

CPCA Skills Capital Grant Funding Programme

To address FE Cold Spots in St Neots and East
Cambridgeshire

Detailed guidance for Applicants

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Background and Context

Since 2022, East Cambridgeshire and St Neots have been identified wards where participation in education (16- 18-year-olds and 19+) is below average relative to the population. These are known as FE cold spots, where limited educational opportunities, resources, and access to learning facilities create barriers to the benefits that skills and training can bring.

We need to harness the talents of all our people to unlock growth and break down the barriers to opportunity. Every young person and adult across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough must be able to learn the skills they need to seize opportunity. Businesses need a highly skilled workforce to drive economic growth and expand opportunity in our communities.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) is committed to reducing FE Cold Spots by investing in learning facilities, increasing access, and collaborating with local businesses to provide relevant skills training and has identified £4.5m in capital investment to address the FE Cold Spots identified.

In 2024, the Combined Authority undertook a detailed study to explore the feasibility and necessity of expanding further education within the cold spot areas of East Cambridgeshire and St Neots. The original proposal was to conduct a feasibility study to develop two new flagship FE Colleges. Through analysis of a range of quantitative and qualitative data, including extensive stakeholder consultation, this work identified limited evidence to justify the creation of two new FE centers. However, the demand for accessible and high-quality skills provision remained, even though the demand did not reach a sufficient threshold to warrant building new FE Colleges.

In July 2024, the Skills and Employment Committee received the feasibility study's findings and considered the recommendations. The Committee agreed to put forward recommendations to the Combined Authority Board, which were subsequently approved on 4th September 2024. The recommendation was to use the £4.5m Capital in a grant funding process where providers could bid for funding that would:

- Support the expansion of existing facilities in East Cambridgeshire and St Neots; and
- create sustainable learning assets that will deliver crucial skills provision in key priority sectors now and in the future.

The Committee also considered a second recommendation which was to invest in existing FE facilities across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough. It was noted that this wider investment was important, but that the existing cold spots of St Neots and East Cambridgeshire needed to be prioritized. The Committee was keen to understand what the expressions of interest would be from wider parts of the

region so that they could get a better understanding of demand and explore further funding asks of the Board. Any future funding could be used as leverage to attract capital funding from the Department for Education's Capital Transformation Fund. There is also an opportunity to develop future capital investment as a future devolution ask, which requires further exploration.

Following market engagement, the expression of interest phase has helped the Authority gain a better understanding of what providers are capable of delivering and in which areas. In total there was a call of over £11m on the £4.5m available. This was made up of eight expressions of interest for St Neots, totaling £5m, three expressions of interest for East Cambridgeshire, totaling £3.4m and four expressions of interest for capital projects across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough that totaled £3.1m.

Based on the information provided during the Expression of Interest phase the expectation is that demand for funding for capital projects in both St Neots and East Cambridgeshire will exceed the funding available. If any funding remains unallocated, the Skills and Employment Committee will consider further exploring the four expressions of interest that were received from across the wider region.

Introducing this guidance document

The purpose of this document is to provide you with the information you need to support you in the completion of your application for Skills Capital Funding for projects in St Neots and East Cambridgeshire.

We want to make the application process as simple as possible. Therefore, if, after reviewing this guidance, you still have questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at skillscapitalgrant@uk.gt.com.

This guidance document is structured in 3 parts. We recommend that you read them all:

- **Part 1** provides a 1-page summary of the key information relating to the Grant Funding Programme.
- **Part 2** provides detailed guidance about the Grant Funding Programme and how to apply, along with a number of key considerations to make your application as strong as possible.
- **Part 3** provides specific information about each question in the application form and the information that needs to be provided.

Part 1 – Key Information

Grant Funding Programme: £4.5 million skills capital funding	
What are the objectives of the Grant Funding Programme?	<p>To address and reduce further education cold spots in St Neots and East Cambridgeshire. The Capital investment can be used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital expenditure linked to the delivery of skills provision and will include: • Acquisition, an upgrade and maintenance of physical assets such as property, technology, or equipment. • renovation or refurbishment of an existing building • purchase of equipment or kit to enable and enhance learning. Note that this will also include software and licensing expenditure. <p>In order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide local and accessible, high-quality skills provision

