



Australian Government

**Department of Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations**

**FOUNDATION SKILLS TASTER COURSE PROGRAM
2009-2010**

FINAL GUIDELINES

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Program

The 'Back to Basics Package' component of the 'Jobs and Training Compact' was announced in the 2009-10 Budget. The primary focus of this package is to strengthen the foundation skills of, and to engage, those Australians who are currently unemployed or outside of the labour force. This will be challenging given the findings of the 2006 Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey which show that 64% and 67% of these groups respectively have language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills levels which would not allow them to function effectively in a workplace in the knowledge economy or to engage fully with formal training¹.

Consequently, efforts to up-skill and increase workforce participation among job seekers and people outside of the labour force will need to be accompanied by concerted effort to raise LLN skill levels. Many people are reluctant, however, to address their needs in this area. This may be because of, for example, perceived stigma or embarrassment, past poor learning experiences, or because they believe it is too late to learn. Such individuals are likely to benefit from encouragement and support in a friendly, informal and welcoming learning environment which may encourage them to undertake more formal education and training.

The Australian Government Foundation Skills Taster Course (FSTC) Program has been designed to provide a "taster" of the training opportunities that are available to job seekers and people who are outside of the labour force. It aims to influence these Australians to participate further in more intensive foundation skills development and/or other foundation skills training. In addition to catering to the needs of individuals, the program also aims to address family literacy needs, in response to evidence that low literacy can be passed between generations if it is not addressed².

The FSTC Program aligns with current government priorities in relation to adult learning and education, particularly those set out in the 2008 Ministerial Declaration on Adult Community Education (ACE). This Declaration acknowledges the role of the ACE sector in providing pathways to further education, training and employment, including through building the self-esteem, motivation and confidence of those who might be struggling to engage. The Declaration is available at:

www.dest.gov.au/sectors/training_skills/policy_issues_reviews/key_issues/nts/vet/2008_Ministerial_Declaration_Adult_Community_Education.htm

1.2 Purpose of the Guidelines

The purpose of the FSTC Program Guidelines is to assist eligible applicants to submit project proposals for funding under the FSTC Program.

The Guidelines set out the broad framework for the administration and delivery of the funding that is available under the FSTC Program. It is important to note that they allow considerable flexibility in terms of the focus of the FSTCs to be provided, as well as their structure and the manner of their delivery.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to amend these Guidelines as necessary. Information concerning any changes to the Guidelines will be communicated to applicants as appropriate. Any

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. (November 2007). *Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, Summary Results*. ABS Cat 4228.0

² Maxwell, J., and Teplova, T. (July 2007). *Canada's hidden deficit: the social costs of low literacy skills*. Paper prepared for the Canadian Language and Literacy Research.

changes will be managed in accordance with the Commonwealth Grants Guidelines and the Commonwealth Grants Policy.

1.3 Further information and enquiries

Further information about the FSTC Program can be found at the FSTC website:

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/fstc>

Enquiries can be directed to the following e-mail address: foundationskills@deewr.gov.au.

2. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

2.1. Program objective

The primary objective of the FSTC Program is to facilitate enhanced client engagement in the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP) and/or other foundation skills training in order to build the skills necessary for success in more formal study and/or employment. The Program targets adults with low LLN skills who are job seekers, or outside of the labour market, and who are not participating in education and training.

The FSTC Program also has a family literacy element which, in addition to the above, seeks to provide opportunities for children and parents (or carers) to learn and grow together.

2.2 Program description

The FSTC Program will support the delivery of approximately 10-35 FSTCs to adults with low LLN skills in communities across the country. Each course will cater for 15-25 people, be run part-time for a period of 6-8 weeks, and be delivered in a relaxed, informal, community based setting. During the 2009-10 financial year, the FSTC Program will cater for a minimum of 250 people.

Rather than being presented as specific literacy and numeracy or foundation skills training, FSTCs will be structured around topics of direct relevance to people's lives (e.g. creating a home garden, parenting classes, obtaining a driver's licence). This approach recognises that embedding LLN learning into activities which are meaningful for participants is an important strategy for engaging reluctant learners. Adults are more likely to attend and remain in a program that is relevant to them and meets their learning requirements.

The FSTC will also encourage the development of positive, peer support networks among participants and where applicable, between participants and the wider community. In turn, such networks may act to support and encourage participants to pursue further learning and/or work at the conclusion of the course and to become more involved and engaged in their local environments.

Projects targeting families will aim to encourage a learning culture within the family.

2.3 Program outcomes

The FSTC Program is seeking to:

- increase self-confidence and inspire changes in participants' attitudes regarding participation in further education and training and/or work;
- encourage participants to enrol in the LLNP or other foundation skills training and/or:
 - undertake further work-related education and training; and
 - enter the workforce;

- promote the development of positive social networks among participants, and where applicable, between participants and the wider community; and
- encourage the development of a learning culture within the family environment, where applicable.

2.4 Program target group

The FSTC Program is targeted at adults aged between 25 and 64 who are job seekers or outside of the labour force, who are not participating in education and training and who have low LLN skills.

Likely participants in the FSTC will include:

- individuals who are in receipt of income support through Centrelink, who do not currently have activity test requirements but who may do so in the future, and who would benefit from this low pressure introduction prior to entering more formal foundation skills training program (for example, some recipients of the Parenting Payment, the Disability Support Pension etc);
- job seekers who aren't currently participating in any education and training, who are experiencing barriers to employment or further education and training due to an LLN skills need, and who would benefit from this introduction prior to entering a more formal foundation skills program (for example, job seekers who volunteer for employment services and/or who are participating in Stream 1 (Limited) (refer to Section 9 – *Definitions*); and
- individuals who are outside of the labour market who have reservations about entering education, training or employment but who would have capacity to benefit from foundation skills training (for example, some recipients of the Partner Allowance or Widow Allowance, individuals who have spent a significant period outside of the workforce raising their families).

