

## **1. EEF Commissioning**

### **1a. How many providers is the EEF looking for?**

The EEF have been allocated £76m for tutoring. With this, the aim from the DfE is to serve around 200,000 students, although it has been recognised that this target may be too high. This would require 70,000 blocks of tuition, most of which would be delivered 1:3.

The EEF has indicated that it might seek to approve ~50 tuition partners to deliver the programme. To help develop the tutoring sector, and to evaluate different tutoring models, it is likely that there will be a range of providers (e.g. paid tutors/volunteers, charity/for-profit, QTS/non-QTS).

On this basis, then, a rough estimation is that the average partner would deliver 1,400 blocks of tuition, although there could be quite a big range as the minimum capacity is ~165 blocks.

### **1b. How will the providers be funded?**

There is no fixed price per hour. However, the EEF were initially considering a fixed price of £50ph. Some models may cost considerably less than this (e.g. volunteering), some models may cost more (e.g. established providers with RCT evidence). The sense I have from the EEF is that the top end would be ~£65ph, but that this would be reserved for the very best providers.

The application form allows applicants to give different prices for 1:1 vs 1:3 and online vs in-person. Further to this, I am seeking guidance from the EEF as to whether providers can have variable pricing for other programme features, e.g. for SEND vs. non-SEND, for qualified teachers vs graduates.

Schools will pay 25% of the cost to the provider and the EEF will subsidise the other 75%, paying the provider based on level of delivery and completion of contract management milestones. The schools can be invoiced upfront by the provider. The EEF payments will be paid in arrears, most likely on a half-termly basis.

### **1c. Is there a limit to how much a consortium can bid for?**

The guidance does not identify an upper limit. However, the steer I've had from the EEF is that while some providers have suggested that they have capacity to deliver ~7,000 blocks, this would be unlikely due to not wanting to become over-reliant on a small number of providers.

I think that any upper limit for a consortium would ultimately be constrained by the track record of the lead partner with respect to the EEF's quality criteria (see [here](#)). In our case, this will apply to The Tutors' Association (TTA). For example, the EEF have stated that the highest levels of provision will be reserved for those with the strongest evidence (e.g. RCTs, QEDs).

### **1d. Can organisations apply to be part of more than one consortium?**

We have now raised this query with the EEF and their guidance is that organisations should only be part of one application to the National Tutoring Programme, whether as an individual bid or as part of a consortium.

### **1e. What is the process for the EEF carrying out background checks on consortium partners?**

The EEF has confirmed that it will need to carry out background checks for all members of a consortium (e.g. finance, safeguarding). As such, our understanding is that partners will not need to submit any documentation in advance as part of the bid.

With a higher number of consortium partners, it may take longer for these checks to be carried out, but the EEF has also stated that this would not be at any disadvantage to a consortium bid.

### **1f. Do organisations have to be based in England?**

The National Tutoring Programme is limited to working with state schools in England. However, there is nothing in the guidance that says that the tutoring partners need to be based in England themselves. As such, we are assuming that any member can apply to be part of the consortium, providing they can demonstrate an ability to deliver high quality tutoring either in-person or online.

## **2. Consortium**

### **2a. How will the consortium be managed?**

If successful, the programme will be delivered under the brand of Tutoring for All (TFA). A dedicated TFA team will manage the delivery a standardised tutoring programme. Consortium partners will be sub-contracted to provide tutors that deliver the tutoring. The contract with the EEF will be managed by TTA, with funds being ringfenced throughout and no surplus retained.

### **2b. Will consortium members need to be approved, or is it assumed that TTA members are credible?**

The initial plan is that all TTA corporate members can join the consortium if they confirm that they will meet the standard joining criteria. If this turns out not to be the case, a member would be ineligible to be allocated tutoring blocks. The criteria will be shared soon, and will include eg: maintaining safe recruitment processes, adhering to TFA policies, having sufficient capacity etc.

### **2c. Will consortium members need to sign a contract with TFA pre- or post-bid?**

I think pre-bid, all that is needed is a good faith commitment to participate, meet the standard joining criteria etc. Thus, I think a contract would be signed post-bid. I will ask EEF for a steer on this.

### **2d. Are you able to share a list of consortium members? (e.g. full list, regions)**

A full list of members will be circulated following the submission of the bid.

### **2e. Will any 'connected parties' to TTA be part of the consortium?**

It may be the case that connected parties to the TTA either join the consortium for tutoring delivery or are sub-contracted to provide services (e.g. learning materials, staff secondments, training).

Where connected parties join the consortium for tutoring delivery, this will be flagged as a potential conflict of interest in any relevant governance decisions and TTA's existing policy followed.