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver employability courses that develop and promote the use of transferable skills. Specifically for young people who are NEET and adults who are economically inactive. • Deliver skills provision that is aligned to key sectors where skills supply is low and vacancy numbers are high • Deliver skills provision that can support local residents to up skill, re-skill or develop new skills that will lead to positive outcomes such as progression to further education, an apprenticeship or a job. • Widen education access and increase levels of participation.
Who can apply?	<p>All providers offering Further Education to young people aged 16-18 and adults aged 19+ within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area.</p> <p>In cases of consortium bids, a lead Applicant must be identified to enter into the Funding Agreement.</p>
What is the deadline for applications?	<p>Friday, 21 March 2025 at 18:00</p> <p>Applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.</p>
What will you fund?	<p>Capital funding will be used to support the delivery of further education provision, either through purchase, renovation or refurbishment of existing sites, or purchase of equipment or kit to enable learning. Note that this will also include software and licencing expenditure.</p> <p>Provision should be focused on key CPCA sector priorities, as well as additional priorities that were identified in the feasibility study. See Part 2.6 below for further detail on what these sectors are.</p>
What information do Applicants need to provide?	<p>Applicants need to complete an application form that covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of the Applicant, the Project, the proposed geographical location and the amount of funding requested • Number and type of expected learners to benefit from the provision that is offered as a result of the capital investment alongside the academic and wider outcomes for learners, including progression to further learning and employment. • Written responses to 4 questions aligned with CPCA's objectives for the fund (separate Word document)
How do I submit my application?	<p>Applications must be submitted via email. Please email skillscapitalgrant@uk.gt.com with your completed submission by 18:00 on Friday, 21 March 2025.</p>
What criteria will be used to make funding decisions?	<p>Applications will be assessed competitively based on passing a series of eligibility checks and the strength of the application.</p>
When will applications be assessed?	<p>Applications will be assessed in March and April 2025 with Applicants informed of the outcome from April 2025 onwards.</p>

Part 2 – Detailed guidance

1. Objectives of the Capital Grant Funding Programme

CPCA is committed to giving local people the skills and training they need to improve their life chances and drive inclusive regional growth. In part this is about working with local employers to understand their skills needs and to identify the most prominent skills gaps across our region, but it is also about ensuring that there are the right facilities, equipment and adaptations in place so that more local people can be trained and upskilled. Together this will enable CPCA to continue:

- Developing a skilled workforce within key emerging sectors in the region;
- Providing a robust offering of further education provision, including enhancing the skills and capabilities of individuals who are not in education, employment or training in the region; and
- Aligning skills provision with regional and national priorities for further education.

CPCA's overarching objective in setting up the Capital Grant Funding Programme is to drive the creation of learning facilities and environments that can deliver crucial skills training now and into the future.

Specifically, CPCA's objectives for the return on investment are for the funding to:

- Provide local and accessible, high-quality skills provision
- Deliver employability courses that develop and promote the use of transferable skills. Specifically for young people who are NEET and adults who are economically inactive.
- Deliver skills provision that is aligned to key sectors where skills supply is low and vacancy numbers are high
- Deliver skills provision that can support local residents to up skill, re-skill or develop new skills that will lead to positive outcomes such as progression to further education, an apprenticeship or a job.
- Widen education access and increase levels of participation

2. Overview of the Grant Funding Programme

The £4.5 million fund will be allocated in a single, competitive, funding round.

All applications will be assessed during March 2025 within an established assessment process (see section 3 for further detail on this). The assessment will be made on the basis of:

- The Application details in terms of the Applicant and the Project proposed;
- The answers given highlighting the number and type of expected learners to benefit from the provision that is offered as a result of the capital investment alongside the academic and wider outcomes for learners, including progression to further learning and employment (separate Excel spreadsheet)
- Written responses to 4 questions that reflect the fund's objectives and [CPCA's overall Employment & Skills strategy](#)

CPCA may request further details from Applicants during this assessment in order to clarify particular points in the application. All the information submitted by Applicants will then be considered by CPCA as part of its assessment and determination of which applications should be awarded funding.

Where a funding award is made, the funding will be distributed in accordance with the relevant terms and conditions agreed with the successful Applicant and the amount awarded will be allocated to specific agreed interventions and activities.

Only Applicants that meet the eligibility criteria and align with the fund's objectives should apply. The competitive nature of the CPCA Grant Funding Programme means that not all Applicants will be successful in their application and that successful Applicants may not receive funding for all the costs that they have applied for.

3. Timetable

Date	Milestone
07 February 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application window opens for Applicants to complete 4-week clarification question window ending Friday 7th March Email address open for Applicants to raise clarification questions
21 March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online portal closes at 18:00 Review and assessment process begins Follow up with individual Applicants as required
April 2025 onwards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants informed of application outcome Grant Funding Agreement signed Successful Applicants begin to receive funding upon submission of claim forms which are compliant with the terms of the Grant Funding Agreement Monitoring and reporting commence

4. Who can apply?

This grant funding programme is open to all providers offering Further Education to young people aged 16-18 and adults aged 19+ within the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area.

Applicants for the CPCA Grant Funding Programme must have a UK presence and be registered in the UK. Funding will be deposited into a UK business bank account.