For projects under the family literacy element of the FSTC Program families of the program target group (including the target group member) are the focus.

2.5 Program coverage and availability

The FSTC Program will test the effectiveness of FSTCs in facilitating enhanced client engagement in the LLNP and/or other foundation skills training in a variety of circumstances.

Consequently, the FSTC Program will be delivered in a range of locations nationally, including rural, regional and metropolitan areas, and to a variety of different target audiences.

2.6 Program timeframe

FSTC Program funding is available for the 2009-10 financial year. Projects nominated for funding must be completed by 30 June 2010.

Each FSTC will run part-time for a period of 6-8 weeks.

2.7 Program funding

Applications for funding to support the delivery of FSTCs must be for a minimum of \$20,000.

2.8 Other funding contributions

While third party funding contributions are not mandatory, complementary investment in FSTC projects is encouraged from applicants, their project partners and/or other community stakeholders.

Complementary investment in the FSTCs could take the form of cash or in-kind (for example, time, equipment, venues etc) contributions.

3. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

3.1 Eligibility of providers to apply for funding

The following categories of providers are eligible to apply for funding under the FSTC Program:

1. existing LLNP providers selected to deliver the LLNP following a competitive tender process;
2. Registered Training Organisations (RTOs), including public, private and community-based RTOs; and
3. non-RTO, community education and training (CET) providers that can demonstrate that:
 - o adult education and training is a key focus of their core business (e.g. they have a business/operational plan that incorporates adult community educational goals and objectives and demonstrates how these are integral to the whole of the organisation objectives);
 - o they are a not-for-profit organisation – see below definition of ‘not-for-profit’; and
 - o they have a governing body that draws the majority of its members from the community or community of interest³ it services, and which engages with, and responds to this community (e.g. committee/board of management members have a range of expertise and skills appropriate to the management and objectives of the organisation and reflect the composition of the community or community of interest being served).

Meaning of ‘not-for-profit’

For the purposes of these Guidelines, a ‘not for profit organisation’ means an organisation where:

- the organisation’s corporate objects do not include operating for the profit or gain of its owners, members or any other individual, whether these gains would have been direct or indirect, both while the organisation is operating and when it is wound up; and
- upon winding up of the organisation, the organisation’s residual assets or funds must be transferred to a not-for-profit organisation with similar objects and which has provisions in its constitution preventing distribution of profit or gain to individuals both while it is operating and when it is wound up.

DEEWR will accept as evidence of an organisation’s ‘not-for-profit’ status:

- i) a copy of the organisation’s corporate constitution containing clauses as above; or
- ii) evidence that the organisation is an income tax exempt charitable institution.

³ The terms ‘community’ and ‘community of interest’ are used here to refer to geographically based communities, and to groups of people who have come together around a common interest (e.g. adult learning), respectively.

All non-RTO CET applicants must provide clear evidence of their status as a not-for-profit organisation. Applications which fail to include the appropriate evidence (in a clear and obvious format) may not proceed to the assessment process.

3.1.2 Access to LLN expertise

Applicants must demonstrate that an appropriately qualified LLN professional will be involved in overseeing the FSTC, including guiding and providing advice on the development, delivery and follow-up of the FSTC activities, and ensuring the quality of the embedded LLN.

An appropriately qualified LLN professional is someone who has appropriate qualifications to deliver LLN training to adults, as well as relevant work experience in this area. Examples of appropriate qualifications are listed at [Appendix 1](#). This is not an exhaustive list and other qualifications may be considered by the Project Assessment Panel.

3.1.3 Capacity to reach target group

Applicants must be able to demonstrate their capacity to reach and engage the program target audience. This includes identifying innovative strategies for how this engagement will be achieved at the local level, as well as outlining any actions that will be taken to facilitate access to the FSTC by the program target audience (for example, delivering the FSTC at times which are practical for clients' child care arrangements, choosing accessible, non-threatening venues, providing transport etc).

Applicants are strongly encouraged to work collaboratively, and with other community groups (including formal and informal groups such as local health/advocacy/welfare organisations, community centres, libraries, sporting or recreational groups, the Country Women's Association, childcare and play groups etc) to maximise their engagement of the program target audience. Non-RTO CET providers, for example, are well placed to engage reluctant learners, whereas other community groups may have pre-existing relationships with the target groups which could be utilised. Applicants are also encouraged to work with local Employment Service Providers and/or Centrelink as appropriate.

It is important to note that applicants for funding are expected to facilitate engagement in the program at the local level (through working collaboratively and with other community groups) as opposed to relying on referral of clients from other agencies.

3.1.4 Pathways to LLNP and/or other foundation skills

Applicants must demonstrate viable and realistic pathways from their proposed FSTC to the LLNP and/or other foundation skills training, including identifying strategies for how these pathways will be achieved.

Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with other education and training providers and/or Employment Services Providers in creating pathways to the LLNP and/or other foundation skills training. When other providers are involved, Applicants are required to submit with their Application Form letters of support from these providers for their FSTC and the proposed pathways to either the LLNP or further foundation skills training (as relevant).

3.1.5 Service delivery arrangements

The FSTC could be delivered via a range of service delivery arrangements, including by providers operating:

- individually, by a stand-alone LLNP provider, RTO, or non-RTO CET provider; or
- in consortium, for example, an LLNP provider delivering training to clients of a non-RTO CET provider.

