

Annex B: Future of the National Collaborative Outreach Programme

Summary

1. The National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) was established in January 2017 and supports 29 partnerships of universities, colleges, local authorities, LEAs, employers and others to deliver sustained and progressive programmes of targeted higher education outreach with young people in Years 9 to 13. In doing so it aims to support the government's social mobility goals by rapidly increasing the number of young people from underrepresented groups who go into higher education, but it has also provided an infrastructure for higher education providers to work collaboratively in local areas.
2. The NCOP provides a route through which schools and colleges can access impartial outreach and information, advice and guidance, without issues of competition acting as a barrier. During the last academic year NCOP partnerships worked with around 1,500 schools and colleges to deliver sustained and progressive programmes of targeted higher education outreach with 102,000 young people.
3. The success measures for the programme are focused on progression to any course of higher education, whatever the mode of study (HNC, HND, foundation degree, degree). Partnerships are encouraged to consider their offer in terms of information about alternative routes into higher education, including higher and degree apprenticeships.
4. Our proposals for the NCOP for the future are to:
 - a. Continue to invest in targeted higher education outreach within the areas where we can have the most impact ensuring that we make the most of the opportunity to strengthen evaluation practice and our knowledge of 'what works'
 - b. Commit to supporting collaboration in the longer term by funding sustainable local partnerships ('outreach hubs') with cross-England coverage to help schools and colleges access the higher education outreach they need and provide a platform for wider collaboration, including with regard to joined up careers advice from before higher education to beyond it.
5. The programme is intended to complement and add value to the work that providers undertake through their access and participation plans, in particular work that is best delivered in collaboration. Through the local partnerships the NCOP supports wider collaborative activity with local authorities, employers and LEAs, as well as with key partners such as the new local careers leads and the opportunity areas.
6. We are asking the board to agree, in principle, to set aside £60 million per year in 2019-20 and 2020-21 to support collaboration between higher education providers and with schools and colleges through the second phase of the NCOP. The total (which represents a little over 4 per cent of our recurrent grant budget for 2018-19) includes £10 million per year to establish outreach hubs within the 29 local partnerships which between them will provide coverage for every local authority in England. We will ask the board to confirm this budget in March 2019, when it sets all budgets following notification of the overall funding available to us from financial year 2019-20 in the government's forthcoming strategic guidance letter.

However, we think it is important to make an in-principle decision now to provide a clear signal about the future as the uncertainty is likely to impact on partnership staffing and hence their ability to build on what has been achieved to date. In communicating the in-principle decision to partnerships we will make clear that we reserve the right to revise the allocation in the event of any changes to the grant made available to us by government from financial year 2019-20.

7. Future support beyond this point will depend on the outcomes of the spending review. However we propose, in principle, to ensure that this infrastructure is available to support collaborative activity set out in the next round of access and participation plans, which extend through to 2024-25.

Background

8. The NCOP was designed as a four year programme with a break point anticipating the shift in oversight from HEFCE to OfS and the likelihood that activity would need to be re-calibrated to reflect new duties. With this in mind we have conducted a review of the programme, drawing on a national impact and formative evaluation of the programme led by CFE Research, stakeholder engagement and monitoring reports from NCOP partnerships. In developing our proposals we have sought to understand the implications of the legislative and regulatory landscape for the OfS, the needs of schools, colleges and employers in relation to outreach and information, advice and guidance, and the benefits and challenges of collaboration in local areas.

9. The NCOP review has been informed by the following:

- The year one report of the formative and impact evaluation of the programme, led by CFE Research, which was published in March 2018¹
- Regular monitoring of NCOP partnerships, undertaken by the OfS
- A number of stakeholder roundtables held in May and June 2018 focused on NCOP and social mobility, including the opportunity areas; careers; further education colleges; and schools
- A survey undertaken in June 2018 which explored several aspects of the OfS' approach to access and participation, including the NCOP²
- Discussions at the June 2018 NCOP partnership chairs and leads meetings and October 2018 NCOP steering group meeting
- Submissions received from partnership leads and other stakeholders sharing their views on the programme.

