



**2025**

## **Collaboration and Innovation Fund**

Guidelines and information on how to apply.

Application form: available [here](#)

<https://adulthoodliteracyforlife.submit.com/> from 17 December 2024

Closing date: 5pm on Friday 7 February 2025



**Rialtas na hÉireann**  
Government of Ireland



Arna chomhchistiú ag  
an Aontas Eorpach

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## A quick overview

Thank you for your interest in the 2025 Collaboration and Innovation Fund. It is a great opportunity to fund projects that support adults with unmet literacy, numeracy, digital and financial literacy needs and projects that support organisations to be literacy friendly.

We have written these guidelines with information about the fund and how you apply for it. Please read them carefully.

This year the Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) National Programme Office is working with the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission (CCPC), who are supporting a **financial literacy strand** for the fund.

Before you start, here are the main things you should know.

### How do I apply?

- You need to complete and submit an online application form. The form is available [here](https://adulthoodliteracyforlife.submit.com/): <https://adulthoodliteracyforlife.submit.com/>
- You do not have to complete it all at once. The form will save your answers as you are working through it.
- The deadline for submitting your application is 5pm on Friday 7 February 2025.

### What are the main criteria for getting funding?

- Supporting the aims of the ALL Strategy: The projects should address unmet adult literacy, numeracy, digital and financial literacy needs and/or support organisations to create a more literacy friendly society.
- Collaboration and Innovation: At least two organisations must be involved and the project should be new or innovative. Organisations must be public or not-for-profit.
- Outcomes: Your project has clear positive outcomes for adults with unmet literacy, numeracy, digital and financial literacy needs, including making Ireland more literacy friendly.

- Sustainability: The potential for your project to be mainstreamed by your organisation and/or another region or service.
- Cost: Your project is good value for money.

### **What type of information will I be asked for in my application?**

- Company, charity and tax information about the organisations.
- The names, addresses and contact details of the organisations.
- Details about your project and how it will benefit participants.
- The cost and details about how the funding will be spent.
- Signed declarations from both the lead and partner organisations.
- Financial information, including bank details, for organisations that are successful in their application.

### **What happens after I submit my application?**

- Your application will be reviewed by a group of people with experience in adult literacy. Together, they will decide the applications that will receive funding.
- Once the applications have been reviewed, you will be told if your application was successful or not.
- Unfortunately, we receive more applications than we have money for, so we cannot fund every application. If you are not successful, we can provide you with feedback on your application.
- If you are successful, we will provide you with information on what to do next.
- When your application has been reviewed, other ways of supporting your project may be identified. If this is the case, your contact details and a brief summary of your project proposal will be shared with the appropriate service(s).

# About the Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Strategy

Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) is a 10-year strategy that aims to:

- ensure that every adult has the necessary literacy, numeracy and digital literacy to fully engage in society and realise their potential; and
- support organisations and services to be literacy friendly and fully accessible to adults with unmet needs.

## Why is it important?

In Ireland, more than 500,000 people have unmet literacy needs. Even more have unmet numeracy and digital literacy needs. This means they may be unable to fill in a form, vote, read instructions on medicines, add up a bill, help kids with homework or search the web for information.

The ALL Strategy is important because it will help people gain literacy skills to achieve their personal, social and employment goals so that they can take part fully in society. The Strategy will also help organisations and services to be literacy friendly and fully accessible to adults with unmet literacy needs. This will support a more inclusive, equal society.

## How is the strategy being managed?

SOLAS (Ireland's further education and training authority) set up a National Programme Office to coordinate the Strategy across all Government departments and stakeholders.

At regional level, Regional Literacy Coordinators (RLCs) have been appointed in the 16 Education and Training Boards. They will drive partnerships between organisations that will support the aims of the ALL Strategy. They have set up Regional Literacy Coalitions to share expertise and develop appropriate responses at local level.

# About the Collaboration and Innovation Fund

## What is purpose of the fund?

The purpose of the fund is to pay for collaborative and innovative projects that:

- support adults with unmet literacy, numeracy, digital and financial literacy needs, and
- create a more literacy friendly and equal society.

## How much funding is available?

In 2025, the total funding available in the Collaboration and Innovation Fund is €1 million.

The funding will be divided into **two strands** as follows:

- **€750,000** for local and national projects that provide innovative and collaborative ways to:
  - support adults with unmet literacy, numeracy and digital literacy needs, and
  - create a more literacy friendly and equal society.
- **€250,000** for local and national projects that support innovative and collaborative ways to:
  - improve **financial literacy** skills for adults with unmet literacy, numeracy and digital literacy needs, and
  - create a more literacy friendly approach to accessing financial services.

