



## The Future of Apprenticeships in England: guidelines for applications for Gatsby support for Trailblazer development

### ABOUT GATSBY

Gatsby is a Foundation set up in 1967 by David Sainsbury (now Lord Sainsbury of Turville) to realise his charitable objectives. We focus our support on a limited number of charitable areas:

- Science & engineering education
- Plant science research
- Neuroscience research
- Economic development in Africa
- Public policy research and advice
- The Arts

Further information on our projects in all of these areas can be found on our website at [www.gatsby.org.uk](http://www.gatsby.org.uk). In science & engineering education a particular focus of ours is increasing the supply, quality and status of technicians – those people working in practical occupations at qualification levels 3 and 4 in science, technology, engineering and mathematics-related sectors.

### INTRODUCTION

The best apprenticeships in England compare favourably with those in countries with world-leading vocational education and training systems. Gatsby believes that the Richard Review and the government's response to it provide a compelling vision for how to build on this success.

In future, the government wants all apprenticeships to provide substantial and sustained training that equips apprentices with broad transferable skills and full competency in an occupation. To achieve this ambition, employers will be put in the driving seat of the new apprenticeship system. Employers will be asked to identify the occupations within their sectors that require apprenticeship training, and then design a set of standards and assessment approaches for each of these apprenticeships. We support the government's plans for apprenticeship reform. However, we recognise that employers need to be supported in their new role. Employers cannot, *on their own*, be expected to re-design apprenticeship standards while also assuring these standards provide the broad occupational competence government has rightly identified as necessary. To achieve this,

employers will need to be supported by professional bodies – as the guardians of occupations and professional standards – and other interested parties. In many sectors, professional bodies will be able to ensure apprenticeships are both relevant to employers *and* provide the broad, occupational competence that government wants.

Furthermore, as the government has made clear, the new apprenticeships should give apprentices the competence and experience needed to secure professional registration in those occupations where it is available. By partnering with professional bodies during the design stage of the new apprenticeships, employers can ensure that every apprentice will have the opportunity to become registered through a professional body when they complete their training. Gatsby strongly endorses this approach and our funding for the work of each consortium will be contingent on alignment of the new apprenticeship standards with professional registration requirements.

### **OUR SUPPORT FOR TRAILBLAZERS**

Gatsby is making funding available to support employers and professional bodies involved in the Trailblazers. **Please note, however, that our priority for funding will be the Trailblazers that are developing apprenticeships in the science, engineering and technology-related (SET) disciplines.** This is in line with Gatsby's wider charitable objectives in science and engineering education. The aim of our funding is to ensure the Trailblazer development consortia have sufficient capacity to ensure their new apprenticeships standards meet the government's approval criteria, namely that the apprenticeship standards:

- a) describe what full competence for a specific occupation means so that, on completion, an apprentice will have the skills and knowledge to perform the role confidently in any part of the sector;
- b) be publicly recognised by employers (including small businesses), recognised professional or trade bodies and, where appropriate, higher education institutions (HEIs), as fit for purpose;
- c) be suitable for small businesses to use to train their apprentices, if necessary with external training;
- d) contain sufficient content, and be pitched at such a level, that a new entrant to the occupation would find them stretching and require at least one year of training to meet the standard while being stretched; and
- e) include any skills, knowledge and other requirements for professional registration if such a system exists in the sector or occupation so that, on completion, a successful apprentice can achieve professional registration [for example as a registered science technician (RSciTech) or engineering technician (EngTech). In order to meet this criterion, consideration will need to be given by each consortium as to how the requirements for professional registration can be demonstrated through the new apprenticeship assessment arrangements.]

## POSSIBLE USES OF GATSBY FUNDING

Part of Gatsby's way of working as a funder is to partner with – and trust – the experts in any particular field and we see no reason why our support of the development of apprenticeship standards for the Trailblazers should be any different. We hope to establish ongoing partnerships with each of the Trailblazer consortia as they develop first the standards and, later, the apprenticeship qualification detail. In this way we aim to be flexible and responsive to consortia needs. Gatsby's funding is intended to support the Trailblazers throughout the entire process of their development (up to when the first apprentices start their training under the new system), not just the next 3-4 months. The funding Gatsby is making available is intended only to be a contribution towards the costs of developing the new apprenticeships; it will not be sufficient to cover the entire costs (especially including staff time etc) incurred by each consortium.