Applications from consortiums are welcome and will require a lead Applicant to be identified along with details of the other members of the consortium. In Part 3 below, we set out which information is required to be provided by the lead Applicant and which information should relate to the consortium. The intention is that the Grant Funding Agreement will be between CPCA and the lead Applicant, who will act as an accountable body for the project and a signed declaration will be required as proof of each organisation's commitment. The conditions and strength of any joint submission will be considered during the project assessment process.

Applicants must consider and answer all the questions in the application form. Where a consortium is applying these questions should be answered by the lead Applicant only, except where specified.

5. How much will I be eligible to apply for?

There is a total funding pot of £4.5m available to apply for, with the allocation of funding prioritised for East Cambridgeshire and St Neots, if any amount remains unallocated this will be allocated to projects across the Combined Authority area. Each provider is not limited to offering provision in only one area. Where Applicants are applying for different projects in the same geography, or similar projects in different geographies a separate application form should be submitted.

Funding allocations must be spent within 12 months of execution of the Grant Funding Agreement (signed by both parties), i.e. between April 2025 and March 2026. In exceptional cases, CPCA may exercise discretion over the delivery period.

Applicants are advised not to make any irrevocable commitments to incur expenditure in reliance on funding from CPCA up until the point that the Grant Funding Agreement is completed (i.e. signed by both parties). Applicants should note that the reporting on the return on investment will be required for a three-year period between the start of the Grant Funding Agreement and up to and including 36 months after that. Further details will be contained in the Grant Funding Agreement.

CPCA will not reimburse any costs incurred as part of, or associated with, the preparation or submission of the Application.

There is no match funding element involved with this skills capital grant funding.

6. What will the Grant Funding Programme fund?

The Grant Funding Programme will provide capital funding to support additional further education provision in the region of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough through:

- renovation and/or refurbishment of buildings
- the adaptation of premises to accommodate equipment and associated learning provision
- the purchase of new facilities or premises suitable for accommodating learning provision
- the purchase of equipment, software and licencing to support learners into careers in the priority sectors identified.

It should be noted that following the capital expenditure, the Applicant must be able to finance the skills provision itself through funding such as 16-18 funding, Adult Skills Funding or Skills Bootcamp funding. Applicants should already have access to this programme funding. It will not be provided by the Authority. The Applicant must be able to provide evidence of sufficient demand from learners and or employers for the provision. Any costs associated with the delivery of the provision will not be funded through this process. This process is for capital expenditure only.

Provision must be aimed towards learners that are aged 16-18 and adults aged 19+. The Combined Authority is particularly interested in ensuring the investment contributes to the continued development of a lifelong learning culture, where personal and professional development delivers outcomes for our people, our economy, and our communities. Funding should be aligned with priority residents and growth sectors so that everyone can realise their potential, benefit from and contribute to economic and social prosperity and be an active citizen in their local community.

Provision delivered, as a result of the capital investment, must be focused on the following priorities:

Priority Sector	Rationale
Construction and housing	Significant housing and infrastructure development occurring within the region
Engineering and advanced manufacturing	An existing sectoral strength within the region with significant future growth prospects
Science and technology innovation, and life sciences	An existing sectoral strength within the region with significant future growth prospects
Digital technology	Strong future growth prospects driven by “industry 4.0” and the wider digital transition. It encompasses both future growth in sectors such as RegTech and Artificial Intelligence as well as the need for improved digital literacy across all sectors

Agri-tech	An existing sectoral strength within the region with significant future growth prospects
Green technology	Strong future growth prospects driven by national priorities around green transition, crossing multiple sectors, technologies and ways of working including renewable energy, bio-diversity and nature based solutions, retrofit, resource use and efficiency, circular economy principals and the development of smart cities.
Health and social care	Significant demand identified through the recent feasibility study
Education support (Teaching Assistants/Higher Level Teaching Assistants)	Significant demand identified through the recent feasibility study
Employability, Entry level and transferable skill development	A critical need identified by employers and a vital foundation to enabling people to access employment

Applicants must have an existing footprint in the CPCA region in terms of having a sound presence with strong networks and existing partnerships, evidencing the applicant's ability to access programme funding for the delivery of provision as a result of the capital investment.

Eligible Projects

Applicants must be on the UK Register of Learning Providers: <https://www.ukrlp.co.uk/> and Projects will only be eligible for funding if they meet the following conditions:

- The funding is for capital purposes only, as listed above, noting that improved accessibility and efficiency alone are insufficient criteria for a funding award.
- Provision is aimed at providing learners with the skills and qualifications needed to get into or fill vacancies in the CPCA priority sectors according to industry needs.
- Provision is delivered in St Neots and/or East Cambridgeshire and their immediate surrounding areas. Once funding has been maximised for these Cold Spots, the authority may consider bids from other parts of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.
- If physical changes to the Facility are proposed (for example, renovating or refurbishing a Facility), capital funding should be made for an asset owned by the FE provider. If the FE provider does not own the Facility, sufficient evidence must be provided from the Facility owner providing their permission. It should be noted that, if required, it is the responsibility of the Applicant to secure appropriate planning permission.

