

HEFCE 01/60
October
Invitation

Respond by 25 January 2002

FDTL phase four

**Invitation to bid for funds under phase
four of the Fund for the Development
of Teaching and Learning**

FDTL phase four

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To	Heads of HEFCE-funded higher education institutions Heads of universities in Northern Ireland Heads of further education colleges in receipt of HEFCE funds
Of interest to those responsible for	Learning and teaching
Reference	01/60
Publication date	October 2001
Enquiries to	Sarah Howls tel 0117 931 7446, e-mail s.howls@hefce.ac.uk

Executive summary

Purpose

1. This document describes the timetable and funding arrangements for phase four of the Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (FDTL).

Key points

2. The FDTL programme is part of the subject strand of the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund and is supported by the HEFCE and the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) in Northern Ireland. Applications may be made by HEFCE-funded institutions and DEL-funded institutions either individually or within consortia.

3. The aims of phase four of the FDTL are to stimulate developments in learning and teaching and to secure the widest possible involvement of institutions in the take-up and implementation of good practice.

4. Phase four of the FDTL will cover the 13 subject areas assessed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in the period October 1998 to September 2000. The subjects are listed at Annex A.

5. Phase four of the FDTL will be funded over the three-year period 2002 to 2005.

6. There will be three levels of funding for individual projects:
 - large-scale projects over a maximum of three years, with a maximum of £250,000 in total for each project. This scale of funding will be restricted to consortium projects
 - medium-scale projects over a maximum of three years, with a maximum of £150,000 in total for each project
 - small-scale projects over a maximum of two years, with a maximum of £75,000 in total for each project.
7. There will be a two-stage application process.
8. Priority areas for learning and teaching development are detailed in Annexes E and F.

Action required

9. First stage bids, using the form at Annex B, should be sent to Sarah Howls at the HEFCE no later than **midday on 25 January 2002**.

Background

10. HEFCE 99/48 described the timetable and funding arrangements for the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund (TQEF). The TQEF, which was established to support our learning and teaching strategy, directs funding at three levels: the institution, the subject and the individual. We are supporting the subject strand of the TQEF through the UK-wide Learning and Teaching Support Network (LTSN), the Teaching and Learning Technology Programme (TLTP) and the FDTL.

11. Information about the previous phases of the FDTL programme can be found on the following web-site: www.ncteam.ac.uk

Strategic purposes and priorities

12. Our learning and teaching strategy has the following purposes:

- a. **Encouragement and reward.** We wish to increase the status of learning and teaching, reward high quality, and help those with the potential to achieve high quality to do so.
- b. **Disseminating and embedding good practice.** All of the strands of the TQEF will support the dissemination and embedding of good practice. We have recently published two 'guides to good practice' to support our initiatives on institutional learning and teaching strategies (HEFCE 01/35), and widening participation (HEFCE 01/37).
- c. **Research and innovation.** We will build on the substantial innovation in learning and teaching already taking place in UK higher education, and identify other areas where investment in research and development can best contribute to the learning experience of students.
- d. **Building capacity for change.** This objective underpins each element of our strategy.

13. The TQEF has been designed to rationalise our support for rewarding and enhancing learning and teaching. We have a focus on making connections between all of our initiatives and supporting increased collaboration with other agencies to ensure that our initiatives complement those of other bodies.

FDTL background

14. Bids for FDTL funds can be made only by higher education institutions or further education colleges that have demonstrated high quality in their higher education provision as evinced through the subject review process. The TQEF Management Committee will be responsible for assessing bids at both stages and making recommendations to the HEFCE on allocation of funds. Membership of the TQEF Management Committee is given at Annex G.

Eligibility for support

15. The aims of phase four of the FDTL are to:

- stimulate developments in learning and teaching
- secure the widest possible involvement of institutions in the take-up and implementation of good practice.

16. The primary focus of FDTL is to develop, disseminate and embed good practice in learning and teaching throughout the higher education sector. Funding under the FDTL is not available for:

- the funding of research on learning and teaching
- support for the dissemination of good practice if restricted to a single area in a single institution.

17. Applications may be made by HEFCE-funded institutions and DEL-funded institutions either individually or within consortia.

18. Applications should relate to one or more of the 13 subject areas covered by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) in the period October 1998 to September 2000 and listed at Annex A. To be eligible to apply for FDTL funding, applicants must have quality approved status in the relevant subject area, and grade 4 in the aspect of provision for which funds are sought.

