



## **Request for Proposals Challenge Fund Grants**

**April 2006**

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For the attention of Teachers who wish to apply for Small Grants for  
projects that use ICT (in its widest sense)

## ***Background***

The Scottish Qualifications Authority and Microsoft Ltd are partnering under an initiative called Partners in Learning. Some detail of that initiative and how it will be implemented in Scotland are given below.

## ***Partners in Learning***

The Microsoft Partners in Learning Programme is a five year, global initiative, sponsored by the Corporate Vice-President of the World-Wide Public Sector of Microsoft Corporation. The programme lies within Microsoft's broader Citizenship activities.

Headline objectives for the programme are, broadly, to drive for greater access to ICT, and better use of ICT, for teaching and learning in schools, and to do this in partnership with others from both the public and private sectors in each country.

Microsoft has designed Partners in Learning to be a programme with global momentum but with local implementation. The portfolio of activities will vary between countries to reflect the fact that infrastructure readiness and educational environments vary across the different geographies.

Within Partners in Learning in the UK, this flexibility of approach is achieved through the availability of a cash grant which is allocated with the guidance of Government Agencies and an Independent Advisory Council.

Partners in Learning is a non-commercial investment for Microsoft and the grant funding is not tied to any commercial or marketing targets.

The purpose of the investment is to deliver educational benefits and it is Microsoft's intention to work with others in the field – to build partnerships – and to ensure the funds are used to optimise the total value of the various investments in UK education.

## ***Focus in Scotland***

Given the advanced state of ICT in schools, the partners have agreed to focus investment and resources on two key themes:

- Teacher confidence: helping teachers to become confident in the use of ICT right across the curriculum and able to realise its full potential for teaching and learning
- Innovation: working with partners in the creative, education and technology communities to explore new ways of using technology to enrich and transform the learning experience

In support of these themes, six project areas will be funded:

- Creation of Teachers Network
- Communities of Practice
- Challenge Fund
- Curriculum Materials
- Marketing and Communications
- Research and Evaluation

## ***Governance and Execution in Scotland***

The partnership will obtain input from a Scottish Advisory Council will, broadly, have responsibility for shaping and agreeing the programme's objectives and work plan.

The Council will be chaired, over the 3 year period, by:  
Jim Donaldson Education Consultant

The Council will consist of the following members:

Joe Wilson Business Manager, Scottish Qualifications Authority  
Bob McGonigle Education Skills Manager (Scotland), Microsoft Limited  
Iain Lawson representing HMIE  
Stuart Robertson representing Learning Teaching Scotland  
Matthew McIver CEO General Teaching Council for Scotland  
Roy Jobson President of ADES  
Liz Hamilton representing Scottish Executive  
Martin Boyle representing Scottish Executive  
Margaret Alcorn representing COSLA

The MoU will be executed through an Operations Group consisting of:

Joe Wilson Business Manager, Scottish Qualifications Authority  
Bob McGonigle Education Skills Manager (Scotland), Microsoft Limited

## ***Project Description***

Research has identified the opportunity to fund individual project proposals where outputs can form a balanced contribution to ICT developments in Scottish Schools.

The use of a challenge budget mechanism has been used successfully to encourage local creativity and ownership. Small sums of available funds can be powerful in unleashing creativity at the grass roots level, balancing the availability of funds at the National level that support systemic change.

In other spheres, this can be clearly seen. The National Lottery supports major projects through its Big Lottery Fund. In Scotland, medium to large scale projects can benefit through the Active Futures (Scotland) programme which supports projects to encourage youth participation in sport. There is also a small grants programme – Awards for All – which can benefit sports clubs. The dual funding methods provide the breadth of opportunity needed to address the identified issues.

This Challenge Fund will be directed to supporting grass roots projects, and be particularly focussed on opening opportunities for classroom teachers to be innovative with ICT.

Microsoft will contribute resources through its Innovative Teachers network which will also provide one mechanism for dissemination of results. Other dissemination routes will also be sought.

The Operations Group will appoint a knowledgeable consultant to administer this project and to provide independent assessment.

It is intended to allocate £35,000 in 2005-6 and £35,000 in 2006-7 to this fund for projects.

## ***Grants***

### **Requirements**

Grants will be awarded to schools where projects meet the following requirements:

1. The sum sought is less than £2,000 and that equal match funding (actual or in-kind) can be demonstrated
2. One classroom teacher involved in the project is a member of the Microsoft Innovative Teacher Network (see <http://www.microsoft.com/uk/education/skills-dev/innovative-teachers>) to obtain support and to provide one route for dissemination
3. The project involves the use of ICT in Scottish Schools
4. The project can be delivered in the 2006-7 academic year
5. The project can demonstrate innovation and creativity

### **Submission**

One electronic copy of the proposal should be submitted by email to Walter Patterson <walt@paris.com> by 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2006.

