Volunteer Administrator

The role is to assist with regular administration tasks as part of the Gateway Protection Programme Team.

#### Advocate Volunteer

Tasks may include accompanying clients to appointments, assisting clients to make phone calls for themselves, or helping clients find their way around.

Volunteers must be available for one or two set half-days per week.

#### Arrivals Volunteer

The role is to provide assistance to an individual or household group of newly arrived resettled refugees for their first week in the UK.

#### Gateway Online Forum (GOLF) Volunteer

The role incorporates the administration and monitoring of the Gateway Online Forum (GOLF) along with promoting the forum to refugee clients.

**For further details, see below.**

**For further information, contact Ged Devaney, on 0783 340 1743, or email: [gerardd@refugee-action.org.uk](mailto:gerardd@refugee-action.org.uk).  
Deadline: Friday 21 October 2011**

## MRSN Advice Centre

129 Princess Road, Moss Side, Manchester M4 4RB.

Mondays from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm – Drop in sessions

Tuesdays – Appointments only

Wednesdays from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm – Drop in sessions

We can usually arrange advice in Arabic, Swahili and Somali, and with our dedicated volunteer interpreters in French, Kurdish, and Farsi.

To arrange an appointment you can call at the advice centre on Mondays or phone us on 0161 868 0777