

# Adult Literacy for Life (ALL): Innovation and Collaboration Fund

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 IRELAND

## Timeline

2023 Implementation 2025 Completed

ID number 48697

## Background

In 2021, the Adult Literacy for Life (ALL), a ten-year strategy for Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Skills was launched. The Strategy is both a cross-government and cross-society initiative with the vision that every adult has the necessary literacy, numeracy and digital literacy to fully engage in society and realise their potential. The ALL Strategy also enables Ireland to align internationally with sustainable development, social and economic goals of the EU, UNESCO and the OECD.

There are four strategic pillars to the strategy:

- (a) Understand – ensure people can understand their needs and where to go to meet them.
- (b) Access – that people can access all of the learning and support they need.
- (c) Expand – that the learning and support available can expand.
- (d) Empower – people and communities are empowered to make a real difference to their lives.

To implement the strategy the following structures have been developed:

- (a) Cross-Government Implementation Group, chaired by the Minister for Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS).
- (b) The ALL Programme office established as a central co-ordinating body across government departments and other relevant stakeholders and is based in SOLAS, the national agency for Further Education and Training – FET.
- (c) National and Regional Literacy Coalitions to drive wider partnership and development work.
- (d) Regional Literacy Co-ordinators appointed to support the sixteen (16) Education and Training Boards in developing the Regional Literacy Coalitions.
- (e) An Innovation and Collaboration Fund was opened for 2022 to support initiatives that build on health, social care and family support interventions for parents, carers, individuals and families to support literacy.

## Objectives

In 2023, the Innovation and Collaboration fund opened for applications to progress the ALL Strategy.

As part of the application, projects had to evidence: collaboration and partnership between organisations; innovative approaches; meaningful benefits for adults with unmet literacy, numeracy and digital literacy needs; and good value for money and no duplication of work already happening.

## Description

The 2023 Innovation and Collaboration Fund was EUR 1 million, with the maximum grant of EUR 50 000.

Organisations that work in the public, not-for-profit, community and voluntary sector were eligible to apply. A minimum of two organisations working together in partnership were required to make an application, with one organisation as the lead applicant, and the other organisation(s) as the partner(s).

The target groups for the ALL Innovation and Collaboration Fund included:

- older adults (55+),
- members of the Traveller community,
- persons with disabilities,
- low-paid workers,
- carers,
- one parent households,
- prisoners and ex-offenders,
- adults in recovery from addiction,
- long term unemployed,
- migrants,
- international protection applicants,
- adults with language needs.

A total of 143 applications were received. A panel of experts evaluated the eligible applications, and 51 projects were recommended for funding. There was one national project and 50 local projects.

### 2023 Implementation

A report on the 2023 Innovation and Collaboration Fund was published which documented the projects funded and included cross-community collaboration between local education providers, libraries, hospitals, and not-for-profit groups to reach people with unmet literacy needs.

### 2025 Completed

The Adult Literacy for Life Innovation and Collaboration Fund continues its annual call to fund projects and activities that support adults with unmet literacy, numeracy, digital and financial literacy needs under the Adult Literacy for Life Strategy.

## Bodies responsible

- Further Education and Training Authority (SOLAS)
- Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science (DFHERIS)

## Target group

### Learners

Young people (15-29 years old)

Young people not in employment, education or training (NEETs)  
Learners with migrant background, including refugees  
Learners at risk of early leaving or/and early leavers  
Learners with disabilities  
Adult learners  
Older workers and employees (55 - 64 years old)  
Unemployed and jobseekers  
Persons in employment, including those at risk of unemployment  
Low-skilled/qualified persons  
Learners from other groups at risk of exclusion (minorities, people with fewer opportunities due to geographical location or social-economic disadvantaged position)

### **Education professionals**

Teachers  
Trainers  
School leaders  
Adult educators  
Guidance practitioners

### **Entities providing VET**

Companies  
Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)  
VET providers (all kinds)

### **Other stakeholders**

Social partners (employer organisations and trade unions)  
National, regional and local authorities

## **Thematic categories**

### **Governance of VET and lifelong learning**

Coordinating VET and other policies  
Optimising VET funding  
Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

### **Modernising VET infrastructure**

Improving digital infrastructure of VET provision

### **Modernising VET offer and delivery**

Diversifying modes of learning: face-to-face, digital and/or blended learning; adaptable/flexible training formats  
Developing and updating learning resources and materials  
Acquiring key competences  
Integrating digital skills and competences in VET curricula and programmes

### **Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences**

Systematic approaches to and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and trainers  
Supporting teachers and trainers for and through digital

### **Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation**

Promotion strategies and campaigns for VET and lifelong learning  
Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs  
Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

## Subsystem

IVET CVET

## Further reading

[Government of Ireland - Adult Literacy For Life: 10-Year Strategy for Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Skills](#)

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[Adult Literacy for Life Website](#)

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[Regional Literacy Co-ordinators](#)

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[Minister announces EUR 1 million for projects to address adult literacy and digital literacy needs](#)

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[2023 Collaboration and Innovation Fund Report](#)

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[2025 Collaboration and Innovation Fund launched by Minister](#)

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[How to apply for the 2025 Collaboratoin and Innovation Fund](#)

## Related policy developments

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**2025 Completed**

### **National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) awarded 2025 UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy for eLearning programme on International Literacy Day**

Learn with NALA (LWN)

The LWN programme is offered on a national scale and is free to learners. It offers learners the chance to learn at their own pace, with additional supports such as telephone learning with an individual tutor.

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#### **Type of development**

Practical  
measure/Initiative

#### **Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2025 Implementation**

### **Learner Support Framework in Further Education And Training (FET) and National Charter for Universal Design**

The position paper of this policy is underpinned by a Universal Design (UD) approach and aligns with the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty.

The Framework to implement the policy outlines the enhancement of the overall learner experience within FET by:

 IRELAND

**Type of development**

Strategy/Action plan

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2025 Implementation**

**Community Education: A Framework for Learning, Providing, Co-ordinating and Funding**

Developing the framework was a collective and collaborative process by the whole of the FET sector, focussing on the needs of learners, who were also a key stakeholder and consulted during the process of drafting the framework.

 IRELAND

**Type of development**

Strategy/Action plan

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2021 Approved/Agreed**

**Transforming Learning 2020-24: Ireland's National Further Education and Training Strategy**

The FET strategy 2020–24 was developed in consultation with the FET sector and other key stakeholders. Consultation was wide-ranging and included bilateral meetings, regional workshops and a public call for submissions.

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**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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 **Cite as**

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). Adult Literacy for Life (ALL): Innovation and Collaboration Fund: Ireland. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/48697>