

## MULTIPLY CAPABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAMME

# Commissioning or Procurement

### ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This resource is aimed to provide some top tips and guidance to address the common challenges of commissioning and/or procurement within Multiply. The content included in this resource has been drawn from discussions with providers, surveys, and learning from the Procurement webinar. We hope you will use the resource to promote discussion, support your planning and encourage creative approaches.

 Find more resources and links to join webinars and forums



### WHAT IS MULTIPLY?

Multiply is a government initiative aimed to support adults to develop their maths skills. DfE funded the Multiply Capability Support Programme to encourage providers to share best practice, network, overcome challenges and develop strategies to increase reach and engagement throughout the programme. This resource concentrates on commissioning and procurement methods. Multiply funding was distributed from DfE to MCAs/ GLA and, where they didn't exist, to Local and County Councils for commissioning and managing the local Multiply offer.

 Find out more about the programme



# Commissioning and procurement systems

Aim to mobilise quickly with joined up thinking: ideas to consider



Keep all internal parties informed and involved from the beginning e.g legal and financial services, politicians etc.

Using the grant process results may mean you do not need to go through lengthy procurement processes.

Map the outcomes and intentions to your main agendas – this will give more kudos and highlight your work across the Council.

Build on your strengths e.g. direct delivery or commissioned or a mix.

Direct delivery – an opportunity to increase and develop maths teaching staff and support your main (accredited) maths delivery.

Commissioned - use trusted delivery partners – they can reach ‘customers’ you might not be able to.

Local Government Association  
Toolkit: Partnership working with the  
voluntary and community sector

 [Access the full document](#)

Local  
Government  
Association

**Toolkit: Partnership working with the  
voluntary and community sector**

Strong relationships between councils and the local Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) are the bedrock of successful places. This toolkit aims to support councils on this journey. It builds upon research commissioned by the Local Government Association and conducted by Locality, into the state of strategic relationships between councils and their local voluntary and community sector.

# Commissioning or procurement

## Commissioning

For time limited programmes that require swift delivery, build on the work of trusted partners who already have a delivery agreement with you.

Discuss ideas with partners:

- At this stage, get a sense of the project ideas – ask questions and determine level of support required.
- What does the learning look like?
- What do your ‘customers’ need and want? What are their attitudes and perceptions of maths?
- How would you develop the project in future years?
- Who is going to project manage, and are the procedures in place?

Commission those who have had experience of this type of learner. If possible, do a variation of existing grant.

Monitor grant activity - learn from the past for example [ESF horizontal principles / cross cutting themes](#) may be useful.

Communicate clear messages from the outset and encourage sharing of the opportunities – what are your expectations?

Strengthen or reprofile with your partners where necessary.

Delivery – start evaluation as early as possible. Build on the [social return on investment](#) methodology.

Share this with your learning organisations and Council or MCA so that they can see their impact.

Encourage creative and innovative approaches.

## Procurement

Reduce the number of variables inside your procurement process.

- Create an agile procurement process.
- Build trusted relationships.
- Don't make the funding methodology overly complicated.
- Try to have a rounded contract value that can easily expand or contract depending on performance.
- Due diligence of providers – ensure they have a history of delivering learning.
- Work together to agree an understanding of success.
- Set up and use monitoring systems.
- Remember - even if you contract out they are still your learners.
- Ensure all the safeguarding policies are in place.

“ **Whatever method of procurement - we've got students doing maths and we've got half a dozen buses going and doing outreach work.** ”

## It's about relationships

### Adult education services to consider:

Does everyone in the Council understand what you do and what you are offering?

Do you share the evidence of the Adult Education Service and how it adds to the bottom line of the Council, VCS and your communities?

How does the work of the Adult Education Service reduce pressures in other areas of the Council?

How are you adding value for your citizens?

Become part of the mainstream voice of your Council.

Become friends with your community organisations.

Build trust.

Meet the local skills gaps.

**“ Work with partners to find solutions to problems.**

### How to cope when things go wrong?

Maintain a sense of perspective and humour, not worrying about all the mistakes.

Communicate an aspirational vision.

**“ Communicate an aspirational vision, and that was really important, because when things got messy it means everybody was working for the same fabulous life enhancing goals.**





“ *To have new money that has had the flexibility and to do what is necessary for the residents of these different areas... is absolutely wonderful* ”

## Key messages

Be agile - get money out of the door asap by having partners in place. This requires building on existing relationships.

Trust your partners.

Finance need to be on your side.

Be transparent so that everyone knows what you are doing.

Link to other services.

Evaluate the social value of the projects.

Get your politicians on board and share your work.

## Useful resources



Local Government Association  
Procurement Support



Crown Commercial Service: public  
procurement policy



Guidance Multiply: funding available to  
improve adult numeracy skills

## Randomised Control Trials (RCT)

Tribal are conducting a series of Randomised Control Trials for the Multiply programme.

If you'd like to get involved:



Click here for more information



Contact Tribal directly

## Hints and tips

**Build** the relationships.

**Simplify** the model.

**Sell the aspiration** – make sure everyone understands the vision so when things go wrong it is still on message.

**Share** good news stories.

“ *We didn't go out to tender and we didn't go through all that formal procurement. We used a partnership agreement with our trusted voluntary and community sector infrastructure organisation.* ”