19. Where a consortium makes an application, the consortium leader must meet the criteria set out in paragraph 18 above. This condition does not apply to other consortium members. We would welcome, where possible, consortia made up of partners from a range of institutions, and between those which have demonstrated high quality and those with lower scores in that aspect of provision. Collaboration with institutions where the project outcomes can be actively applied is encouraged. This will help to promote quality improvement throughout the sector. The consortium could also include members whose work in learning and teaching falls within a subject area covered by the QAA prior to October 1998 and those whose subject area has yet to be covered by the QAA.

20. For each subject area, an institution can make only one application as a sole applicant or as a consortium leader. However, it can be represented in a number of applications as part of a consortium led by another institution. Institutions may also submit more than one bid where more than one subject area within the 13 subject areas listed at Annex A has been assessed.

21. For the purposes of the subject review process, some institutions chose to join together two or more subject areas. Where the assessment was made on this basis, leading to one profile and one report, the institution may submit only one application as a sole applicant or consortium leader.

22. We expect the applications to take one of the following forms:

- a. Consortium applications from more than one institution, relating to one or more subject areas.

b. Applications from one or more subject areas in a single institution.

23. However, where support is given to a single institution initiative, we will fund only activities which can demonstrate:

- genuine innovation
- very high levels of institutional support (including some matched funding)
- a clear and considered strategy for dissemination and transfer to other institutions.

24. Individuals whose work in learning and teaching is in a subject area that does not meet the criteria for eligibility in paragraph 18 above, can be involved in the FDTL as a member of a consortium.

How to apply for funding

25. There will be a two-stage application process. Details of the procedure for submitting an application are given at Annexes B and C. Institutions must complete the application form at Annex B. The criteria against which bids will be assessed are described in Annex C. These criteria relate to the key features that we expect to see in all successful applications. Institutions are encouraged to take account of them in preparing their applications. The two-stage application procedure will allow institutions that have been successful in the first stage to respond to the assessment criteria in greater detail in the second stage of the application process.

Guidance on submissions

Building on existing knowledge and expertise

26. Within the FDTL programme we wish to fund activities and outputs that add to the higher education sector's collective knowledge, and support the process of change in learning and teaching as it informs theory and practice. Therefore, applicants should locate their project within the body of existing knowledge and demonstrate how the project will add value.

27. We encourage applicants to visit the web-sites listed at Annex D to see the work that is being supported, in particular by the UK funding bodies, to enhance the quality of learning and teaching and promote the status of teaching and teachers in higher education. In particular, we believe that all applicants will benefit from browsing the web-sites of our National Co-ordination Teams for the TQEF, widening participation, disability and the Innovation Fund, and the site of the Learning and Teaching Support Network. These web-sites are listed below:

- TQEF NCT www.ncteam.ac.uk
- Action on Access www.brad.ac.uk/admin/conted/action
- National Disability Team www.natdisteam.ac.uk

- Innovations NCT www.innovations.ac.uk
- LTSN www.ltsn.ac.uk/centres

28. This phase of the FDTL programme will also support projects that build on previous projects supported by the HEFCE/DEL or other organisations. An FDTL project could quite legitimately continue work undertaken by another project. It is the additionality that is the critical factor that will be taken into consideration in allocating funds for FDTL phase four projects.

29. Project proposals must relate to the relevant QAA subject area for FDTL phase four. However, applicants may involve colleagues in subject areas beyond the 13 subjects identified at Annex A. Applications may involve as partners any other subject area, whether or not that subject has been through the subject review process.

30. As part of our policy of ensuring that FDTL projects are joined up to other learning and teaching developments, we encourage applicants to consider how their development will link to their institution's learning and teaching strategy and, where appropriate, their institution's human resource strategy, widening participation strategy and strategy for supporting disabled students.

31. To facilitate the process of 'knowledge gathering' outlined in paragraph 26 above, we will make available a maximum of £1,000 to each lead applicant for associated travel and subsistence costs while putting together the first-stage application. Applicants could, for example, use these funds to meet with colleagues working on existing projects to talk through areas of mutual interest. This funding can also be used to support the development of consortium applications. Also, we expect applicants to use these funds to participate in the two-day seminar we are holding on 25 and 26 March 2002 for projects going forward to the second stage. We expect the quality of the applications to reflect this up-front allocation of funds, and we reserve the right to withhold or reduce the payment where we judge that this is not the case.

Subject priorities

32. This phase of the FDTL programme builds on the experience of previous phases and takes into account the way our policy to support and promote learning and teaching has developed. We have always linked the FDTL process with the results of, and information provided by, the QAA subject review process. The criteria for applications for FDTL phase four funding reflect the continuing link between FDTL and QAA subject review.