Applicants may also wish to consider, for example, alternative sites of FSTC delivery, such as the premises of any local community groups who have been engaged in the process.

Eligible applicant-led consortia will be treated as a single applicant and a lead organisation for the consortia must be identified on the Application Form. Letters of support for the FSTC from each member of the consortia must also be submitted with the Application Form⁴.

3.1.6 Insurance requirements

To be eligible for funding under the FSTC Program, applicants must currently have, or commit to obtaining if their application is successful, the following insurance:

- Workers' compensation to the amount required by the relevant state or territory legislation;
- Public liability insurance for \$10,000,000 (ten million dollars) or more per claim; and
- Professional indemnity insurance for \$1,000,000 (one million dollars) or more per claim.

3.1.7 Additional requirements for Applicants to receive funding

All applicants must also meet the following additional requirements in order to receive funding under the FSTC Program:

- permit project details to be recorded on the DEEWR website;
- demonstrate that the proposed project can be completed by 30 June 2010;
- agree to the terms and conditions of the draft funding agreement;
- agree to participate in the program evaluation; and,
- have a current Australian Business Number (ABN).

Some applicants may also be required to undertake financial viability assessment before they are deemed to be eligible to receive funding under the program.

3.2 Eligibility of clients to participate

To be eligible for participation in an FSTC, clients must:

- meet the eligibility criteria specified below; and
- be granted a waiver by DEEWR before enrolling, if they do not meet the eligibility criteria.

For projects targeting families, at least one member of each participating family group must meet the eligibility criteria specified below. When demand for places in family literacy projects exceeds supply, preference should be given those families that have the greatest number of adult members falling within the program target audience.

3.2.1 Residency

Clients must be:

- an Australian citizen; or
- the holder of a permanent Australian visa.

Evidence of citizenship or residency status needs to be sighted by the FSTC provider, and relevant details recorded on the personal details form at [Appendix 2](#) (refer to Section 7.3 for further information about the personal details form, including how this might be approached with clients). Evidence will take the form of one of the following: an Australian birth certificate; birth certificate extract; Australian passport; naturalisation certificate; green Medicare card or appropriate visa issued by the Commonwealth, or a Health Care Card.

⁴ In instances where a consortia partner is also a key player in the creation of pathways to the LLNP and/or other foundation skills training, only one letter of support for the proposed FSTC/pathways from that organisation is required.

3.2.2 Age

FSTC providers must target clients who are between 25 and 64 years of age. For family literacy projects, parents and carers should ideally fall within this age group.

Original evidence of age must be sighted for each client, and relevant details recorded on the personal details form. Evidence will take the form of one of the following: a passport, birth certificate, birth certificate extract, current driver's licence, or Proof of Age card.

FSTC providers should consult with DEEWR in those cases where it isn't possible to engage sufficient numbers in the target age group.

3.2.3 Personal circumstances

Clients must be:

- a volunteer job seeker⁵ who does not currently have activity test requirements, is registered with an Employment Service Provider, and is not participating in education and training or working – confirmed by sighting the client's Health Care Card and completion of the personal details form at [Appendix 2](#);
- a Stream 1 (Limited) Participant who is registered with a Job Services Australia provider and who is not currently working or participating in education and training – confirmed by sighting the client's Job Seeker Card and completion of the personal details form at [Appendix 2](#);
- an income support recipient who does not currently have activity test requirements but who may do so in the future and who is not participating in education and training or work, - confirmed by sighting the client's Health Care Card and completion of the personal details form at [Appendix 2](#); or
- an income support recipient who does not have activity test requirements (and is not likely to in the future) and who is not participating in education and training or work – confirmed by sighting the clients Health Care Card and completion of the personal details form at [Appendix 2](#); or
- an individual who is not currently working, not registered with Centrelink, and not participating in education and training but who is intending to seek paid employment within the next year – confirmed by completion of the personal details form at [Appendix 2](#).

Evidence of each client's personal circumstances must be sighted for each client and relevant details recorded on the personal details form.

3.2.4 Client intention to seek employment within the next year

Clients must have an intention to seek employment within a year of their participation in an FSTC. The intention to search for work in the future should be confirmed as part of the completion of personal details form at [Appendix 2](#), and the *Privacy Notice* (see below).

3.2.5 Capacity to benefit

Clients must be assessed by the FSTC provider as having the capacity to benefit from participation in the FSTC (refer to [Appendix 3](#) for the Capacity to Benefit template). This assessment should take account of:

- the likelihood of the client moving from the FSTC into the LLNP or other foundation skills training;

⁵ Please note that prisoners in custody, including prisoners in pre-release programs, are not eligible to participate in an FSTC.

- the client/family ability to successfully meet the FSTC requirements such as regular class attendance; and
- the capacity of the client/family to benefit in terms of their personal lives through participation in the FSTC (for example, through gaining improved confidence and self-esteem or improved family or community relationships).

A copy of the 'capacity to benefit assessment' should be copied for each client/family and retained on the client's file by the FSTC provider.

In circumstances where the demand for FSTC places exceeds the supply, the 'capacity to benefit assessment' should be used to prioritise individuals for participation in the FSTC.

3.2.6 Privacy notice

FSTC providers must ensure that clients sign the *Privacy Notice* at [Appendix 4](#). This seeks client consent to collect their personal details for the purposes of program administration, reporting, monitoring and evaluation and to contact them for the purposes of the program evaluation (refer to Section 7.7 for further information about the program evaluation). It also seeks to confirm the client's intention to seek employment within a year of confirming participation in the FSTC.