## Why has the fund been divided?

Ireland's first National Financial Literacy Strategy will be published in 2025. To support this, the Consumer and Competition Protection Commission (CCPC) has given €250,000 for projects on financial literacy. Financial literacy is the financial awareness, knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours that people need to help them to make sound financial decisions and ultimately achieve individual financial well-being.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2020 OECD Recommendation on Financial Literacy

## **What is the difference between a local and a national project?**

A local or regional project has an impact in one area, county or ETB catchment area. In a local project, the lead organisation is any public, not for profit organisation. The minimum amount of funding available for a local project is €1,000 and the maximum amount is €25,000.

A national project has an impact in more than one county or happens in more than one Education and Training Board region. In a national project, the lead organisation is a public, not for profit national representative body or an organisation that provides a service in more than one location. The maximum amount of funding available for a national project is €50,000.

If you are not sure whether your project is local or national, please contact the ALL National Programme Office by email at [cif@solas.ie](mailto:cif@solas.ie).

## **Who can apply?**

Organisations that work in the public, not-for-profit, community and voluntary sector can apply for the Collaboration and Innovation Fund. Individuals and private sector organisations cannot apply for the Fund.

You need a minimum of two organisations working in partnership to apply for the Fund. One organisation is the lead applicant, and the other organisation or organisations are the partner applicants.

The lead organisation must provide:

- a tax clearance access number,
- tax reference number, and
- charity number, if applicable.

## **Who is responsible for the funding?**

The lead organisation is responsible for all funding. They must make sure that the approved funding allocation for any project under the Collaboration and Innovation Fund:

- is used for the specific purpose intended
- is spent by 31 December 2025

- is not used for costs that extend beyond 31 December 2025
- returns all unspent monies to SOLAS
- complies with all statutory, European Union and other obligations that apply.

Where the lead organisation / applicant forwards on grants, it must receive an invoice from any partner organisation with details of the costs incurred by that partner.

## What are the main criteria for getting funding?

Successful projects will showcase:

- collaboration and partnership between organisations,
- innovative approaches,
- meaningful benefits for adults with unmet literacy, numeracy, digital and financial literacy needs,
- how they can be mainstreamed by your organisation and/or another region or service
- good value for money and no duplication of work already happening.

If your organisation has received funding from the Collaboration and Innovation Fund in the past, you can apply for funding again, but **your project must be new and innovative**. You cannot apply for funding to run the same project again.

## Projects must not duplicate existing services.

Any proposed project should not have an adverse impact on existing services or provision funded through SOLAS, Education and Training Boards and or other state agencies. If a proposal duplicates a service that is already being funded in the region, it will not be considered for evaluation.

## How do I apply?

Complete and submit an online application form by 5 pm on Friday 7 February 2025.



# Guidelines for your proposal

## Consult with your Regional Literacy Coordinator.

Each ETB has a Regional Literacy Coordinator (RLC). Their role is to work with organisations at a local level, as well as colleagues across the education, health, community development and local government supports and services. The RLC in your region can provide additional information and answer questions you may have about your application. You **must** consult with the Regional Literacy Coordinator in your area before submitting your application. The list of Coordinators is on page 18.

If you are submitting a proposal for a national project, you must consult with the ALL National Programme Office [cif@solas.ie](mailto:cif@solas.ie) before submitting your application.

## Who should the project support?

Projects should address the needs of adults with unmet literacy, numeracy and digital literacy needs, specifically the groups identified in the ALL strategy:

Older Adults (55+)	Members of the Traveller Community	Persons with Disabilities
Low-paid Workers	Carers	One-parent Households
Incarcerated Persons and Ex-Offenders	Persons Recovering from Addiction	Long-term Unemployed
Migrants	International Protection Applicants	People with Language Needs

## What should the project focus on?

Below is a list of day-to-day areas in life where literacy, numeracy and digital literacy is important. For example, in family life, community, health, work and using government and other online services. Your project should reflect one or more of these areas.