We have identified some areas where we believe Gatsby funding might be helpful. This list (below) is by no means exhaustive and is not intended to limit the ways of working that the consortia might settle upon.

### Research

We believe that extensive primary research is unlikely to be needed (or indeed viable given the time requirements for the development process). However each consortium may wish to ensure its members are informed as to existing research that could support their thinking. For example, for each occupation being considered, one might wish to collate available data (from UKCES and other sources) on:

- the employment outlook
- the size of the current workforce and other Labour Market Information (LMI)
- existing occupational standards from the UK and internationally (for example O\*NET in the USA: [www.onetonline.org](http://www.onetonline.org)) for these and similar occupations
- associated professional and registration standards
- any associated licences to practise and vendor qualifications

### Consultation

While much of the development work will be done by the consortia it seems unlikely that any one consortium will be able to reflect all of the different sectors and sizes of employer where a particular occupation is prevalent. Therefore we suggest there might be a need to carry out some web-based surveys, seminars or focus groups. In some cases it may also be decided that advertisements or inserts in relevant trade magazines would be beneficial, to raise awareness of the development process and/or to elicit views from a wider range of stakeholders.

### Coordination

Arranging meetings and bringing together the group and ensuring that all the necessary paperwork is produced and distributed in a timely fashion will be critical for the success of each consortium. We would anticipate that some of the consortia may need some resource to ensure that this happens, for example by procuring the efforts of a project manager with experience of similar projects.

Beyond the Gatsby support for individual consortia, we have also agreed to work with BIS colleagues to ensure good communication channels *between* the Trailblazer consortia are developed and used efficiently.

## Expenses

While we would expect large organisations involved in the consortia to cover the expenses of their own staff to participate in the development process, some of the organisations that need to be engaged (notably small businesses) may require financial support to meet their expenses if they are to contribute fully.

## APPLYING FOR GATSBY FUNDING

Our preference is for Gatsby staff to meet with employer and professional body representatives of each of the development consortia so that we can understand the particular challenges that each consortium faces and thus how our funding might be best used. **If your consortium is interested in applying for Gatsby support, please email Faye Riley ([faye.riley@gatsby.org.uk](mailto:faye.riley@gatsby.org.uk)) in our education team to fix a date and time to meet with us.**

After our initial meeting it is likely you will be asked to prepare a brief written proposal describing how any Gatsby funds would be used by your consortium. Things to be covered in such a proposal would include: a summary of your proposed working methods and a timeline of activity; the occupations you have chosen to develop apprenticeship standards for and which professional registration scheme(s) they will be aligned to; a budget, suggested payment schedule and payee details for any grant; an identification of funding and support in kind which will be committed by the various consortium partners; and details of the lead contact for correspondence.

There will not be a specific closing date for applications for funding and it may be the case that, as a consortium develops its thinking and work, additional funding need is identified. Thus consortia should not feel pressure to seek now all the funding they may end up requiring over the coming 12-18 months. As described earlier, Gatsby hopes to establish ongoing partnerships with each of the consortia over the duration of their development work and we will aim to be responsive to need, as far as our funds allow. In responding to such need, it should be noted that it is likely that some Trailblazer consortia will receive more Gatsby support than others; indeed it is possible that some consortia will not receive any Gatsby support. **In all cases, please be aware that Gatsby's priority will be to support Trailblazers that are developing apprenticeships in the SET disciplines, in line with our wider charitable objectives in science and engineering education.**

Finally, please remember that Gatsby is a modestly-sized charitable foundation with limited resources. In all cases, the decision of Gatsby regarding a grant application will be final and, while we aim to provide constructive feedback to all applicants, we do reserve the right not to enter into correspondence regarding the background to Gatsby's funding decisions.

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Website: [www.gatsby.org.uk](http://www.gatsby.org.uk) Twitter: [@GatsbyEd](https://twitter.com/GatsbyEd)

Registered charity no. 251988

25 October 2013