Applicants should be able to demonstrate how their proposed provision encourages and enables integration of all learners, with priority given to those most in need, to ensure the region's diverse communities are fully represented and everyone has access to skills which are locally relevant and support progression.

Ineligible Projects

Projects will not be eligible for funding if the following criteria apply:

- The improvement of facilities is not solely intended for the provision of further education.
- Land is being purchased for the subsequent development of a new facility.
- Costs relate to existing and ongoing maintenance works that cannot be explicitly linked to a return on investment, or staffing costs.

7. What is the application process?

Having expressed an interest, you will have received an invitation to submit an application.

The application form covers:

- Applicant details
- Financials and risks
- Benefits
- Learner Data
- Wider outcomes
- Progression outcomes
- Written responses (separate Word document)

Each of these sections includes a number of questions. Please see Part 3 of this guidance for a detailed explanation of what is required for each section and against each question. Your responses to these questions will be assessed as part of CPCA's assessment process.

Where you have documentation that provides specific evidence of the assumptions or information you have included in your application then you may also submit this as supporting evidence alongside your application forms. This could include but is not limited to a supplier quote for a particular activity, a design or drawing, or a more detailed plan. Please do not submit general marketing documentation as this will not be reviewed or considered.

Any supporting documents provided should be clearly referenced within the application form. References should also be provided to the specific page numbers and/or sections where the relevant information can be found as the assessment process will not necessarily review all supporting information in detail. The key points of information from any supporting documents, and their relevance to your application, should be summarised within your responses and as part of the word limits specified.

Once funding has been awarded, it can be drawn down monthly in arrears against achievement of Milestones and/or Outputs with either evidence of cost incurred or certified expenditure. No funding can be drawn down until after planning permission has been granted (where applicable). Examples of acceptable evidence include invoices, receipts and bank statements.

Please note that there will also be a monitoring and evaluation phase for at least 36 months after the Grant Funding Agreement has been executed. Successful Applicants will be asked to provide information on the progress and outcomes of the provision being delivered using the new site, kit, equipment etc, in terms of number of learners and other key indicators. This includes a breakdown of the demographic of learners, i.e. by gender, ethnic minority, age and disability. Applicants will be required to provide formative performance reports, including photographic evidence, and to complete a summative evaluation at the end of the 36-month period. Providers should be prepared to allow CPCA Officers to visit the premises and meet with learners benefitting from the investment.

The Combined Authority will also request case studies and examples of good practice which will form part of a series of social media campaigns that promote the scheme and the return on investment.

8. How are the applications assessed?

The information provided by the Applicants in their application form will be assessed by CPCA following the assessment process set out below. Part 3 of this document details how each of the questions will feed into this assessment. The assessment process has been established on the basis of CPCA's objectives for the Grant Funding Programme. Applicants should review the assessment process carefully before deciding whether to apply to the fund.

Applicants should note that CPCA is under no obligation to clarify or allow updates to an application.

Where an application is incomplete, inconsistent, vague or ambiguous CPCA reserves the right to reject the application.

Eligibility checks

As the first stage of the assessment process all applications must pass the following eligibility checks:

- Agreement to all the confirmation statements
- Application is for an eligible project
- Amount requested is within the stated thresholds
- Application is for eligible costs

If, following these eligibility checks, an application does not pass one or more of the eligibility checks it will be deemed as ineligible to receive funding from the Grant Funding Programme. If an application does pass all of the eligibility checks it will be confirmed as eligible to receive funding from the Grant Funding Programme (i.e. an “eligible application”) and will then be subject to the following further stages of the assessment process:

Application strength

Each of the 4 written response questions will be reviewed and assessed from 1 (very poor/no evidence) to 5 (excellent) using the scoring matrices detailed in Part 3. A maximum total score of 20 is therefore available for the written response questions.

The return on investment, as proposed in the projected volumes of unique learners that will be able to access learning as a result of the investment, will be scored from 1 (very low return on investment) to 5 (excellent return on investment).

This will give a maximum total score of 25.

All eligible Applications will be ranked according to their application strength score within the geography applied for. The Application receiving the highest score will be ranked at number 1 and all the other Applications will be ranked in descending order according to their score.

CPCA’s determination

Based on the full range of information provided by Applicants in their application form and during this process, CPCA will determine which of the applications should be recommended to receive funding and in what amounts.