<b>Family Life</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have the confidence and ability to read a bedtime story, help with maths, English or Irish homework, or even fill out a form required to register or enrol in school.</li></ul>	<b>Employability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Read job advertisements, fill out applications, be able to search for vacancies, apply online and communicate clearly in interviews.</li></ul>
<b>Good Health</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arrange a follow-up appointment with your doctor online, read the label on a medicine bottle and understand the diet and lifestyle needed to be healthy.</li></ul>	<b>Job Retention</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be able to read safety signs at work, send e-mails, complete health and safety courses, work with and use technology and conduct online meetings.</li></ul>
<b>Living Safely</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be able to understand safety warnings and instructions, understand situations to make sound judgements and decisions.</li></ul>	<b>Shopping</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be able to shop and purchase things online, know your consumer rights and entitlements, assess value for money.</li></ul>
<b>Services</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Access Government services and other online services required. Understand rights and eligibility, be able to apply online, provide the necessary evidence, deal with follow-up correspondence and complain about poor service.</li></ul>	<b>New Skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be able to learn new skills online, complete online assessments, read theory and do coursework as part of a course.</li></ul>
<b>Finances</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Manage finances, budget effectively, pay bills, use an ATM and online banking, access essential financial services and be able to identify a scam.</li></ul>	<b>Security</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be able to identify phishing, protect your personal information and data and avoid other forms of scams, targeting and manipulation online.</li></ul>
<b>Community</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Help people learn to live together, have the language and social skills to integrate within their communities, be healthy and thrive, irrespective of their economic, social or cultural background.</li></ul>	<b>Digital</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have the technology and be able to use it to complete many of the functions outlined above. To access news and information, to use e-mail, social media and other tools to interact with others.</li></ul>

## Who can give support to a project?

People providing support to projects, for example volunteer tutors, must be over 18. Transition year students should not participate in projects on behalf of project lead or partner organisations.

## Project budget and costs

### Eligible costs

These costs will include direct costs, programme costs and indirect overhead costs for example rent, light, heat and so on. Indirect costs **should not be more than 10%** of the direct cost of the project.

Where appropriate and necessary, please make sure that the cost of preparing materials for courses is included in programme costs.

### Tutor costs

- **Where the lead organisation is an Education and Training Board (ETB):**  
Tutor hours allocated to the project that **are already included** in the ETB FAR 4 should not be included in your application. If the tutor hours are not covered in your FAR 4, we will include a declaration on this in the funding documentation we send to you.
- **Where the lead organisation is not an ETB:**  
If you have an allocation of ETB tutor hours **already covered** by the ETB's existing budget, tutor costs should not be included in your application. If these tutor hours are not covered by the ETB's **existing budget**, we will include a declaration on this in the funding documentation we send to you.

If your project is using adult literacy tutors, they must be paid at the ETB hourly tutor rate.

## Capital equipment

The Collaboration and Innovation fund should not be used to purchase capital equipment. Single items of furniture and equipment that cost over €1,000 inclusive of VAT are categorised as capital equipment.

Where equipment is purchased, this comes under the ownership of the lead organisation. If equipment is being loaned out by the lead organisation, you should have a loan scheme and policy in place and keep proper records.

## Reach funding

Proposed projects may apply for other sources of funding such as Reach. However, there must be no duplication of State funding and the project **must not be dependent on receiving funding from another source**. If you are applying for Reach funding for this project your information may be shared within the ETB. There is more information about Reach funding in Appendix 1 on page 19.

## How your application will be evaluated

SOLAS will review all applications to make sure they meet the criteria set out in this document. An independent expert panel will consider the applications that meet the criteria. Applicants must have clearly identified and demonstrated the need and reasons for their proposed project.

### Criteria for an eligible application

Your application is eligible if:

- You have completed all of the sections of the application form.
- Your project has two or more partners.
- The lead organisation is tax compliant.
- The lead organisation has consulted with their Regional Literacy Coordinator.
- All governance requirements and assurances on how you spend the funding are in place.
- There is no duplication of State funding.
- Terms and Conditions of funding are complied with.

Once all eligible applications have been evaluated, SOLAS will write out to all lead organisations to tell them of the outcome.

The level of funding allocated may be lower than the funding applied for. Where this is the case, the lead organisation may be asked to resubmit their application reflecting the recommended funding.

SOLAS will issue successful projects with a funding letter and terms and conditions of funding. Once these have been acknowledged, SOLAS will issue the funding.

### Scoring for eligible applications

For eligible applications, the scoring will be assessed below. The maximum mark available is 100 and a minimum score of 70 must be achieved for a project to be considered for funding.

