Further information on Adult and Community Education (ACE) 2021

This information supports tertiary education organisations (TEOs) to apply for ACE funding for 2021. It also contains important information for ACE in Schools coordination funding. This information reflects the Government's increased investment in ACE in response to COVID-19. It details:

› ACE investment priorities for 2021, including:
› additional funding requests;
› high level expectations for ACE providers;
› updated timeline for ACE funding applications.

ACE Background

The purpose of the ACE Fund is to purchase provision that provides adults with community-based education foundation skills, and pathways into other learning opportunities that meet community needs. ACE in Communities, ACE in Schools and ACE in TEIs provide funding for informal, community-based education provided by private training establishments (PTEs), rural education activity programme (REAP) providers, community organisations and Tertiary Education Institutions (TEIs).

The Government has increased funding for Adult and Community Education (ACE) by $4.6 million a year from 2021. In addition, the government allocated a 1.6% increase to ACE funding rates from 2021 as part of an across-the-board increase to tertiary education tuition and training subsidies to meet cost pressures.

The additional funding is part of the Government's COVID-19 response and economic recovery plan. It includes expanding the range of government-funded informal ACE provision to better support people displaced from work, experiencing social isolation, and facing barriers to entering the labour market. The funding will also support the ongoing operation of ACE Aotearoa to support sector leadership and build the capability of ACE providers.

Changes in the composition of ACE participants can increase the cost of delivering ACE programs. For example, some learners speak different languages and many learners have varying levels of education and learning abilities. They often face different but substantial barriers to learning. Consequently, ACE tutors need to help their students to overcome these challenges in different ways.

We will use our additional funding processes to identify opportunities for investment aligned to the Government's priorities, and work with you to make funding amendments, when needed, as the year progresses.

ACE funding priorities from 2021

We continue our commitment to building a healthy education and community workforce and to investing in the future of work. From 1 January 2021, the priorities of ACE funding are for programmes that:

> Improve employability, such as courses focused on employability, or life skills such as financial literacy, and introductory 'taster' courses

> Promote social and cultural inclusion and participation, including but not limited to, courses in languages including Te Reo Māori, New Zealand Sign Language, Pacific languages (especially Realm languages) and Asian languages, and courses supporting digital inclusion

> Raise foundation skills through courses in literacy, numeracy and/or digital literacy

> Improve health and wellbeing, such as courses in parenting, mental health and resilience, or conflict resolution/anger management

ACE funding does not prioritise provision broadly classed as hobby courses (e.g., arts, crafts and music, personal fitness and recreation, and home maintenance). Any funding requests for ACE provision must demonstrate how it meets one of the programme priorities listed above, as well as how the provision addresses community learning needs.

Further details on the ACE funding priorities can be found in Appendix 2 and 3.

ACE co-ordination by schools

We may allocate up to $500,000 of the total ACE funding each year to provide targeted support for ACE co-ordination by schools. The purpose of this funding is to help meet schools' administration and programme co-ordination costs. Priority for funding will be given to new schools and existing schools that need support to expand courses.

Applications for ACE co-ordination funding must be made using the Additional Funding Request template summary sheet.

Additional funding requests

As we work together through 2020 and into 2021, we will use the additional funding process to identify opportunities for investment of extra funding over and above your indicative allocations. We recognise that in the current environment the demand picture will continue to evolve after funding is finalised and/or your additional funding request is submitted.

Our assessments of additional funding requests will be informed by input from Government's key partners, and wider regional, industry and learner needs. We will work with you during this time of uncertainty to meet the immediate and medium term priorities. We will look at your additional funding requests in the context of your overall Investment Plan for 2021 (if you have one).

A template to make additional funding requests for ACE is available in our Investment Toolkit. A supporting document is also available to provide guidance about this process; the information TEOs need to provide; and how we will assess requests and make decisions. To be considered, all additional funding requests must be made using this template.

High level expectations for ACE providers

All ACE providers are required to:

Engage with the community and relevant networks to support the career pathways function of ACE providers
> work with Regional Skills Leadership Groups, local iwi, local organisations, peak bodies, local industry, local employers, and communities, including other TEOs involved in ACE, to identify and meet community learning needs, when appropriate for their overall portfolio of ACE provision.