CPCA reserves the right in its discretion to make its determination according to a range of factors, including the ranking achieved by the application, ensuring that the fund monies are optimally allocated in terms of covering projects in key locations aimed towards sectors with high demand.

Completion of CPCA’s determination will not (of itself) release funding or entitle an Applicant to funding. The award of funding will remain subject to conditions and the agreement and execution of CPCA’s standard Grant Funding Agreement, the terms and conditions of which will be non-negotiable.

9. Funding amount

CPCA expects the amount of funding requested by Applicants to accurately represent the public funding requirement for the Project and the minimum necessary to enable the Project to proceed and deliver the best value for money for the UK taxpayer.

The amount of funding sought by any Applicant will not bind CPCA. CPCA will consider the amount sought as part of the section “Applicant Details” of the application form. If, during the assessment process, CPCA concludes that the amount of funding requested is not the minimum necessary to enable the Project to proceed and/or deliver the best value for money for the UK taxpayer, it may adjust the amount awarded for the Project to an amount that it considers (in its absolute discretion) necessary to achieve objectives. It will be this amount that CPCA will assess and consider during CPCA’s

determination and it will be this amount that will be included in the Grant Funding Agreement.

10. What happens after you have applied?

Once an application has been submitted via email, Grant Thornton and representatives of CPCA will consider and review it.

If further information is required to enable an application to be assessed, Applicants will be sent an email detailing what's required and the deadline for the return of this information. If the additional information isn't returned by the stated deadline, CPCA reserves the right not to progress the application. If the application is deemed ineligible, no further information will be requested.

When the final decisions on awards are made, an email notifying the applicant of the award decision will be sent. All Applicants are expected to be notified of the outcome of their Applications by early April 2025.

If a funding Award Decision is approved, Applicants will receive a copy of the Grant Funding Agreement, together with a 'notification of decision' and a Payment Schedule by email, from CPCA. The Grant Funding Agreement and Payment Schedule will need to be signed using e-signature and returned by the stated deadline. If a signed Grant Funding Agreement is not returned by the stated deadline, CPCA reserves the right – at its discretion – to deem the Award Decision to have lapsed, and for no funding to be awarded. This is to ensure the fund can be fully utilised in the timeframes available and achieve the maximum benefit from the fund.

11. Handling of information

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) provides a general right of access to information held by public authorities, subject to certain exemptions.

Applicants should note that CPCA may be required to disclose any or all information provided to CPCA by Applicants (including details of an Applicant's application) in response to a request made pursuant to FOIA even where such information is identified and marked as confidential and/or commercially sensitive.

FOIA provide certain exemptions from/exceptions to a general right of access. Exemptions from disclosure are generally subject to a public interest test.

To assist CPCA in considering the application of any available FOIA exemption, Applicants should:

- (a) identify and clearly mark any information contained in their application which is commercially sensitive and confidential; and
- (b) accompany their application with a substantive justification for the classification of information as commercially sensitive and confidential and a time limit after which such information can be disclosed. This can be uploaded as part of the supporting documentation.

CPCA will notify an Applicant if an FOIA request is received that would require the disclosure of any of the Applicant's information marked as commercially sensitive and confidential.

CPCA shall not be liable to an Applicant in disclosing information in response to an FOIA request that may fall within an available FOIA exemption.

12. Data and monitoring requirements

Post-award monitoring and reporting will be a contractual requirement for successful Applicants. CPCA (or its representatives) will require evidence of the expenditure incurred and outputs generated as a condition for releasing payment as well as information to assess the progress being made towards an investment decision. This will be monitored for at least 36 months following on from funding being allocated, where successful applicants will be asked for information such as number of learners participating in learning each year as well as other KPIs included in the detailed scoring matrix provided in Part 3.

Exact data and monitoring requirements will be confirmed within the Grant Funding Agreement.

13. Changes to this guidance or the Grant Funding Programme fund

CPCA reserves the right to make changes to the guidance and/or Grant Funding Programme after its launch. We will communicate any changes as quickly as we can to those who have expressed interest.

This includes the right to cancel the Grant Funding Programme before it has completed (whether in whole or in part) or at any time before the Grant Funding Agreement is signed, as well as any future funding under CPCA.

14. Subsidy Control

CPCA is subject to the Subsidy Control Act 2023. It is CPCA's responsibility to comply with the Subsidy Control Act however, we may ask applicants or grant recipients to help us during the process. For example, we may ask you for details of current and previous funding your organisation has received.

If we believe your award is a Subsidy as defined by the Subsidy Control Act, we will inform you of this. There may be additional conditions as part of your Grant Funding Agreement to ensure we maintain compliance.

If your award is classed as a subsidy and is for over £100,000 or above, we will also need to publish its details on the UK Subsidies Transparency Database.