<b>Scoring</b>			
	<b>Total minimum score of 70 must be achieved</b>	<b>Minimum Required</b>	<b>Maximum Marks</b>
<b>A</b>	The project supports the aims of the ALL Strategy to address unmet adult literacy, numeracy and digital literacy needs <sup>1</sup> and/or to support organisations to create a more literacy friendly society	10	15
<b>B</b>	The application proposes collaborative and innovative approaches with other organisations	10	15
<b>C</b>	<b>Applications will be scored under either C(i) or C(ii)</b>		
	(i) The application targets identified cohorts under the ALL Strategy (maximum 20) <b>or</b>		
	(ii) Other adults with unmet literacy/numeracy/digital literacy needs (maximum 15)	15	20
<b>D</b>	The application has clear and demonstratable positive outcomes	15	20
<b>E</b>	The potential for the project to be mainstreamed by the lead/partner organisations and/or another region or service	5	10
<b>F</b>	Value for money	15	20
<b>Total score</b>		<b>70</b>	<b>100</b>

<sup>1</sup> For projects applying under the financial literacy strand, the project must address financial literacy needs

## Completing your project

You must contact your Regional Literacy Coordinator to let them know when your project is starting. They will arrange to visit the project once it has begun.

SOLAS will require a **final report** on the outcomes at the end of the project, including confirmation of funding spent. We will send a report template to the Lead Organisation to be completed and sent back to SOLAS at the end of January 2026.

SOLAS may ask for **additional evidence** of how the grant has been spent and may look for further supporting documentation.

Where training materials, supports, reports and / or research are developed through the Collaboration and Innovation Fund, these should be submitted along with the end of project report.

The ALL logo should be on relevant information and communication materials produced by and/or on behalf of projects funded through the Collaboration and Innovation Fund. Projects funded through the financial literacy strand of the fund should include the CCPC logo.

Any content and/or material produced will be **jointly owned** by the ALL National Programme Office for further circulating, use, and development. Any content and/or material produced under the financial literacy strand will be **jointly owned** by the ALL National Programme Office and the CCPC for further circulating, use, and development.

This will be done with full acknowledgement of the project development included.

When the end of project report has been submitted, SOLAS will **review the final expenditure** on the project and will recoup any unspent money.

## Documents in the Application

There are four additional documents to be completed as part of your application. These are part of the online application and can be downloaded and submitted through the platform.

## Designated Signatory of Lead Organisation

As part of SOLAS funding requirements, all funding documentation must be signed and dated by a designated signatory. The designated signatory is the CEO/Principal and/or a staff member who has the authority to sign funding documentation and reporting returns. SOLAS recommends at least one additional signatory is nominated, **where appropriate**. Please give us official email addresses only to ensure GDPR compliance.

If there is any change to the designated signatory during the year, please tell SOLAS in writing to [cif@solas.ie](mailto:cif@solas.ie)

## Declaration by Lead Organisation

The designated signatory for the lead organisation must fill in and sign this declaration on behalf of their organisation.

The declaration covers the terms of the application including

- confirmation that the information in the application is accurate and complete.
- confirmation that making the application does not guarantee funding
- consent to the ALL Office / SOLAS making enquiries to a third party about the funding application.
- acknowledging that information in the application may be made available on request under the Freedom of Information Acts 1997 and 2003 or under the 2018 EU General Data Protection Regulation.
- agreeing that any funding unspent in 2025 must be returned to SOLAS.
- agreeing with the terms and conditions of funding.



## Declaration by Partner Organisation

Each partner in the project must fill the declaration and it must be signed by the person(s) authorised to sign funding documentation on behalf of their organisation.

In signing this document the partners are agreeing that:

- they have read the 2025 Guidelines for ALL Strategy Collaboration & Innovation Fund
- they have agreed to act as a partner organisation for this project
- the information in the application about their organisation is accurate and complete.

## SOLAS Bank Authorisation Form

The bank authorisation form provides the bank details for your organisation

This can be completed either:

- in full by an authorised Bank Official and must be stamped by the bank, **or**
- by an Accountable person (see note below) in the organisation and a top copy of your bank statement, confirming the bank account details given, should be sent in along with the form. The bank statement must be dated within the last six months.

## Further information and questions

If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact your Regional Literacy Coordinator in one of the 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs) or the ALL National Programme Office [cif@solas.ie](mailto:cif@solas.ie).

