

# **National HE STEM Programme**

## **Call for Collaborative Proposals to Transfer & Embed Good Practice within HEIs**

**Call Opens: 1 February 2010**  
**Call Closes: 1700 on 12 March 2010**

**Successful Proposals notified by 22 March 2010**

**Further Details: [www.stemprogramme.com](http://www.stemprogramme.com)**

### **About the Programme**

The National HE STEM Programme is a £21million, 3-year initiative funded by the Higher Education Funding Councils for England and Wales (HEFCE and HEFCW) that commenced on the 1 August 2009. Although focused around science, technology, engineering and mathematics, it will primarily support the disciplines of chemistry, engineering, mathematics and physics. These are STEM subjects that have been deemed strategically important and vulnerable, and were the subject of pilot Project activities initiated by the Higher Education Funding Council for England in 2005 and 2006.

The National HE STEM Programme will support Higher Education Institutions and encourage the exploration of new approaches to recruiting students and delivering programmes of study within the STEM disciplines. It will enable the transfer of good practice across the Higher Education STEM sector, facilitate its wider adoption, and encourage innovation. The Programme will not seek to undertake short-term interventions, but will focus upon sustainable activities with the potential to achieve long-term impact within the Higher Education sector.

The National HE STEM Programme will take forward activities in three related strands:

1. Activities to widen participation within the STEM disciplines at university level by working with those currently within the School and FE sectors;
2. Higher Education curriculum developments focusing upon course delivery and design, student support, and knowledge and skills;
3. Activities to encourage those currently within the workforce and society without a prior university-level qualification to engage with further study to develop enhanced knowledge and skills.

## Nature of the Call

To support the transfer and wider adoption of proven good practice within the HE STEM<sup>1</sup> sector, the National HE STEM Programme is making available funding to those from HEFCE and HEFCW funded Higher Education Institutions to share proven evidence-based interventions directly related to its three strands of activity.

This funding opportunity is designed to support those within the HE sector who wish to adopt particular approaches, resources or ideas within their own institutions that they have identified exist elsewhere. Funding is available to support HEIs with the adoption of proven practice, and while it is not expected funding will be used for further development work, it is acceptable for the funding to be used modify the practices, approaches and resources to align with institutional processes and procedures. **It is not intended to enable the development of new practice or to fund or expand existing activities within a particular institution.** Examples might include:

- Adoption of Pilot Project approaches for HE led widening participation activity within schools and colleges;
- The transfer and adoption of practice between the different STEM disciplines;
- The adoption of curriculum interventions relating to delivery, assessment, and student support;
- The embedding of curriculum interventions that enhance the development of the wider graduate skills required for employment;
- The embedding of approaches to increase employer engagement with the Higher Education curriculum;
- The adoption of approaches which both aim to develop HE STEM provision that is accessible to adult learners and which encourages and supports adult engagement in HE study.

**Funding will be allocated to support the transfer and embedding of existing, evidence based proven practice. To this end, it may be used to support the wider adoption of the outcomes and practices from the four Pilot Projects<sup>2</sup> as these were fully evaluated and the impact of their activities assessed.**

**This funding opportunity is also available to support the transfer and embedding of related good practice identified<sup>3</sup> or disseminated by, amongst others, the four Higher Education Academy Subject Centres: Engineering; Materials; Mathematics, Statistics & Operational Research; and, Physical Sciences, and from the HEFCE Funded Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. In these instances, proposers will need to clearly demonstrate to the reviewing panel the evidence based nature of the practices proposed.**

Further details on the work of the Pilot Projects, Professional Bodies, the Higher Education Academy Subject Centres, and the Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning is available at: [www.stemprogramme.com](http://www.stemprogramme.com)

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<sup>1</sup> Within the context of the National HE STEM Programme, 'STEM' refers to the disciplines of Chemistry, Engineering, Mathematics and Physics.

<sup>2</sup> Chemistry for our Future (the Royal Society of Chemistry); the London Engineering Project (the Royal Academy of Engineering); More Maths Grads (a consortium of mathematical bodies); and, Stimulating Physics (the Institute of Physics).

<sup>3</sup> Such practice may have been promoted, for example, in Subject Centre publications, at workshops and conferences, or via case studies.

## Funding

Limited funding is available to support proposals, and a large number of submissions are anticipated. Value-for-money will be an important consideration during the review process, and it is therefore anticipated that funded proposals will typically be less than £10,000.

