

## General FAQs

### **Can you help me complete my application?**

Of course! We are running a series of workshops to run through the application process and discuss eligibility in advance of the window closure.

### **How do I know if my idea is innovative?**

Please attend an applicant workshop with the Innovation and Investments team who are here to discuss your ideas and can help you understand what is currently happening in the assessment space. You can book your free place on one of our workshops [here](#).

### **Which stage of the learner journey does the Assessment Innovation Fund target?**

The jointly supported fund will encourage the testing of learner-centric and adaptable assessment solutions; harnessing digital technology to create a more inclusive, robust, fairer, and reliable assessment experience.

### **Does my project need to focus on a particular age range or education space?**

Your approach to assessment should support adults in the UK aged 16 and above in gaining or enhancing their knowledge and skills for the workplace. While projects involving diverse learner profiles are welcome, we strongly encourage a primary focus on driving change and reform in the assessment of vocational training and skills, with an expectation that this focus is reflected in any learner samples used in the project's evaluation.

### **If my bid is unsuccessful, can I apply for future windows?**

Yes, please! We will give you some feedback which we hope will be useful to you. You are welcome to re-apply in future windows and you can get support from us on your application ahead of the submission.

### **Can my project be any length of time?**

Projects can start as soon as the grant agreement is signed and will usually last between 18 and 24 months, although each project is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. On completion, a final project report will need to be delivered.

### **Can I submit more than one application in one window?**

Yes, you can! Your project ideas should be sufficiently different from each other. Please attend an applicant workshop to talk through whether your ideas could be combined or if separate applications are a better fit with the purpose

and amount of funding we have for each project. You can book your free place on one of our workshops .

### **What is your application process?**

All interested organisations are invited to submit an expression of interest (EoI) form which can be found . The EoI makes up stage one of our selection process and these are evaluated by colleagues from across NCFE and Ufi VocTech Trust.

If successful at stage one, you will receive an invitation to stage two, where you will need to complete a written application form pre-filled with all the details from your EoI. Your written application form is judged by a panel made up of internal and external experts.

Successful candidates at stage two will be invited to give a presentation and answer questions from our Expert Panel on their application.

### **How much detail do I need to provide on my proposed methodology?**

A detailed evaluation of your methodology will take place if you are invited to take part in stage two of our selection process. Your application needs to have sufficient detail to allow our expert panel to judge it against the criteria we publish. This includes scoring applications on the feasibility, robustness and research methodology covered within the application. Please include as much detail as you can on your methods.

That said, we do expect to work with successful applicants to refine and agree on methodology following the selection process.

We have also teamed up with What Worked Education to support our own understanding of good evidence-based decision making. If you need support with your proposed research methodology, we suggest you take a look at their [website](#).

### **If I am involved in the Expert Panel, can I still apply?**

Yes, absolutely! If you decide to submit an application, we will make sure that we don't involve you in the selection process for that particular window. With multiple Assessment Innovation Fund windows and a fantastic and flexible group of panel members, we are confident we can accommodate your bid without losing out on your expertise for funding decisions in future windows.

## **Legal and Financial FAQs**

**I'm not comfortable with the terms and conditions in your draft contract. Are you open to discussion on these?**

We understand that each applicant may have varying needs and as such we can work with applicants on a case-by-case basis to discuss their needs. To organise these discussions, please send us an email at [aif@ncfe.org.uk](mailto:aif@ncfe.org.uk) with some high-level thoughts on the arrangements and your preferred proposal for moving forward.

**Do you have any guidance on how much of the funding should be used for various elements of the Impact project?**

We don't have set stipulations in this respect because we hope that project ideas will come from a range of different organisations who will naturally have a range of fixed and variable costs. The purpose of our fund is to innovate in assessment and so if your funding breakdown is aligned to that purpose, we are happy.

**What can the funds be spent on?**

NCFE and Ufi VocTech Trust are charities and must ensure that any funding given demonstrates benefit to our beneficiaries who are our current and prospective learners. It is because of this that we won't fund day-to-day overheads or staffing, and we won't fund other organisational costs unconnected to the project. We will fund anything that is connected to the project including people's time, equipment and technology development. We expect that budgets set out in the application form should cover the minimum requirements to deliver the project.

**Will we receive the full amount of funding requested?**

The level of investment may vary from the funding applied for. This may be because you've included costs that we're unable to fund or we may believe that the project can be delivered more cost effectively. Where we feel that the amount of funding needs to be adjusted, we will discuss this with applicants.

**Do you require match funding or co-funding?**

If your organisation is 'for profit', we will require match funding or co-funding to demonstrate a shared commitment to the project. This could be equivalent to staff time, or funding for specific activities within the project. We do not prescribe expectations of the level of match-funding; however, we would expect that match funding is transparent and reasonable with respect to an organisations size.