A copy of the *Privacy Notice* should be copied for each client, and retained on the client's file by the FSTC provider.

3.2.7 Waivers

In exceptional circumstances DEEWR may, at its discretion, waive the requirement for a client to meet provisions outlined in these program guidelines.

In all cases, the FSTC provider must request the waiver in writing, setting out the reasons why it is requesting the waiver of the requirements outlined in these program guidelines. Waivers will only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

DEEWR will consider applications for a waiver on a case-by-case basis. All applications should be forwarded to the Project Delegate for their consideration and final decision.

3.2.8 Change in eligibility

An applicant who is eligible at the commencement of training is able to continue to participate in the program regardless of a subsequent change in eligibility.

4. APPLICATION PROCESS

4.1 Application Round

It is expected that only one national funding round for the 2009-10 financial year will be conducted. DEEWR, however, reserves the right to re-approach the market subject to budget availability and the quality of applications received under the funding round.

To apply for FSTC Program funding, applicants must complete and successfully submit an on-line Application Form to DEEWR by 25 September 2009. Section 4.3 provides further information about submitting an application on-line.

4.2 Timeframes

Implementation milestones and timeframes follow:

ACTIVITY	DATE
Application form available on DEEWR website	31 August 2009
Lodgement of funding applications to DEEWR	25 September 2009
Project Assessment Panel provides funding recommendations to the Program Delegate	16 October 2009
Announcement of successful projects	30 October 2009
Projects completed	30 June 2010

4.3 Submitting an application

Applicants must complete and successfully submit an on-line Application Form to DEEWR by midday, Australian Eastern Standard time, on Friday 25 September 2009. The on-line Application Form will be available from midday on Monday 31 August 2009. DEEWR will not accept hard-copy applications. DEEWR will not accept late applications. The application must include sufficient information and associated supporting documentation to enable the Project Assessment Panel to assess the application.

The FSTC Program is a competitive initiative. It is unlikely that all projects seeking funding will be successful.

Applicants can apply online for FSTC Program funding by registering for access to the Tertiary Education Online (TED) website at <https://tedonline.deewr.gov.au/>. The website will provide details on how to complete the registration process and instructions on submitting your application. Please note that applicants will need their ABN details to complete the registration process.

For assistance with registering for or accessing the Tertiary Education (TED) Online website, or for help with downloading or submitting your application, please visit <http://deewr.gov.au/tedonlinehelp> or click the *Contact* link on <http://www.tedonline.deewr.gov.au>.

5. CONDITIONS OF PROPOSAL LODGEMENT

5.1 Confidential information

Applicants should note that the information provided to the Commonwealth as part of the FSTC Program may be shared with relevant Australian Government and state/territory government agencies, and other relevant organisations and individuals including members of the Project Assessment Panel.

5.2 Conflict of Interest

Where an applicant identifies that a conflict of interest exists or might arise in relation to an FSTC, the applicant must identify the actual, apparent or potential conflict of interest and inform DEEWR immediately.

A conflict of interest may exist, for example:

- if the applicant, or any of its personnel has a relationship (whether professional, commercial or personal) with a party who is able to influence the FSTC Program assessment process, such as a DEEWR staff member; or
- if the applicant is using the FSTC program as a means of enhancing participation in their own or another organisations foundation skills programs for financial gain.

Each applicant will be required to declare in the Statutory Declaration section of the Application Form that to the best of its knowledge there is no conflict of interest that would prevent the applicant from proceeding with the project or any funding agreement it may enter into with the Australian Government.

5.3 Further Contact

DEEWR may contact the nominated contact on the Application Form to seek further clarification or negotiate modifications to the proposal's scope or budget.

6. ASSESSMENT AND NOTIFICATION PROCESS

6.1 Probity

DEEWR is committed to ensuring that the process for funding projects under the FSTC Program is fair and in accordance with published guidelines, as may be varied by DEEWR from time to time.

6.2 Project Assessment Panel

Applications for funding under the FSTC Program will be assessed against the criteria detailed below by a Project Assessment Panel with appropriate expertise and knowledge. The Project Assessment Panel will comprise no less than three members that may be drawn from the Foundation Skills and Pathways Branch of DEEWR, elsewhere in DEEWR or from external stakeholders. Where DEEWR does engage an external member of the Project Assessment Panel, DEEWR will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that the external member maintains confidentiality over all applications under the FSTC Program. Experts in LLN training development and delivery in community settings will be consulted as appropriate.

6.3 Assessment Criteria

Applications will be checked for compliance with the Application Form and these guidelines and then assessed according to the following criteria. When applying for approval of a proposed FSTC project, applicants must therefore address the following criteria:

Value for money

In assessing applications against this criterion, the Project Assessment Panel will take into account the degree to which the application and project budget demonstrate that expenditure items provide value for money. In addressing this criterion, applicants must indicate:

- details of how the FSTC will be implemented in a cost effective manner that will provide value for money;
- the anticipated outcomes of the FSTC in light of the funding being sought; and
- details of any risks associated with the FSTC and how these will be managed by the FSTC provider.

Capacity to engage the target audience

In assessing this criterion, the Project Assessment Panel will take into account the extent to which the application demonstrates the proposed FSTCs capacity to reach and engage the target audience of the program. In addressing this criterion, applicants must indicate:

- details of any existing relationships and/or linkages with the FSTC target audience;
- the relevance of the proposed FSTC activities to the target audience;
- any collaboration between providers and with other (formal and informal) community groups who have been engaged and/or consulted in the process;
- the strategies that will be used to engage the FSTC target audience;
- any effort that has been made to facilitate access to the FSTC by the target audience; and
- the site/s of the FSTC delivery and why this/these were chosen.