ETB	First Name	Mobile	Email
Cavan and Monaghan	Ceinwen Fergus	087 068 7841	<a href="mailto:ceinwenfergus@cmetb.ie">ceinwenfergus@cmetb.ie</a>
Cork	Veronica Bowen	086 0296086	<a href="mailto:veronica.bowen@corketb.ie">veronica.bowen@corketb.ie</a>
City of Dublin	Andrew Connolly	086 601 8180	<a href="mailto:andrew.connolly@aes.cdetb.ie">andrew.connolly@aes.cdetb.ie</a>
Donegal	Adele McElhinney	086 084 9284	<a href="mailto:adelemcelhinney@donegaletb.ie">adelemcelhinney@donegaletb.ie</a>
Dublin and Dun Laoghaire	Nuala Nedjati	086 047 2363	<a href="mailto:nualanedjati@ddletbaes.ie">nualanedjati@ddletbaes.ie</a>
Galway and Roscommon	Bernadette Smith	087 763 6260	<a href="mailto:Bernadette.smith@gretb.ie">Bernadette.smith@gretb.ie</a>
Kerry	Paula Tiller	087 337 2139	<a href="mailto:paula.tiller@kerryetb.ie">paula.tiller@kerryetb.ie</a>
Kildare and Wicklow	Deirdre Gallagher	087 188 4355	<a href="mailto:deirdregallagher@kwetb.ie">deirdregallagher@kwetb.ie</a>
Kilkenny and Carlow	Helen Walsh	087 767 5547	<a href="mailto:helenm.walsh@kilkennycarlowetb.ie">helenm.walsh@kilkennycarlowetb.ie</a>
Laois and Offaly	Tamara Latham	085 856 0160	<a href="mailto:tlatham@loetb.ie">tlatham@loetb.ie</a>
Limerick and Clare	Tom Kent	087 056 4369	<a href="mailto:tom.kent@lctetb.ie">tom.kent@lctetb.ie</a>
Longford and Westmeath	Anne-Maria Egan	085 857 0991	<a href="mailto:aegan@lwetb.ie">aegan@lwetb.ie</a>
Louth and Meath	Niamh McShane	086 201 1988	<a href="mailto:nmcshane@lmetb.ie">nmcshane@lmetb.ie</a>
Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim	Thomas Howley	085 748 2365	<a href="mailto:thomashowley@msletb.ie">thomashowley@msletb.ie</a>
Tipperary	Ester Mackey	087 062 6937	<a href="mailto:emackey@tipperaryetb.ie">emackey@tipperaryetb.ie</a>
Waterford and Wexford	Edel Finan	086 084 5354	<a href="mailto:edelfinan@wwetb.ie">edelfinan@wwetb.ie</a>

## Appendix 1: Reach Fund

The aim of Reach funding is to provide support to educationally disadvantaged learners in accessing and participating in Community Education.

The main differences between the Collaboration and Innovation Fund and Reach funding are set out below:

Collaboration and Innovation Fund	Reach Funding
Any public, nonprofit organisations can apply to the ALL National Programme Office for the Collaboration and Innovation Fund.	Community Education providers can apply to their ETB for Reach funding.
Partnership model required with a minimum of two organisations needed.	A single organisation can make an application for Reach funding.
<p>The purpose is to support collaborative and innovative activities that will help achieve the aims of the strategy and create a more equal society. This includes activities that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support adults with unmet literacy, numeracy and digital literacy needs.</li> <li>• Supports a whole-of-society response to adult literacy needs.</li> </ul>	The purpose is to assist ETBs to increase their capacity and to assist Community Education providers to address the decline in participation of disadvantaged learners particularly those on literacy and basic skills programmes at NFQ levels 1 to 3.
The aim of the fund is to support individuals and or groups experiencing unmet literacy, numeracy or digital literacy needs through new and innovative approaches using a partnership model.	The aim of the funding is to tackle inequalities and support access to Community Education, and also intended to address specific actions in the Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Strategy.

<p>Targets funding of innovative activities that support the priority groups named in the Adult Literacy for Life Strategy.</p>	<p>Targets funding of educationally disadvantaged learners in accessing and participating in Community Education.</p>
<p>Must be used to support organisations that support individuals with unmet needs.</p>	<p>Can be used to support an individual with unmet needs.</p>
<p>Target groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Older adults (55+);</li> <li>• members of the Traveller community;</li> <li>• people with disabilities;</li> <li>• one-parent households;</li> <li>• low paid workers;</li> <li>• careers;</li> <li>• long-term unemployed;</li> <li>• migrants;</li> <li>• international protection applicants;</li> <li>• people with language needs;</li> <li>• incarcerated persons and ex-offenders;</li> <li>• persons recovering from addiction.</li> </ul>	<p>Target groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-term unemployed;</li> <li>• young people;</li> <li>• people with disabilities;</li> <li>• members of the Traveller and Roma communities;</li> <li>• migrants and refugees;</li> <li>• women wishing to return to the labour market;</li> <li>• lone parents</li> </ul>
<p>The ALL National Programme Office in SOLAS manage the Collaboration and Innovation Fund.</p>	<p>The ETBs manage Reach funding.</p>