33. In FDTL phase four we encourage applicants to make effective use of the information available from the subject review process. To support this objective, we have taken advice from the TQEF National Co-ordination Team (NCT) and the LTSN subject centres in establishing priorities for learning and teaching development in the subjects concerned. The priorities are based on the information provided in the subject overview reports published by the QAA and are set out in Annex E. Although we welcome applications that address these priority areas, we are also willing to provide funding for applications that address other areas.

34. We would also welcome applications that address some of the wider generic issues, either alongside their specific subject priority area or as the primary area of work. Annex F lists those generic priority areas that were identified in the subject overview reports.

Disseminating and embedding good practice

35. The aims of the FDTL programme are to stimulate developments in learning and teaching and to secure the widest possible involvement of institutions in the take-up and implementation of good practice. Applications for FDTL phase four should distinguish between the following types of dissemination as identified in the TQEF NCT briefing paper on Dissemination:

- dissemination for awareness – publicity, publications, conferences, web-sites, demonstration workshops
- dissemination for understanding – consultancy, workshops with the active engagement of end-users
- dissemination for implementation – working alongside end-users and helping them to use the ideas and embed them into their departments and courses
- continuation of activity beyond the funding life of the project.

The full content of the Dissemination briefing paper can be found through the TQEF NCT's web-site at www.ncteam.ac.uk

36. Projects will be responsible for their dissemination strategy. However, applicants are required to provide evidence that they have come to an arrangement with either their LTSN subject centre or the LTSN Generic Centre (or both) that will ensure that the products of their development are disseminated as widely as possible throughout the higher education sector. Applicants are advised to contact their subject centre at an early stage to discuss the range of dissemination services that the centre could provide. Applicants will be expected to use a proportion of their budget to support the dissemination and other services provided by the subject centre. The principal role of the subject centres will be as a dissemination route for projects, but they are also able to provide advice and guidance on a number of subject-based issues. Applicants are advised that the subject centres will be holding discipline-based meetings during the first-stage application phase of FDTL phase four to offer specific advice and guidance for the various subject communities. Further details regarding these meetings can be found on the subject centres' web-sites.

37. There are many ways in which project outcomes could be disseminated. For example, projects could include their relevant professional body in their dissemination strategy and look to their own institutions' learning and teaching strategies for dissemination routes. Applicants will be expected to provide a clear and comprehensive dissemination strategy.

38. Applicants that progress to the second stage of the application process may wish to investigate the possibility of developing a collective dissemination strategy with other FDTL phase four projects in their subject area as well as their relevant subject centre. This

approach has worked well in previous rounds of the FDTL programme, particularly in modern languages. The TQEF NCT will provide further information on this initiative at the seminar in March 2002.

39. Applicants will need to provide a clear statement about their plans to embed the products of their development to effect change in learning and teaching in higher education.

Consortia

40. Consortia should include a range of providers with a variety of developmental needs. Institutions aiming to submit a consortium bid should provide information on how collaborative groundwork will be established. This should include the agreement of senior managers in partner institutions to provide active support during the planning and implementation of the proposed project.

41. To encourage robust collaboration in phase four of FDTL, consortium partners must confirm partnership contracts before funding is agreed beyond the project start-up phase. Where projects fail to secure such contracts we will terminate the project funding.

Accessibility

42. In line with our policy of widening participation, applicants should consider how the project will take into account the learning needs of a diverse student population, including disabled students.

Funding

43. We are planning to commit up to £8 million over the period 2002-03 to 2004-05 to fund phase four of FDTL. The exact level of funding available for projects will be confirmed before successful stage one applicants are invited to submit their stage two bids. Successful applicants can begin to receive funding from October 2002, at a point which best suits their project plan.

44. We wish to encourage a varied portfolio of projects, spanning a range of timescales and funding levels. Projects should bid under one of the following three categories:

- a. Large-scale projects over a maximum of three years, with a maximum of £250,000 in total for each project. This scale of funding will be restricted to consortium projects.
- b. Medium-scale projects over a maximum of three years, with a maximum of £150,000 in total for each project.
- c. Small-scale projects over a maximum of two years, with a maximum of £75,000 in total for each project.

45. Applicants may include funding for the following:

- buying staff time

- recruiting new project staff
- buying in external expertise
- dissemination of project outcomes
- travel and subsistence
- equipment (up to 10 per cent of the total project cost).

46. Funding for staff time should include activities such as project management, project monitoring and project evaluation. Applicants will be expected to provide a clear statement regarding their plans for the evaluation of the project. This should include the cost involved in commissioning an external evaluation.