Capacity to contribute to the program objective

In assessing this criterion, the Project Assessment Panel will take into account the extent to which the application demonstrates that the proposed FSTC will meet the program objective. In addressing this criterion, applicants must indicate:

- the strategies that will be used to facilitate greater client engagement in the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP) and/or other foundation skills training;
- the strategies that will be used to provide opportunities for children and parents (or carers) to learn and grow together, where applicable;
- any relationships that have been established with other education and training providers, Employment Service Providers, Centrelink, or other relevant organisations/community groups;
- details of any staff members' and/or organisational experiences/successes that will assist in delivering the FSTC in accordance with the broader program objective; and
- the likelihood that the FSTC will result in increased engagement in the LLNP and/or other foundation skills training by the program target audience.

Level of need among the FSTC target audience and/or in the community where the FSTC will be delivered

In assessing this criterion, the Project Assessment Panel will take into account the extent to which the application demonstrates the level of need among the FSTC target audience and/or in the community where the FSTC will be delivered. In addressing this criterion, applicants must indicate:

- the general characteristics of the community in which the FSTC will be delivered;
- the level of need for informal, introductory LLN training among the FSTC target audience/in the community; and
- the availability of any evidence/data which demonstrates the level of need in the community and/or among the FSTC target audience.

6.4 Other considerations

In determining which projects will receive funding, the Project Assessment Panel may also have regard to:

- the total amount of funding available;
- a relative comparison to other, similar proposed projects;
- the need to ensure a diversity of target audiences, locations and approaches; and
- an equitable national distribution of funding.

6.5 Notification

Applicants will be advised in writing of the outcomes of their request for funding in October this year.

7. FUNDING ADMINISTRATION AND PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

7.1 Funding to be provided

Funding under the FSTC Program is not available retrospectively. Successful applicants must not begin project activities depending on funding before a funding agreement has been signed. DEEWR also reserves the right to negotiate with successful applicants or offer less than the amount for which they have applied.

Funding will be based on the budget submitted in the Application Form, including any GST applicable. The budget must provide a breakdown of income and expenditure by item (for example, teaching costs, equipment, venue hire) and detail the funding received from the FSTC Program as well as from other sources.

Applicants are encouraged to use their judgement and discretion in requesting funding under the FSTC Program. Proposals where the major portion of the budget comprise the purchase of equipment, for example, will not be viewed favourably.

7.2 Funding Agreements

After a project is approved, a funding agreement will be developed between DEEWR and the successful applicant and signed by the respective delegates (a copy of the draft funding agreement is available at <http://www.deewr.gov.au/fstc>). The funding agreement will provide details on:

- the project approved;
- funding to be granted by the Australian Government including any conditions;
- a breakdown of the contributions from all parties;
- funding allocation for specific items;
- expected commencement and completion date;
- conditions and requirements for subcontractors who are engaged to work on a FSTC;
- payment milestones and schedule;
- additional conditions for payments (where appropriate); and
- acquittal obligations.

Payments under funding agreements will generally be based as follows:

- an upfront payment (40%) will be paid on commencement of the project;
- a milestone payment (40%) will be paid on receipt of a satisfactory final report acquitting all funding received and appropriate invoices; and
- a final payment (20%) will be paid on participation in the program evaluation and successful follow-up of clients after the conclusion of the FSTC.

Action may be taken by the Australian Government to terminate a funding agreement where requirements are not being met.

7.3 Client registration

FSTC providers must collect a range of personal details from clients on their commencement with an FSTC using the personal details form at [Appendix 2](#). This has been designed to capture client demographic information, and to help ensure/demonstrate client eligibility for the program.

DEEWR encourages FSTC providers to use their discretion in collecting clients' personal information and proof of their status of eligibility for the program (refer to Section 3.2). It is important that this occurs in a way which does not frighten clients, and scare them away from participation in the program. FSTC providers, for example, may wish to hold informal discussions with clients prior to the commencement of the FSTC to gather the required information, rather than providing clients with an enrolment form to complete themselves.

7.4 Enrolment in the LLNP and/or other foundation skills training

FSTC providers must encourage and support clients to enroll in the LLNP and/or other foundation skills training. This could be achieved, for example, through outlining the individual social, economic and personal benefits that are likely to arise as a result of participation in more formal learning, demystifying the LLNP (perhaps through a field trip or LLNP graduate guest speaker), setting out the options that are available locally, and providing practical assistance to clients who wish to pursue these.

7.5 Encouragement of peer support networks

FSTC providers must provide opportunities for the development of positive peer support networks among clients, and where appropriate, depending on the nature of FSTC activities, between clients and the wider community. This obligation could be achieved, for example, by encouraging clients to interact and work collaboratively, through inviting people from potentially useful networks to co-teach or to participate in some way in the FSTC, or through setting activities that require clients to interact with networks and stakeholders out in the wider community.

7.6 Reporting requirements

Reporting requirements will form an important component of the funding agreements between DEEWR and FSTC providers. These are set out in [Appendix 5](#).

7.7 Program evaluation

FSTC providers must participate in the evaluation of the FSTC Program and records kept during the FSTC must be made available for this purpose.

The evaluation will take the form of 'action research' and will be ongoing throughout the life of the program. Lessons learnt from each project will be shared among successful applicants, and these should be considered in the development of any subsequent FSTCs as appropriate.

FSTC providers must explain the importance of clients' individual participation in the program evaluation to their clients (possibly in the context of them signing the Privacy Notice – refer to Section 3.2.6). This explanation should seek to emphasise that the evaluation is not about the individuals' themselves, but is aimed at improving the quality and content of the FSTCs overall.