### **Response**

The Partners reserve the right to accept proposals in part, or to make proposals to extend their scope. Decisions will be undertaken based on the criteria in this RFP and will be final.

Successful awards will be announced on June 23<sup>rd</sup> 2006.

## **Proposal Format**

Proposals should be no more than 3 pages in length, and comprise two sections

1. Institution Details (1 page) containing
  - Organisation name
  - Address
  - Lead contact
  - Phone
  - Email
  - Capability statement
  - Website relevant to this proposal
2. Requirements Response (2-3 pages) containing a response against the requirements listed above. It would be useful if this response were grouped under (or referred to) the following headings.
3. Brief description of the project
  - Innovation: the differences from existing approaches
  - Creativity: the ways in which creativity will form part of the teaching and/or learning process
  - Teaching: the benefits that the teacher(s) expects to gain from the project
  - Learning: the impact of the project on the pupils' experience (such as motivation, achievement)
  - Sustainability: the continuation of the innovative activities beyond the initial project
  - Transferability: the extent to which skills developed through the project can be transferred to other teaching and learning activities in the school and beyond.
  - Competency: the teachers and pupils taking part in the activity have the competence to benefit from the project, or these skills will be developed as part of the project.
  - Commitment: The school senior managers are committed to supporting the project

## **Funds**

Funds will be paid up front to successful applicants.

## **Evaluation**

An external consultant will be engaged to perform supportive evaluation of the project, which will include a review of how funding is allocated. To aid evaluation, the consultant will provide a short 2-page pro-forma to guide internal evaluation.

## **Guidelines**

A set of guidelines (given below) will apply.

## **Examples**

This fund has been set up to remove financial obstacles to using ICT in innovative and creative ways across the broad area of Scottish school education to enrich learning experience. It is particularly targeted at projects which the innovative teacher is unable to progress through a shortfall of available cash.

The examples below are purely illustrative and Applicants should not feel that their project will be unsuccessful if it differs.

- Innovative ways of developing competence in literacy and oral communication
- Learning about other cultures and religions by sharing through electronic communities and other methods.
- Using on-line resources to support learning e.g. modern studies, social sciences, physical sciences
- Developing creative skills in pre-school through the use of ICT
- Using games and other software not originally designed for education to enhance students' learning.
- Providing access to the creative arts for a greater range of students through use of digital cameras or digital video recorders.
- Utilising digital audio players in language education to open up new learning routes.
- Enhancing field trips through the application of Mobile GPS technology.
- Providing support to learners by means of an e-portfolio system to encourage self-reflection and recognition of progress

## **Dissemination**

We plan to showcase outcomes from the funded projects at the annual Scottish Learning Festival in September organised by Learning & Teaching Scotland ([www.ltscotland.org.uk](http://www.ltscotland.org.uk)). The input will depend on the conference programme but will be in the form of a workshop or similar to share best practice.

## **Conditions of Grant**

If an application is successful, the following will apply.

### **Usage**

1. The Applicant will use any grant for the purpose set out in the application.
2. The Applicant will not use a grant to pay for goods or services which the Applicant bought or ordered before the Applicant receives the award letter confirming the grant.
3. The Applicant will keep to any relevant legislation that affects the way in which the Applicant delivers the project.

### **Changes**

4. The Applicant will not make any major change to this project without first receiving agreement in writing. The Applicant can change the project slightly, without seeking permission first.
5. The Applicant will explain any changes during evaluation.

### **Extension**

6. If the Applicant receives the grant for a pilot project, the Applicant understands that funding will not automatically be given for any later projects.

### **Evaluation**

7. The Partners will authorize an independent third-party to evaluate the project and produce a report for the Applicant and the Partners. The purpose of the evaluation will be to support and provide impartial advice & guidance.

### **Dissemination**

8. The Applicant will make use of the Microsoft Innovative Teacher Network to disseminate the results of the project as one route to share their experience with other teachers.
9. Applicants are encouraged to use existing or discover new ways of sharing best practice through other routes.

### **Acknowledgement**

10. The Applicant will acknowledge the grant in suitable publications (such as the annual report) and on their web site.
11. The Applicant can use "Partners in Learning" in any acknowledgement and refer to the Partnership between the SQA and Microsoft.
12. The Partners plan, over the three-year term, a number of dissemination events. Applicants may be asked to speak or contribute to these.

### **Finance**

13. The Applicant will spend the grant within the academic year in which the award was made.
14. If the Applicant does not spend the entire grant, the Applicant will return the unspent amount.
15. The Applicant understands that the Partners will not increase the grant if the Applicant overspends.
16. The Applicant will keep all financial records and accounts, including receipts for items bought with the grant, for at least two years from receiving the grant. The Applicant will make these available on request.
17. The Partners may request repayment of a grant, in whole or in part, if:
  - The Applicant fails to keep to these guidelines
  - The Application Form was completed dishonestly or the supporting documents gave false or misleading information
  - The Applicant did not complete the project in a timely manner