47. The value for money of all project activity should be clearly demonstrated. The amount of funding requested must be commensurate not only with the cost of that activity but also with the eventual outcomes of the project.

48. The allocation of funds by the Council for any projects supported under this initiative will be deemed to include VAT where applicable.

49. Project awards will not be adjusted for inflation for years two and three. Applicants are advised to reflect any cost increases in years two and three in their applications. The HEFCE and DEL will not provide any supplementary funding during the period of the award.

Support costs

50. We will pay support costs only as they relate to the project's specific activities. Institutions should be able to demonstrate that they have robust costing systems in place which conform to the Council's guidance on costing (HEFCE 13/97), and that these form part of the institution's costing and pricing strategy. The total budget should include an outline of how the support costs were calculated.

51. Support costs should be included in the total amount of funding requested and should not take the bid over the thresholds described in paragraph 44.

Application procedure

Stage one applications

52. Applicants should complete the application form at Annex B and submit a supporting statement of no more than 2,500 words outlining their proposed project. This supporting statement should address the criteria for the assessment of applications as detailed in Annex C.

53. Please send four hard copies of the application to arrive no later than **midday on 25 January 2002** to:

Sarah Howls
FDTL project manager
HEFCE
Northavon House
Coldharbour Lane
BRISTOL, BS16 1QD

54. One copy must be on white A4 single-sided paper, unbound and with all the pages numbered. We will not accept late applications or copies sent by fax or e-mail.

Stage two: detailed bids

55. We will provide decisions on stage one applications by 20 March 2002. Where we consider that the first-stage application provides a firm basis for stage two, our TQEF National Co-ordination Team will provide feedback from the TQEF Management Committee to help applicants develop the second-stage application. Where an applicant is not invited to submit a second-stage application, we will provide feedback on the reasons for this decision.

56. We will require no more than 5,000 words in support of applications at the second stage. Further information about the second-stage application procedure will be sent to applicants when they are given the decision on the first-stage application.

57. For those applicants invited to submit a stage two application, the TQEF National Co-ordination Team will be running a two-day advice seminar on 25 and 26 March 2002. All second-stage applicants are encouraged to send two representatives to the seminar, details of which will be included with the feedback on stage one. The deadline for second stage applications is midday on 17 May 2002.

Co-ordination and management of the programme

58. The TQEF National Co-ordination Team, based at the Centre for Higher Education Practice (CeHEP) at The Open University, co-ordinates the projects funded within the FDTL on behalf of the HEFCE and DEL. The NCT:

- provides educational development support for individual projects and for project staff
- supports the management of individual projects
- encourages co-ordination and connections across projects
- collects and disseminates information on FDTL projects
- provides advice and guidance to the HEFCE and DEL
- facilitates the management of change in learning and teaching.

59. The NCT fulfils its responsibilities by:

- visiting projects and attending project events and meetings
- giving advice and feedback on questions and issues raised by projects

- running workshops and producing briefings on themes common across projects, such as project management, dissemination and evaluation
- sharing information across projects through a newsletter and web-site
- organising an annual conference.

60. Projects will be required to co-operate with the NCT and produce quarterly reports for the NCT detailing progress against project plans.

61. We will require annual monitoring information and financial expenditure statements on all funded projects. Our continued support will depend on satisfactory progress being made towards a project's aims and objectives. We would also like to receive information regarding any issues that arise within the project and the challenges that are presented to the project team in dealing with them. Therefore we require from applicants a final report with a full expenditure statement at the end of the project.

62. We will continue to evaluate the FDTL programme to ensure that its aims have been realised and that value for money has been obtained. To support the evaluation of the FDTL and TQEF, co-operation with HEFCE external evaluators will be a condition of funding under FDTL phase four.

Timetable

63. The timetable for the FDTL phase four programme is:

Date	Event
Midday 25 January 2002	Deadline for submission of stage one bids to the HEFCE
By 20 March 2002	Institutions receive feedback and decision from the HEFCE on stage one bids
25 - 26 March 2002	HEFCE/NCT advice seminar to support institutions in the preparation of stage two applications
17 May 2002	Deadline for second-stage applications to be submitted to the HEFCE
By 26 July 2002	Letters sent to stage two applicants with the final decision on their application
From October 2002	Projects to start

Further information

64. All publications mentioned in this invitation to bid can be found through the HEFCE web-site at www.hefce.ac.uk under 'Publications'.

65. If you wish to discuss any aspect of the FDTL programme, please contact:

Sarah Howls, tel 0117 931 7446
e-mail s.howls@hefce.ac.uk