Target provision to appropriate learner groups
> target ACE provision in foundation skills to learners who have low or no formal qualifications
> target ACE provision in English language/ESOL to learners who identify as having English language needs

Learner priority groups

> Schools must prioritise learners with the highest need and those who have been traditionally underserved, such as Māori, Pacific peoples, and learners with disabilities
> TEIs must prioritise ACE provision that involves:
> • learning of foundation skills
> • re-engagement of learners whose previous learning was not successful
> • progression of learners into formal tertiary education

There are expectations to support the career pathways function of the ACE sector

ACE providers have the ability and flexibility to develop programs that are responsive to the local needs of the region. ACE providers can develop the foundation skills needed to enter the workforce, and aid learners with the knowledge to move on to higher levels of qualifications needed for employment.

With the adoption of new technologies and business models, most of those at risk of becoming displaced, unemployed or long-term unemployed, are those with lower-level skills and working in occupations requiring mid-level skills.

The ACE sector has a vital role to play in re-engaging and reskilling these people who have been negatively impacted by technological change or other structural adjustments within the economy, such as the ones we are experiencing with COVID-19.

ACE providers can offer options to people who experience barriers (social, economic or educational) in accessing formal education and training. ACE providers can help them on their pathway to full economic and social participation. The ACE sector's role in the regions is significant.

We want ACE providers to show us how well they can meet the needs of employers, learners, and communities with their programmes and courses, to succeed.

What do I need to do?

Please review your indicative allocation against your expected demand and submit your documents by the required due dates. A 2021 ACE Mix of Provision (MoP) has been provisioned to your Workspace2. We will be looking for TEOs to submit ACE MoPs that clearly meet the expanded funding priorities and community needs.

All TEOs including NZIST subsidiaries or wānanga, need to complete a MoP.

If you are requesting additional funding for ACE, you must complete the ACE Additional Funding request template available on the TEC website, and submit it together with your MoP. Existing providers can submit additional funding requests through Workpsace2.

If you are a current TEO, but have not delivered ACE in 2020 you will need to submit an ACE additional funding request using the ACE additional funding request template available on the TEC website.

If you are a new provider, you will need to complete a New Provider Application and the funding request using the ACE additional funding request template available on the TEC website. These documents should be submitted to customerservice@tec.govt.nz

Updated timeline for ACE funding applications

On May 11 2020, Cabinet agreed an initiative which provided funding for building the capability of providers and expanding the range of Government-funded Adult and Community Education (ACE) to better meet the learning needs of New Zealanders in the post COVID-19 21st century.

The Minister considered feedback from affected providers and has now made a decision to proceed with the proposed variations. These changes will come into effect on 1 January 2021.

The 2021 Funding Conditions Catalogue will be updated to reflect the amended ACE Funding Conditions in due course.

Activity	Indicative timing
TEC releases further information on ACE funding applications for 2021 (this document)	2 October 2020

TEC provides indicative allocations, and releases the templates for:
• Mix of Provision (MoP)
   o ACE in TEIs
   o ACE in Schools
   o ACE in Communities
• Additional Funding Request templates
   o ACE in TEIs
   o ACE in Schools/Communities
	2 October 2020

Activity	Indicative timing
TEC undertakes further discussions about ACE funding requests with TEOs as needed	From 5 October 2020
TEOs submit any changes to their funding requests following discussions with TEC	By 16 October 2020
TEC makes funding decisions	October – November 2020
TEOs notified of decisions via funding approval letter	From December 2020
TEC makes first payments	January 2021

Appendix 1: FAQs

How do I apply for school ACE coordination funding?

Applications for ACE funding are to be made on the summary sheet of the ACE additional funding request template.

How will the allocation be distributed?

The TEC will provide an allocation that ensures access to ACE throughout New Zealand and considers each TEO's overall portfolio of provision.

