

# Expression of interest

# Title: T Level Professional Development (TLPD) Evaluation

**Project reference: DFERPPU/2018093**

**Deadline for expressions of interest: 5pm Tuesday 12th February 2019**

## Summary

Expressions of interest are sought to evaluate the first phase the T Level Professional Development (TLPD) programme.

## Background

[T Levels](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/t-level-action-plan) are to be introduced in phases from September 2020. T Levels are new 2 year technical programmes which will provide young people with a high-quality technical alternative to A-levels. They have been developed with employers and will combine classroom study with workplace experience, from which students can progress directly into work or further study. The first three T Levels will be delivered from September 2020 by approximately 50 high performing providers across the country. A further 6 T Levels, with an additional 50 to 75 providers coming on line, will be delivered from September 2021.

A programme of high quality professional development is needed to ensure that teachers are equipped to teach the new technical qualification – which requires skills and knowledge in pedagogy (core teaching skills and methods), practice (subject knowledge and subject specific teaching) and professional knowledge (industrial and employability understanding for teachers)[[1]](#footnote-1). Leaders and non-teaching staff involved in T Level delivery will also need training to understand T Levels and what they mean for their specific role, and to be ready to lead, manage and participate in a significant programme of change.

To respond to these challenges the department appointed the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) to design and deliver the first phase of a comprehensive and centrally funded programme of professional development called [T Level Professional Development (TLPD)](https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/tlevels/). Phase I of TLPD is aimed primarily at the first two waves of T Level providers in 2020 and 2021, however, other providers outside these two cohorts will be able to access some aspects of the programme where capacity allowes. TLPD support will include:

1. understanding what a T Level is for everyone who plays a role in delivering them, and preparing them to deliver this significant change programme;
2. raising standards of pedagogy both generally and within teachers’ subject-specific areas;
3. ensuring currency and industry-relevance of teachers’ subject knowledge;
4. strengthening the teaching of English, mathematics and digital delivered within subject specialisms; and
5. facilitating and supporting the development of greater collaboration between T Level providers.

Ten Professional Development Advisors (PDAs) have been appointed by the ETF to help providers identify their specific needs and to access the most relevant aspects of the overall programme. The PDAs will work with an average of 5 providers each from the 2020 cohort and will be allocated a similar number of 2021 providers when these have been selected.

The successful bidder will be expected to carry out an independent evaluation of Phase I of TLPD drawing upon the experience of the 2020 and 2021 providers. The data collected will be used to evaluate the full TLPD project (including Phase II at a later date).

Furthermore, the evaluation of TLPD will add to our understanding of what represents effective professional development in a technical education setting – particularly in the area of subject specific pedagogy, which is currently an under researched area.

## Evaluation aims

The evaluation will seek to answer the following questions:

* How effective has TLPD been in meeting its aims? Is it on track to do so?
* Do recipients feel they better understand T Levels?
* Do recipients feel their pedagogical skills have increased, do they understand their subject better? Do they feel more able to embed maths, English and detail within their teaching?
* Was the level of support provided by the ETF during TLPD right? Was the programme sufficiently flexible and accessible to allow providers to take part?
* Have the networks and hubs made a difference to how prepared colleges are to deliver T Levels, has best practice been effectively shared?
* How the process can be improved ahead of Phase II?
* What elements of the process have worked well? Why?
* What elements of the process haven’t worked well? Why?
* What lessons can be learned and applied to Phase II?
* Do staff within 2020 and 2021 providers feel more prepared for T Levels? Has staff confidence in delivering T Levels improved? Have they had the training that they think is required?
* Do leaders feel better prepared to manage the change that T Levels will require?
* Do participants feel the quality of training provided was appropriate?
* What evidence is there that colleges and staff are preparing for T level delivery?
* What have been the unintended consequences?
* Has TLPD accessed the widest possible range of T Level staff? Have any staff members missed out on training?

## Methodology

## The department requires the research to be designed around undertaking a process evaluation of Phase I of TLPD, and to provide some indication of change in providers’ confidence ahead of T Levels. This could be achieved through looking at before and after measures of whether staff feel more prepared etc.

The successful contractor should utilise monitoring data already collected by ETF, whilst working closely with ETF to help minimise burden on the sector. A range of methods will be required for the process evaluation data collection including but not restricted to interviews and focus groups, as well as potentially surveys with key stakeholders and officials (including DfE, and the ETF Professional Development Advisors) and T Level 2020 providers.

## Timing

* Deadline for EOIs - 5pm Tuesday 12th February 2019
* ITT issued - 15th February 2019
* Deadline for ITTs – 5pm Friday 8th March 2019
* Clarification interviews (to be held in Sheffield) - 19th March 2019
* Contract awarded (set up meeting held in Sheffield) - 25th March 2019
* Fieldwork required from April 2019
* Presentation / workshop on the interim findings W/C 10th June 2019
* Interim Findings slide deck and interim report for internal use to be delivered W/C 10th June 2019
* Further Interim Findings slide deck November 2019
* Presentations of findings W/C 6th April 2020
* Full Findings report to be delivered by 1st May 2020

## Assessment criteria

Expressions of interest will be assessed against the following criteria:

* Understanding of the Department’s requirements
* Understanding of the overarching policy context within which this work is being taken forward.
* Experience and technical ability in developing high quality research designs that are flexible to the needs of different customers.
* Experience in working closely with policy makers and multiple stakeholders.
* Project management skills and ability to deliver to timescales and within budget.

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| Scoring: |
| 1.    No evidence/very poor |
| 2.    Poor evidence |
| 3.    Some evidence |
| 4.    Good evidence |
| 5.    Excellent evidence |

**Each one of these criteria has equal weighting.**

Expressions of interests submitted must be no more than 1000 words – anything longer will be disregarded.

| **Closing date for EOIs:** 5pm Tuesday 12th February 2019  **Send your EOI form to:** Sophie.aisbitt@education.gov.uk and [Helen.wood@education.gov.uk](mailto:Helen.wood@education.gov.uk) (any queries relating to the EOI should also be sent to both email addresses). |
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## How to submit an expressions of interest

You must submit an expression of interest (EOI) in order to be considered to be invited to tender. To do so, please complete the NEW EOI Form which can be found under attachments. A submission of an EOI does not guarantee an invitation to tender and the Department does not routinely advise organisations that they have not been successful in being invited to tender. Feedback is however available on request.

All contracts are let on the basis of the [Department’s Terms and Conditions](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eoi-guide). You are encouraged to check these before submitting your expression of interest, as these form part of your contractual obligations.

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1. Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2014). Skills Beyond School: Synthesis Report, Paris: OECD Publishing. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)