FSTC providers must facilitate client feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the FSTC and their future intentions, and undertake follow up clients, including keeping records regarding their destinations, after the conclusion of the course.

FSTC providers may also be approached to participate in an interview with the program evaluators, to ascertain the views of key staff who have been involved in the FSTC regarding the value of program and areas for improvement.

7.8 Media and communications

FSTC providers must ensure that all advertisements, promotional activities (such as pamphlets or other publicity material) and any other public relations matters are consistent with these Guidelines and funding agreement.

As a minimum all publicity material should include the following words:

'Funded by the Australian Government'

7.9 Project funding acquittal

FSTC providers must provide full financial acquittals in accordance with the requirements specified in the funding agreement.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 Role of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)

DEEWR is responsible for administering and overseeing the FSTC Program. This role includes:

- seeking project proposals from organisations;
- assessing and approving project proposals;
- preparing funding agreements with successful applicants;
- managing funding agreements, including payment of funds to successful applicants;
- responding to all enquiries on project guidelines, policy and administration;
- managing the program evaluation; and
- facilitating information sharing about project outcomes.

8.2 Role of FSTC providers

FSTC providers will be required to:

- submit a complete and accurate application for funding, with all essential supporting documentation, to DEEWR by the due date;
- agree to the terms and conditions of the DEEWR funding agreement;
- enter into and comply with a Funding agreement with DEEWR if funding is approved, as appropriate;
- alert DEEWR to, and/or seek approval from DEEWR for, any project variations (time, cost, scope) in accordance with the Funding agreement;
- participate in the program evaluation;
- ensure that the project is completed by 30 June 2010;
- provide a final project report and meet other reporting requirements; and
- supply audited financial statements as evidence of the acquittal of expenditure of all funds for the purpose for which they were provided, as set out in the Funding agreement.

8.3 Administrative arrangements

- The Group Manager, Youth and Industry Skills Group, has approved these guidelines prior to their finalisation.
- The Branch Manager, Foundation Skills and Pathways Branch, has responsibility for the operation of the FSTC Program.
- The Director, Adult Literacy Policy Section, is the Program Delegate of the FSTC Program and on a day to day basis is responsible for overseeing program administration.
- The Project Delegate is the Assistant Director responsible for managing the FSTC Program within the Adult Literacy Policy Section. The Project Delegate is responsible for managing funding agreements under the program and the day-to-day administration of the project funds.

9. GLOSSARY

Community education and training provider – refers to a not-for-profit, community-based education and training providers that is:

- a training organisation whose core business includes offering adult learning in community settings;
- incorporated under Australian Government or state/territory government legislation as a ‘not for profit’ organisation; and
- not a publicly funded TAFE institute.

Employment Service Providers – refers to Jobs Services Australia (JSA) providers, the Disability Employment Network, and the Vocational Rehabilitation Service.

Family literacy projects – refers to projects that seek to foster positive learning relationships within families and which will result in benefits for both adult and child participants (for example, projects which will assist parents or carers to become more engaged in their children’s learning and development, or projects which encourage parents or carers to engage in activities with their children).

Foundation Skills – the term ‘foundation skills’ in these guidelines refers to the five core skills of learning, reading, writing, oral communication and numeracy that are essential for people to participate effectively in our society. People need to be able to communicate effectively in many different ways, for diverse purposes, in a variety of contexts and to think critically about information and ideas. The five core skills are described in the *Australian Core Skills Framework*⁶.

Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program – is an Australian Government Program which provides eligible job-seekers with training to improve their language and/or literacy and numeracy skills to assist them in achieving sustainable employment and/or undertake further education and/or training.

Persons Not in the Labour Force – refers to people who are not classified as employed or unemployed.

Stream 1 (Limited) Participant means a person who is not a Fully Eligible for the stream services available under Job Services Australia⁷ and who either:

- (a) is not:
- (i) undertaking Full-Time study, unless the purpose for seeking Services from the provider is to obtain an apprenticeship or traineeship;
 - (ii) Employed for 15 hours or more each week, unless he or she is seeking Services from the provider for the purpose of obtaining an apprenticeship or traineeship;
 - (iii) an overseas visitor on a working holiday visa;
 - (iv) an overseas student studying in Australia; or
 - (v) prohibited by law from working in Australia; or

⁶ See <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Skills/Programs/WorkplaceEnglishLanguageandLiteracy/Documents/AustralianCoreSkillsFramework.pdf> for further information.

⁷ See <http://www.deewr.gov.au/Employment/JSA/Pages/faq.aspx#11> for more information and Job Services Australia and the different streams that are available to assist individuals to gain employment.

(b) has characteristics which identify the person as being a Stream 1 (Limited) Participant, being characteristics which DEEWR may Notify the provider, from time to time.

Notes on (a)(i)

'Full-Time study' means:

a university course that for the purposes of the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS), represents a standard student load for the equivalent of a full-time student a course that is at least 15 contact hours per week a course determined as being full-time by the relevant educational institution.

Notes on (a)(ii)

Volunteer job seekers without participation requirements on Disability Support Pension or Parenting Payment may choose to receive services as either a Fully Eligible Participant or a Stream 1 (Limited) Participant. For these job seekers, working 15 hours or more per week does not affect their eligibility for Stream 1 (Limited) services Job seekers on Leave Without Pay from their regular employment are Stream 1 (Limited) eligible.

Tertiary Education - refers to all post-school education, including vocational education and training and higher education.