We have historically provided ACE courses such as Flower Arranging, Sewing, and Cake Decorating. Will these courses still be funded under the revamped ACE priorities?

The TEC is not likely to approve these hobby courses. Courses must meet the priorities of the funding as outlined in the Appendices.

What are the reporting requirements for a TEO receiving ACE funding?

If you are New Zealand Institute of Skills and Technology (NZIST) and its subsidiaries or wānanga, you must:
- supply to us information about each learner enrolled in ACE provision by completing the fields in the Single Data Return (SDR) and using the funding source code 23; and
- submit the information on or before the date we specify.

If you are a PTE, REAP provider, school, or community organisation you must submit:
- a progress report for the period 1 January to 31 May no later than 10 working days after 31 May; and
- a progress report for the period 1 January to 30 September no later than 8 working days after 30 September; and
- a final report for the period 1 January to 31 December no later than 31 January of the following year.

Each progress report and the final report must:
- be completed and submitted in accordance with the template that we will provide to you; and
- relate to the specific delivery commitments outlined in your Investment Plan.

Where can I find more information?

Further information can be found on the TEC website: https://www.tec.govt.nz/

Appendix 2. Overview of ACE funding priorities by type of TEO

Type of TEO	Programme priority	Appropriate targeted provision	Learner priority	Engagement with community and relevant networks
TEIs (NZIST and wānanga) PTEs, REAPs, Community Organisations	**Improve employability** • Courses focused on employability • Life skills such as financial literacy • Introductory 'taster' courses **Promote social and cultural inclusion and participation** • Languages, including Te Reo Māori, New Zealand Sign Language (including ESOL), Pacific languages (especially Realm languages) and Asian languages • Courses supporting digital inclusion **Raises foundation skills** • Courses in literacy, numeracy and/or digital literacy **Improve health and wellbeing** • Courses such as parenting, mental health and resilience, or conflict resolution/anger management.	Target ACE provision in foundation skills to learners who have low or no formal qualifications Target ACE provision in English language/ESOL to learners who identify as having English language needs	Existing priorities apply: • learning of foundation skills • re-engagement of learners whose previous learning was not successful • progression of learners into formal tertiary education	Must work with Regional Skills Leadership Groups, local iwi, local organisations, peak bodies, local industry, local employers, and communities, including other TEOs involved in ACE, to identify and meet community learning needs, when appropriate.
Schools			Existing priorities, as well as: Prioritise learners with the highest need and those who have been traditionally underserved, such as Māori, Pacific peoples, and learners with disabilities	

Appendix 3. Overview of ACE funding priorities by type of priority

Type of Priority	Type of courses	Explanatory notes
Raise foundation skills	Literacy, numeracy and/or digital literacy	Existing funding priority
		Courses with specific (rather than embedded) learning outcomes on literacy, numeracy and/or digital literacy
		Foundation skills provision must be targeted at learners who have low or no formal qualifications
Improve employability	Courses focused on employability Eg, CV writing	Courses that develop employability skills
	Life skills Eg, Financial literacy	Courses that develop employability skills
	Taster courses in areas of demand Eg, Introduction to carpentry	Providers need to provide evidence of local industry need Courses should align with other government priorities
Promote social and cultural inclusion and participation	Te Reo Māori	Existing funding priority
	New Zealand Sign Language	Existing funding priority
	English language (including ESOL)	Existing funding priority English language/ESOL provision must be targeted at learners who identify as having English language needs
	Other languages Eg, Pacific languages (especially Realm languages, ie, Pacific languages spoken in Niue, Cook Islands, and Tokelau) Eg, Asian languages	Courses that focus on supporting language maintenance in ethnic communities Courses that focus on language acquisition to support community needs (eg, develop competencies in languages of ethnic communities)
	Digital inclusion Eg, How to create a RealMe account	Courses that focus on developing learners' digital skills and/or developing learners' ability to access digital technologies and services
Improve health and wellbeing	Courses that meet health and wellbeing needs Eg, parenting, mental health and resilience, or conflict resolution/anger management.	Courses that promote health and wellbeing needs in the context of interpersonal relationships and/or social wellbeing.