Where connected parties are sub-contracted to provide services other than tutoring delivery, these services will be procured openly and with transparent selection criteria. As part of this, an invitation to tender or to make recommendations will be shared amongst TTA members.

### **2f. Do you have a budget for the course content and classroom providers?**

This will be confirmed as part of the final bid. The final amounts have not been confirmed yet, as they depend on the applications from potential technology partners. However, we expect that these will be in keeping with the budget as outlined in the webinar slides.

### **3. Delivery**

#### **3a. How will the technological solutions be chosen?**

We expect to need tech solutions for:

- 1) Administration, booking and allocation
- 2) Online course content, assessment and tracking
- 3) Virtual classroom / online tutorial delivery.

A request for information will be published shortly and different products will be competitively evaluated. It may be possible to confirm these solutions after the bid submission, although the budget would need to be confirmed in the bid.

#### **3b. How will the tutors be chosen?**

The idea is that consortium partners will provide verified tutors to deliver the tutoring blocks that are sub-contracted to them. TFA will want to ensure that the basic criteria are met, but it would then be up to consortium partners to select the right tutors from their network.

Some tutoring agencies and charities will have a uniform tutor profile (e.g. volunteer only, QTS only). In light of this, I am seeking guidance from the EEF as to how much the tutor profile can vary across a consortium, in which partners may have different models.

#### **3c. Is the tutor training mandatory?**

Based on the guidance from EEF, yes. They stipulate that a 'manualised training programme' will be a necessary condition for providers to meet. The idea is that the training will be appropriate to the experience of the tutors and that it would be light touch, perhaps a half-day or at most a full day. This would cover elements specific to the NTP context, including: working with disadvantaged students; working with schools; small group pedagogy; safeguarding.

#### **3d. What considerations have been made for the event of school closures?**

The EEF are keen that the programme runs even in the event of school closures, so we will be planning on that basis. We expect that the most common response will be to move tutoring online in the event of a school closure. However, there may be other options, e.g. pausing delivery then condensing or extending the programme.

#### **3e. What geographical areas is the tutoring likely to be concentrated in?**

The EEF want the programme to be available to schools across England. It appears that the ideal scenario would be to have in-person tutoring available in all areas, although it seems likely that remote areas will rely on online tutoring more heavily. From a commissioning perspective, I think some areas will be more competitive for providers (e.g. London, other major cities, South East).

#### **3f. What age groups is the tutoring likely to be focused on?**

The EEF want the programme to be available for students aged 5-16. However, it seems likely that there will be a focus on exam years, particularly for GCSEs (Y10 and Y11) but also for SATs (Y6).

#### **3g. What subjects is the tutoring likely to be focused on?**

The EEF has stipulated that the tutoring will be available at primary level for reading, writing, maths and science; and at secondary level for English, humanities, maths, MFL and science. My assumption is that core subjects will be the most popular, but it will ultimately be driven by school demand.

### **3h. Will hybrid blocks with some in-person and some online be considered?**

The programme is designed to be hybrid flexible, so that it can be delivered either in-person or online. There are no plans to offer a hybrid block as standard, so the choice for schools will be either in-person or online. However, as per 3d, in cases of school closure we anticipate that in-person blocks may be adapted to online delivery.

### **3i. What is meant by standardised content and will there be opportunities for bespoke delivery?**

The assessment and course content will be made available by one central provider. This is to ensure that the programme is codified and delivered with consistency, which follows advice from the EEF. As such, the curriculum will be standardised across any given programme type (e.g. Maths KS2, English KS4). However, tutors will work with schools to identify appropriate topics for the 15 hours of tuition, understand individual student needs and adapt their teaching to meet those needs.

So, it isn't the case that every student will be following the exact same sessions. Rather, they will be working from the same bank of resources within each subject / age group combination.

## **4. Management**

### **4a. How will TFA manage the programme?**

TFA will manage key functions, including sales, tutor training, school partnership management and quality assurance. Agencies will be sub-contracted to supply tutors, pay them and take a margin.

TFA will manage these functions through a central team, including staff for school relationships, consortium relationships, programme delivery and operations. This is likely to include new staff recruited by TTA and secondments from within TTA or consortium partners.

### **4b. How will tutoring blocks be allocated to consortium partners?**

We are still working on the mechanism for this, but the basic idea so far is that:

- a) As part of the application process to join the consortium, members will need to give an indication of their expected tutoring capacity (inc. regions, subjects etc).
- b) Members will be assigned to one of three Provider Categories (e.g. Category A = large, Category B = medium, Cat C = small).
- c) Referral sales – i.e. where a school has listed a consortium member as a referring partner – will be allocated directly to that consortium member.
- d) Non-referral sales – i.e. those that have been generated by TFA – will be allocated to applicable partners in proportion with the category sizes.