Volunteer Job Seekers – refers in these guidelines to those individuals who are considered to be Fully Eligible for the stream services under Job Services Australia but who do not have Activity Test Requirements (e.g. recipients of the Disability Support Pension or the Parenting Payment without participation requirements who volunteer to receive job search support services).

Foundation Skills Taster Course Program
Examples of Appropriate Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN)
Qualifications

Qualifications

To ensure effective delivery of Foundation Skills Taster Course (FSTC) projects, deliverers must work with an appropriately qualified language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) professional.

Appropriately qualified LLN professionals must have:

- appropriate qualifications to deliver LLN training to adult learners; and
- relevant work experience

Appropriate qualifications include, and are not limited to:

- Certificate IV in Language, Literacy and Numeracy Assessment and Training
- Advanced Diploma of Language, Literacy and Numeracy practice in VET
- Graduate Certificate in Literacy and Numeracy
- Graduate Diploma in Literacy and Numeracy
- Graduate Diploma of Adult and Vocational Education and Training
- Degree, Diploma or Certificate in TESOL (ESL) or Literacy or both or equivalent
- Cambridge ESL Training (CELTA)
- Bachelor of Education with a TESOL or ESOL Major
- Degree or equivalent (3 Yr tertiary qualification) with a recognised TESOL qualification
- Diploma of Teaching with an ESL or Literacy Major (A Bachelor degree is required to do this course)
- Certificate or Diploma in TESOL

NOTE:

Should your qualification not appear on this list, please contact the FSTC Program team at foundationskills@deewr.gov.au for further assistance.

**FOUNDATION SKILLS TASTER COURSE
DRAFT PERSONAL DETAILS FORM**

**This form has been designed to capture client demographic information and to help Foundation Skills Taster Course (FSTC) providers to ensure and demonstrate client eligibility for the program. We recommend that this information be collected during an informal chat with clients, in which the provider completes this form on the client’s behalf.*

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

FIRST NAME:..... **SURNAME:**.....

POSTAL ADDRESS:.....

.....

.....

TELEPHONE :(.....)..... **MOBILE:**.....

E-MAIL ADDRESS:.....

GENDER:

Female

Male

**You must give clients’ the opportunity not to answer the following question (one option would be to preface this with “you don’t have to answer this question, but do you consider yourself to be.....) ”*

IS THE CLIENT:

Aboriginal

Torres Strait Islander

Disability, Impairment or Long Term Condition

Non-English Speaking Background

For projects addressing family literacy, please use Section One above to capture demographic information on the family member who meets the client eligibility criteria for the program. For families where more than one member meets the eligibility criteria for the program, please complete a separate personal details form for each person in this category. Demographic information about other family members should be recorded at Attachment 1.

SECTION TWO: CLIENT ELIGIBILITY

RESIDENCY

The client is either an Australian citizen or permanent resident and has provided evidence of this:

Australian Birth Certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number:.....
Australian Passport	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number:.....
Naturalisation Certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number:.....
Green Medicare card	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number:.....
Visa	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number:.....
Health Care Card	<input type="checkbox"/>	CRN:.....

AGE

The client is aged between 25-64 years of age and has provided evidence of this:

Drivers Licence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number:.....
Proof of Age card	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number:.....
Passport	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number:.....
Birth certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number:.....

The client is years old.

PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

**The table at Attachment 2 sets out the range of personal circumstances for eligible clients. We suggest you use this, and relevant variations of the following questions, to help you to determine the client's personal circumstances and whether they intend to seek employment within the next year.*

**You may also wish to point out to clients that due to the limited funding that is available for the FSTC Program, the Australian Government has asked that only clients who are genuinely committed to seeking paid employment within the next 12 months be allowed to take part.*

- Are you currently participating in any other education and training?
- Do you receive an income support payment through Centrelink?
- What type of income support payment do you receive through Centrelink?
- Do you currently have activity test requirements?
- Are you likely to have activity test requirements in the future?
- Have you volunteered to receive employment services assistance?
- What are your plans for the future? Do you hope to one day get a job?

(Continued on next page)

PRIVACY NOTICE

The client has signed the *Privacy Notice* (see Appendix 4 of the program guidelines). A copy of the signed *Privacy Notice* is attached to this form.

- Yes
- No

SECTION THREE: PROVIDER DECLARATION

I certify that the information contained in this form is accurate and correct, and I am satisfied that the client meets all of the identified eligibility criteria for the FSTC.

Name:.....

Position:.....

Organisation:.....

Date:.....

Signature:.....

NOTE: THIS FORM CONTAINS PERSONAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE ABOVE CLIENT AND MUST BE STORED IN ACCORDANCE WITH INFORMATION PRIVACY PRINCIPLES.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF FAMILY MEMBERS

Family member name	Relationship	Age

Does this family have more than one adult member who meets the eligibility criteria for the program?

Yes

No

**For families with more than one member in the target group, the demographic information on other family members need only be collected once.*

Client Personal Circumstances

Target Group	Characteristics
Volunteer job seeker (not activity tested)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recipients of the Disability Support Pension (DSP) and Parenting Payment (PP) who volunteer to receive Employment Services • Do not currently have activity test requirements • Are not currently participating in any education and training or work • Have volunteered to receive employment-related services (either as a Fully Eligible Participant or as a Stream 1 (Limited) Participant)
Stream 1 (limited) participant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are not in receipt of income support but have registered with Centrelink or an Employment Service Provider to receive the job search assistance that is provided under Stream 1 (i.e. an initial interview, assistance with preparing a resume and advice about the labour market) • Are not currently participating in any education and training or work
Income support recipient (currently not activity tested but may be in the future)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recipients of income support payments that are likely to involve activity test requirements in the future (e.g. DSP, PP recipients) • Do not currently have activity test requirements • Are not currently participating in any education and training or work
Income support recipient (not activity tested and unlikely to be activity tested in the future)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recipients of income support payments that are unlikely to have activity test requirements in the future (e.g. Widow Allowance, Mature Age Allowance, Partner Allowance) • Do not currently have activity test requirements • Are not currently participating in any education and training or work • Have an intention to seek paid employment within the next year
Not currently working, not registered with Centrelink	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are not registered with Centrelink or an Employment Service Provider • Are not currently participating in any education and training or work • Have an intention to seek paid employment within the next year



Foundation Skills Taster Program

[Insert name of Project]

Capacity to Benefit Assessment

Client name:.....