15. Any questions?

If you have any questions within the 4-week clarification window ending Friday 7TH March, please contact us at skillscapitalgrant@uk.gt.com.

Part 3 – Specific information about each question in the application forms

Applicant Details Tab		
Information requested	Guidance for the information requested	Purpose of information for assessment
1. Applicant Details		
1.01 – Applicant's legal name	Lead Applicant's full organisation/company name to be provided. If bidding in a consortium or via a special purpose entity, this question along with 1.02-1.04 and 1.06 should be based on the details of the lead Applicant identified.	To undertake eligibility and credibility checks on Applicant
1.02 - Applicant registered address	Lead Applicant's registered UK address.	To undertake eligibility and credibility checks on Applicant
1.03 - Applicant website	Lead Applicant's website to be provided.	For information
1.04 - Contact name	Applicant's full legal name to be provided. This will be the individual we would discuss the application with if required and they will also be informed of the outcome of the application.	For information
1.05 - Contact email address	Applicant's email address to be provided.	For information
1.06 - Contact telephone number	Applicant's telephone number to be provided.	For information
1.07 - Organisation type	Select the type of organisation from the following options: <i>limited company, charity, public sector or other (if other, please state).</i>	For information
1.08 – Organisation's registration number	Organisation's Registration Number to be provided (if applicable). Details can be found via Companies House. If no registration number, please leave blank.	To undertake eligibility and credibility checks on Applicant
1.09 - VAT registration number	Organisation's VAT Number to be provided (if applicable). If no registration number, please leave blank.	To undertake eligibility and credibility checks on Applicant
1.10 - Local Authority area	Confirm the Local Authority area the Project will be based in.	For information
1.11 - High-level overview of funding request	Please provide a high-level overview why you are applying for funding and what the FE Capital Grant will be used on.	For information – the purpose of this statement is to give the assessor an overview of your Project and help orientate

(Word limit: 150 words maximum)	<p>A high-level overview of the Project for which you are applying for funding is to be provided.</p> <p>This should outline the sector and location that the capital expenditure will be aimed towards and why you need support from the Skills Capital Grant Funding Programme.</p>	them in assessing the remainder of your application
1.12 - Capital fund request	<p>Please provide a figure of the capital fund amount required to execute your Project.</p> <p>This figure must include irrecoverable VAT.</p>	To have a clear idea of the capital funding being requested
1.13 – Capital Investment obtained from other sources (£)	<p>Please provide an exact figure of the remaining capital funding amount required to execute your Project. This will be the total cost of the Project minus the Capital fund request.</p> <p>This figure must include irrecoverable VAT.</p>	For information to ensure it is clear how much the total Project will cost
1.14 – Are you applying as a consortium?	Confirm if the application is being submitted by a consortium. If yes, please detail the names and registration numbers of the other organisations within the consortium.	To undertake eligibility and credibility checks on Applicant
1.15 – Proposed Project's start date	Please advise when the proposed project is expected to start.	To understand when the Project may start.
1.16 – Proposed Project's end date	Please advise when the proposed project is expected to end.	To understand when the Project may end.
1.17 - Development or redevelopment of premises	<p>If the project includes development or redevelopment of premises, please indicate whether your organisation has control of the site or if you have site owner's permission.</p> <p>What are the necessary permissions, e.g. planning and have they been granted?</p> <p>It should be noted that, if required, it is the responsibility of the applicant to secure appropriate planning permission.</p>	To understand if the relevant permissions are in place.
1.18 – Key Milestones for Q1 April – June 2025	Please detail the key milestones between Q1 April – June 2025 to reflect the phasing of your Project from initiation to delivery.	For information on the timeline.
1.19 – Key Milestones for Q2 July – Sep 2025	Please detail the key milestones between Q2 July - Sep 2025 to reflect the phasing of your Project from initiation to delivery.	For information on the timeline.
1.20 – Key Milestones for Q3 Oct – Dec 2025	Please detail the key milestones between Q3 Oct - Dec 2025 to reflect the phasing of your Project from initiation to delivery.	For information on the timeline.