We are still looking at the best ways to allocate tutoring blocks to consortium partners and any decisions would be taken after the bid is submitted. We wouldn't expect consortium partners to have to 'bid' for the work, instead we are seeking a fair system of distribution. Our current assumption is that this would be based on size, but there may be other considerations too (e.g. evidence of impact, tutor profile).

### **4c. Will tutors need to be employed by consortium partners?**

No, but they can be if you choose. The consortium is designed to enable the consortium members to be sub-contracted by TFA to supply tutors on an employed or self-employed basis, including the stipulation that tutors will need to undertake training and support on-going management processes. We are currently seeking legal advice to double check this is the case.

#### **4d. Who will be responsible for data tracking and evaluation?**

Data tracking and evaluation will be one of the key functions managed by TFA. This will include data on delivery (e.g. sales), tutors (e.g. placements), student progress (e.g. attendance, attainment) and evaluation data (e.g. data requests to EEF). Tutors may be responsible for inputting some data, including on student progress.

TFA will need to maintain a register of tutors that are delivering placements, including their verification (e.g. DBS, QTS) and their contact details. This data will be held internally and will not be shared with other consortium partners. TFA will only focus on those tutors delivering placements and will not seek to create a master list of all tutors linked to consortium partners.

### **5 Finance**

#### **5a. What is the budget for TFA?**

While the major cost will be tutor wages, there are significant central costs associated with the 'hands on' partnership model that the EEF is stipulating. As noted in above, this includes sales, school relationships, tutor training, quality assurance etc. As such, TFA will be allocated a significant percentage of the overall budget to setup and deliver the programme (~30%).

As noted above, TFA will ringfence funds throughout and no surplus will be retained. In the event that TFA under-spends against the contract, this would need to be recouped by the EEF. There is no mechanism for distributed any remaining funds to consortium partners.

#### **5b. How will VAT be recovered?**

I am waiting on confirmation of this from the EEF, but the initial guidance is as follows:

*"Please include your costs in the application without VAT. Tuition Partners will receive 75% subsidy from the EEF and 25% payment from the school(s). Where an organisation is considered to be making taxable supplies (not an eligible body for the education VAT exemption), and is VAT registered, we would expect it to account for VAT on the full value of the supply made to the school, not just the 25% payment it expects to receive. Schools should be in a position to recover in full the VAT charged pursuant to s.33 of the VAT Act 1994 for Local Authority schools, or s.33B of the VAT Act 1994 for Academy schools, as a cost directly attributable to their non-business activity of the free supply of education to pupils. Therefore, VAT should not fall as an additional irrecoverable cost for schools."*

#### **5c. Will regional cost differences be taken into account?**

I haven't worked through this yet. I will ask EEF for a steer on whether this might be possible. If yes, it may be sensible to have a simple system for regional cost differences (e.g. London vs non-London), However, it may still be optimum to have a standard costing model.

#### **5d. Will tutors be paid for the training?**

This hasn't been confirmed yet. In part, it depends on EEF guidance, including whether training is treated as a setup cost or a variable cost. However, in order to ensure that the bid is competitive, it is likely that tutors will be asked to complete the training pro bono or at a reduced rate.

## **6. EEF Application**

### **6a. Will there be a formal process for TTA members to apply to be part of the consortium?**

Yes, there will be, but the idea is that this will be light touch. As noted above, TTA members can join the consortium if they confirm that they will meet the standard joining criteria. If this turns out not to be the case, a member would be ineligible to be allocated tutoring blocks.

As part of the application process, members will need to give an indication of their tutoring capacity (e.g. regions, subjects). Members will be assigned to a Provider Category (e.g. Category A = large, Category B = medium, Category C = small). This data will be used to calculate the size and scope of the bid, as well as the mechanism for allocating tutoring blocks once the programme is running.

### **6b. Can TTA members apply to join the consortium later?**

At this stage, we are assuming that this would not be possible. I will ask the EEF for further guidance.

### **6c. Can an organisation make a joint bid as an independent and as part of TTA?**

I don't know. I will ask the EEF for guidance on this too.

### **6d. Can capacity be listed as 'tutor hours' rather than tutors?**

Yes. I will seek to include 'tutor hours' as a standard measure, as well as giving indicative examples for average tutors (e.g. X tutors, doing Y hours per week).