Client’s personal circumstances:

- Volunteer job seeker (without activity test requirements)
- Stream 1 (limited) Participant
- Income support recipient (currently without activity test requirements but may have these in the future)
- Income support recipient (without activity test requirements and unlikely to have these in the future)
- Not currently working, not registered with Centrelink, but intends to seek paid employment within the next year

1. Likelihood of the client moving from the Taster Course into the LLNP or other work-related education and training (e.g. is the client motivated to undertake further study? Does the client have a desire to enter the workforce in the future?)

2. Client/family ability to successfully meet Taster Course requirements such as regular class attendance (e.g. does the client/family have the time, capacity etc to attend FSTC classes? Would there be any barriers to client/family participation?)

3. Capacity of the client/family to benefit through participation in the FSTC (for example, through gaining improved confidence and self-esteem or improved family or community relationships) (e.g. is the client/family likely to experience direct benefits as a result of their participation in the FSTC?)



Australian Government
Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

PRIVACY NOTICE

Foundation Skills Taster Course Program

[Insert name of Project]

I understand that:

- (a) **[insert name of FSTC provider]** will collect my personal information for the purposes of reporting, program administration, monitoring and evaluation of the **[insert name of project]**;
- (b) **[insert name of FSTC provider]** may disclose my personal information to the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), including its contractors or agents, who may use that personal information for the purpose of reporting, program administration, monitoring and evaluation of the **[insert name of project]**; and
- (c) **[insert name of FSTC provider]** may disclose my personal information to DEEWR’s Ministers and other Members of Parliament for the purposes of reporting on the **[insert name of project]**; and
- (d) I will be contacted following my participation in the **[insert name of project]** for the purpose of the program evaluation, including to participate in a telephone interview with the program evaluators.

I confirm I have read and understood the above information and consent to the stated uses of my personal information.

I also confirm my intention to seek paid employment within a year of the date of this notice.

.....

(Signature of participant)

.....

(Date)

If the above statement was read aloud to you, please have that person complete the following:

I have read aloud all of the details of the above privacy statement to the participant whose name appears on this form.

.....

(Name)

.....

(Relationship to participant)

Foundation Skills Taster Course Program Reporting Requirements

Background

Reporting on project implementation and impacts is required to determine the extent to which the Foundation Skills Taster Course (FSTC) Program meets Commonwealth desired outcomes.

The reporting requirements will facilitate timely, regular advice to governments. Use of this information may include but not be limited to:

- reporting to the Coordinator General, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and COAG on overall program progress and impacts;
- periodic departmental reporting, including progress against key outputs and outcomes;
- analysis on whether projects are meeting the program objectives and provision of advice about how projects might be modified to achieve better outcomes; and
- ad-hoc reporting as required by DEEWR.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

DEEWR will be responsible for:

- developing and maintaining reporting requirements;
- provision of any reporting tools, templates and guidance that it determines are appropriate; and
- analysis of data and provision of reports to the Commonwealth.

Successful applicants

FSTC providers will be responsible for meeting their obligations as set out in their funding agreements with DEEWR. These will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- collecting and providing data to DEEWR as specified in for individual projects;
- ensuring accuracy of information provided to DEEWR;
- maintaining adequate records in relation to projects and storing those records in accordance with requirements set out in ;
- keeping records of expenditure of funding provided by DEEWR in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards; and
- ensuring they comply with other reporting requirements specified in the Guidelines or the funding agreement.

Reporting

Client enrolment

FSTC providers must collect a range of personal information from clients, including proof of their eligibility for the program and basic information about their attitudes towards education, training and/or work, upon their enrolment in the FSTC (refer Section 3.2, and to the personal details form at [Appendix 2](#)).

This information should be copied for each client and retained on client's files by the FSTC provider.

During the FSTC

FSTC providers must keep records regarding participants' progress throughout the FSTC, including any perceived changes in: attitudes towards participation in further education and

training, work and/or the community; skill levels; intentions about what to do following the conclusion of the course; confidence levels; attitudes towards their children's education; and, levels and nature of class interaction. FSTC providers must also assist with the administration of a simple survey to clients at the conclusion of the FSTC, which will be designed to collect information about any changes in client views, attitudes and behavior that may have resulted from participation in an FSTC (this survey will be supplied by DEEWR).

These records should be copied for each client and retained on the client's file by the FSTC provider.

Final Project Report

FSTC providers must provide to DEEWR a Final Report within one month of the conclusion of the FSTC which demonstrates the project was completed in the specified manner and includes an audited financial statement acquitting all funding received.

The Final Report will be expected to include quantitative data relating to client demographic information, personal circumstances, participation rates, completion rates as well as qualitative information regarding changes in clients' attitudes, intentions and behaviours.

Information provided in the Final Report will be used to support the overall program evaluation and DEEWR reporting on the program.