1.21 – Key Milestones for Q4 Jan – Mar 2026	Please detail the key milestones between Q4 Jan - Mar 2026 to reflect the phasing of your Project from initiation to delivery.	For information on the timeline.
2. Financials and Risks		
2.01 – Financial ask	Please provide a clear itemised list of expected capital costs that demonstrates the entire sum of eligible funding requested. For each cost, please provide a category, high-level description, expected date of activity and the total cost.	To have a clear idea of the capital funding being requested, which will inform the payment schedule.
2.02 – Budget forecast for Q1-Q4 for 2025/26	Please detail the budget forecast across each quarter for the financial year of 2025/26. For each applicable month, please provide an expected budget. All figures must include irrecoverable VAT.	To have a clear idea of the capital funding being requested, which will inform the payment schedule.
2.03 – Funding of remaining costs	Please provide details on how the remaining amount (non-eligible costs) required to fund the Project will be funded. E.g., remaining £500k will be funded through company funds	To understand how the remaining funds required to execute the Project will be funded.
2.04 – Has work already started on the Project?	Has any work started on the Project for which you are seeking funding? Please detail the work that has started and why the funding you are seeking is necessary for this project to proceed.	To understand if any work has started on the Project and why funding is required.
2.05 – Impact of Capital Grant support	Please explain if the Project would go ahead without FE Cold Spot Capital Grant support. Please detail what additional value the CPCA funding will bring, e.g., expediting project delivery, enabling implementation or facilitating larger-scale delivery.	Understand the additional value of CPCA funding. This is a pass/fail question and will be assessed as part of the eligibility checks.
2.06 – Risks and mitigations	Please detail any risks and mitigations that have been considered for the project e.g., delays to the timeline.	To understand if key risks and mitigations have been considered.
3. Benefits and Outcomes		
3 - Learner Data	Please provide relevant course information for the Project, as well as the number of learners in each age category. Please also provide the number of expected learners in each quarter once the funding has been invested – adjust the dates in columns K-W accordingly to start from when delivery of provision has commenced. This should add up to the number of Total Learners in column J. Note: only the cells highlighted in yellow should be manually filled in.	To understand the throughput of learners.

4. Wider Outcomes		
4 - Wider Outcomes	<p>In columns E-M, please state the number of learners achieving each of the wider outcomes of the courses to be provided.</p> <p>Note: only the cells highlighted in yellow should be manually filled in and columns A-D will populate automatically from the previous tab, so it is important to fill in the tabs in order.</p>	To understand how the Project may support in upskilling learners and the benefits it will deliver for them.
5. Progression Outcomes		
5 - Progression Outcomes	<p>In columns E-K, please state the number of learners achieving each of the progression outcomes of the courses to be provided.</p> <p>Note: only the cells highlighted in yellow should be manually filled in and columns A-D will populate automatically from the previous tab, so it is important to fill in the tabs in order.</p>	To understand the further education and employment opportunities generated by the Project.

Written Responses (see separate word document)

Written Response Guidance

The following section provides guidance to support you in responding to the 4 written response questions. The prompts provided are guidance to support you in drafting a response. Some elements may not be relevant to your Project. Each response will be scored between 1 (very poor/no evidence) and 5 (excellent).

4.01 Please explain how the provision, to be delivered as a result of this Capital Investment aligns with the key skills need of the geographical area in which provision will be based. (Word limit: 1,000)

Applications will be assessed to consider whether and to what extent it provides details on:

- A clear outline of the sectors that provision will be focused on and how they align with CPCA priority sectors or additional sectors identified in the feasibility study.
- A clear description as to how the capital investment and subsequent provision being delivered will benefit the needs of the geographical location where the provision will be based.
- A clear description of the intended impact of the capital investment

Score	Description
5 - Excellent	Robust and detailed evidence that the provision aligns with the CPCA priority sectors, with clear and evidenced links between the region and cold spot's needs, demand, and what the provision will achieve in the short-term and long-term for the geographical location selected. These statements are supported by comprehensive underlying evidence as appropriate.

4 – Good	Clear reference as to how the provision aligns with the CPCA priority sectors and is partially evidenced as appropriate. Evidence of a strong understanding and expectation of the requirements and associated benefits to the geographical location selected but there is an indication of some gaps.
3 - Moderate	Moderate indication that the provision aligns with the CPCA priority sectors with limited supporting evidence. Some evidence that the Applicant has considered and accounted for the benefits to the geographical location selected.
2 – Poor	Minimal evidence that the provision aligns with the CPCA priority sectors, and little understanding and expectation around the associated benefits to the geographical location selected.
1 – Very poor/no evidence	No evidence and/or detail that the provision aligns with the needs identified through the CPCA priority sectors. No direct reference to the requirements or associated benefits to the geographical location selected.

4.02 Please set out any partnerships and relationships with businesses and employers you have in this geography and how they will be drawn on to achieve the key outputs identified. (Word limit: 750)

Applications will be assessed to consider whether and to what extent it provides details on:

- Partnerships or collaborations your organisation has established with other stakeholders or institutions to support the successful and sustainable delivery of provision.
- A clear description of how your organisation will work with employers and wider partners to create a sustainable pipeline into employment and/or further education and address the region's skills and employment needs.