While any well argued case will be considered, proposals that involve the transfer of practice between multiple HEIs, or multiple STEM departments with a single HEI will be particularly valued. Proposers should clearly articulate how they will engage with those responsible for developing the practice the proposal wishes to embed. All proposals must include either a letter of support or a statement from a Head of Department or School, or a faculty Dean confirming the commitment towards long-term sustainability.

Funded proposals must be no longer than six months in duration, and should complete by the 30 September 2010. Payment for successful proposals will typically be made on the following basis:

- 30% of total amount upon receipt of signed agreement;
- 35% of total amount upon receipt of interim progress report;
- 35% of total amount upon receipt of final case study report.

As with all activities of the National HE STEM Programme, the focus of this call is upon supporting institutions to develop and adopt new practices that will enhance the learning experience of their students. It is therefore expected that successful proposals will not have a full economic or overhead cost associated with them; this may, however, count as a contribution in kind.

All proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. HEI involvement with the activities is prominent and will bring added benefit to the HE sector;
2. The activity will add value to the overall aims and objectives of the Programme, and their value-for-money is clearly evident;
3. The aims, objectives, activities and outputs (including key milestones) are clearly defined;
4. At least one of the core National HE STEM Programme Partners<sup>4</sup> is involved in the activity proposed (or its dissemination) along with other STEM sector partners;
5. There is a clear sustainability strategy for ensuring the long-term use, roll-out, or continued engagement with the activity and its outputs;
6. There is a visible contribution in kind;
7. There is a commitment from the HEIs or organisations involved to engage with the wider outputs from the Programme;
8. The practice proposed for adoption is identified and proven good practice;
9. The budget is realistic and clearly defined.
10. There is a clear dissemination and evaluation strategy (which may be ongoing).

Funding decisions will be made by a panel on the basis of how well projects address these criteria.

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<sup>4</sup> The core Programme Partners are: The Institute of Mathematics and its Applications; The Institute of Physics; The Royal Academy of Engineering; The Royal Society of Chemistry; and, The University of Bath; The University of Birmingham; The University of Bradford; The University of Southampton Manchester-Metropolitan University; and, Swansea University.

## Outcomes

To ensure proposals meet Criteria 4, as a minimum, proposers are asked to identify within their submissions how they will engage with the Spoke HEIs of the National HE STEM Programme to disseminate the outcomes of their work. All funded proposals are required to produce, as a minimum output, a case study, in an agreed format, detailing their experiences so that these may be shared with the wider HE sector to inform future practice and activity. All lead proposers are also required to contribute to two seminars organised by Programme Partners for which reasonable travel expenses will be provided.

## Submission

All proposals must be submitted no later than 1700 on the 12 March 2010. They must be submitted using the template which may be downloaded from [www.stemprogramme.com](http://www.stemprogramme.com). They should be returned to: [STEM@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:STEM@contacts.bham.ac.uk).

## Contacts

Any initial questions or queries should be addressed to: [stem@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:stem@contacts.bham.ac.uk)

To contact the regional Spoke Higher Education Partner Institutions:

- **South-West England:** The University of Bath ([HESTEM@bath.ac.uk](mailto:HESTEM@bath.ac.uk))
- **West Midlands and East Anglia:** The University of Birmingham ([HESTEM@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:HESTEM@contacts.bham.ac.uk))
- **North-East England:** The University of Bradford ([HESTEM@bradford.ac.uk](mailto:HESTEM@bradford.ac.uk))
- **North-West England:** Manchester Metropolitan University ([HESTEM@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:HESTEM@mmu.ac.uk))
- **South-East and London:** The University of Southampton ([HESTEM@soton.ac.uk](mailto:HESTEM@soton.ac.uk))
- **Wales:** Swansea University: ([HESTEM@swan.ac.uk](mailto:HESTEM@swan.ac.uk))

To contact the Professional Body Partners:

- **The Institute of Physics** ([HESTEM@IoP.org](mailto:HESTEM@IoP.org))
- **The Institute of Mathematics and its Applications** ([HESTEMmaths@ima.org.uk](mailto:HESTEMmaths@ima.org.uk))
- **The Royal Academy of Engineering** ([HESTEM@RAeng.org.uk](mailto:HESTEM@RAeng.org.uk))
- **The Royal Society of Chemistry** ([HESTEM@rsc.org](mailto:HESTEM@rsc.org))