Score	Description
5 - Excellent	Excellent partnerships and relationships across the Combined Authority area with clear evidence around how these will support the delivery of provision, for example detail on how they will provide complementary support and services or a pipeline of learners and specific detail of how they will work with partners.
4 – Good	Good partnerships and relationships across the Combined Authority area and reasonable evidence around how these will support the delivery of provision, for example detail on how they will provide complementary support and services or a pipeline of learners and high-level detail of how they will work with partners.
3 - Moderate	Some evidence of partnerships and relationships across the Combined Authority area and how these will support the delivery of provision, for example detail on how they will provide complementary support and services or a pipeline of learners and some detail of how they will work with partners.
2 – Poor	Limited evidence of partnerships and relationships across the Combined Authority area and how these will support the delivery of provision, with very little detail of how they will work with partners, provide complementary support and services or a pipeline of learners.

1 – Very poor/no evidence	No evidence of partnerships and relationships across the Combined Authority area and how these will support the delivery of provision, with basic if any detail of how they will work with partners, provide complementary support and services or a pipeline of learners.
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4.03 Please describe your understanding of the expected demand for this facility/refurbishment/equipment, giving consideration to student needs, business requirements and future economic growth. (Word limit: 750)

Applications will be assessed to consider whether and to what extent it provides details on:

- Describe your existing presence or footprint within the area and how you will engage with the local community to raise awareness of the learning opportunities available. You must include:
- How learners will be recruited and enrolled along with a projected number of learner starts and completions over time.
- How you intend to work with employers to shape the curriculum?

Score	Description
5 - Excellent	Very clear evidence that the provision is helping to address student needs and business requirements, and that it is scalable to meet the future demands of the region. Evident that the Applicant has comprehensively understood and incorporated national and regional priorities for further education into their considerations.
4 – Good	Strong assertions that the provision is helping to address student needs and business requirements, and that it is scalable to meet the future demands of the region. Applicant has good understanding of national and regional priorities for further education, and has incorporated them accordingly into their considerations.
3 - Moderate	Some assertions that the provision is helping to address student needs and business requirements, and that it is scalable to meet the future demands of the region. Applicant has evidenced moderate understanding of how provision aligns with national and regional priorities for further education.
2 – Poor	Limited evidence that the provision is helping to address student needs and business requirements, and that it is scalable to meet the future demands of the region. This includes limited alignment of provision with national and regional priorities for further education.
1 – Very poor/no evidence	No evidence of provision helping to address student needs and business requirements. There is no evidence of scalability to meet the future demands of the region, nor alignment with national and regional priorities for further education.

4.04 Please provide details of how the project will be successfully implemented. This should include details of your experience of delivering capital projects to time and budget; how you will fund and resource the revenue aspect of the skills delivery; and how you will ensure capacity and capability for monitoring output over the next 3 years. (Word limit: 1,000)

Applications will be assessed to consider whether and to what extent it provides details on:

- An implementation plan that sets a timeline of delivery with key milestones and success measures.
- Previous experience of skills capital project delivery.
- The resources you have in place to monitor and evaluate the return on investment and outcomes for learners?
- A robust and credible evidence base for costs including quotations received or project management arrangements.
- Where relevant, you should demonstrate evidence of securing the proposed site for delivery, covering areas such as: site securing process, feasibility assessment, site suitability, risk mitigation strategies and community engagement and consultation.

Score	Description
5 - Excellent	Fully scoped, with the required arrangements in place to deliver including evidence around how premises will be secured if relevant. Clear plans and processes, technical details provided, clear timelines, and allocated roles and responsibilities. Pre-requisite investments have been complete. Documentation indicating appropriate arrangements around finance, procurement, project management. In-depth supporting documents provided, such as a project timeline. Provides a very credible evidence base for deliverability of provision.
4 – Good	Mostly scoped with only one or two (small) things yet to be in place/established. Broad breakdown of plans and processes, some roles and responsibilities allocated. Most pre-requisites are in place with plans around securing premises if relevant. Some descriptions of the arrangements around finance, procurement, and project management. Provides a good level of credibility in terms of evidence based on deliverability of provision.
3 - Moderate	High level plans and processes, broad descriptions of roles and responsibilities. Limited evidence of delivery plans. A limited amount detail about proposed arrangement for finance, procurement, project management and limited plans around how premises will be secured if relevant. The evidence based on deliverability lacks credibility as there are some concerns.
2 – Poor	A general overview. Simple assertions regarding arrangements without much contextual information. Limited supporting documents, like basic project plans. Limited sense of how premises will be secured if relevant. The evidence base for deliverability of provision has limited credibility as there are major concerns.
1 – Very poor/no evidence	No confidence in ability to deliver. Vague statements or assertions about plans, roles and responsibilities. No plans around securing premises if relevant. This proposal is not credible as there are major concerns around the subsequent deliverability of provision.