10. A strong and comprehensive plan for evaluation of the first phase of the programme is in place underpinned by a theory of change, logic chain and indicator bank. The overall aim of the national evaluation of NCOP is to assess how successfully the programme is meeting

¹ See <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/2018/ncopyear1/>

² See <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/2c71a592-340f-4308-8cfc-dbf64df28252/access-and-participation-survey-report-final-20180724.pptx>

its objectives by considering the developing wider context and the programme's alignment with, and impact on, the broader coverage of outreach activity and investment through access and participation plans.

11. The essential components of the phase one evaluation are:

Led by OfS

- a. Regular monitoring and account management by the OfS.
- b. Quantitative analysis of national administrative data sets to measure progression into post-16 pathways, and higher education entry and progression rates.

Led by NCOP partnerships

- a. Local evaluation undertaken by each NCOP partnership.
- b. Longitudinal activity monitoring and tracking of young people involved in NCOP. Participants are being tracked through one of the three recognised higher education tracking systems³ so there is robust data on the pathways that are taken during and after their engagement with NCOP and the activities that have the most impact on these.

Externally commissioned

- a. Formative and impact evaluations of the NCOP led by CFE Research, in partnership with the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT), and leading social scientists and economists at various universities. The key objectives of the *formative evaluation* are to examine the effectiveness of the processes involved in the design and implementation of collaborative approaches to outreach and to contribute to a fuller understanding of what works, in what context and why. The principal aim of the *impact evaluation* is to assess the consequential changes resulting from the diversity of NCOP interventions, by using a range of experimental and quasi-experimental methodologies. In addition, the team is helping to develop the capacity of partnerships to evaluate their activities at the local level.

12. A 12-month report covering the externally commissioned evaluations by CFE Research was published in March 2018⁴. It is too early to evidence the causal impact of the programme in terms of which interventions have the most impact on students progressing to higher education. For example insights into the impact of NCOP on the 2017/18 Year 13 cohort will begin to emerge in 2018, as the findings from the baseline and follow-up surveys are analysed with further information on progression available from HESA in spring 2020. However, the researchers draw out key themes relating to NCOP partnerships, school and college engagement, evaluating NCOP at a local and national level, and NCOP learner

³ These are Aimhigher West Midlands, East Midlands Widening Participation Research and Evaluation Partnership (EMWPREP), and Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT)

⁴ See

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20180405115436/http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/2018/nco/year1/>

perceptions of higher education. Relevant findings have been included throughout this paper.

13. The Higher Education and Research Act 2017 places a statutory duty on the OfS to have regard to “the benefits for students and employers resulting from collaboration between such providers”. The Secretary of State for Education’s guidance letter to the OfS (February 2018)⁵ recognised that ‘there is a place-element to social mobility, as there are parts of the country that do not offer adequate opportunity for our young people. Government is keen that the higher education sector plays its role alongside Government, employers and the third sector to tackle the barriers to opportunity and ensure that all young people have equal opportunity. This means looking harder at those areas that face the greatest disadvantage’. We have, therefore, particularly sought to understand the benefits of collaboration in local areas through our review of NCOP.

14. A literature review exploring the benefits of collaboration found that there is great potential for ‘collaborative advantage’ through delivery of higher education outreach in partnership. The review identified many benefits and advantages of collaborative and partnership working which can be grouped into the following themes: relationship building and mutual benefit, shared learning, benefits to learners and practical benefits. However it also identified a number of potential challenges to collaborative working namely practical challenges, challenges associated with evidence and impact, and those relating to competition and developing trust.

15. The NCOP evaluation⁶ found that ‘collaboration across a range of partners helps to enhance expertise, generate fresh ideas and ensure a varied offer of experiences and opportunities for learners.’ It also acknowledged that establishing partnerships with appropriate staff, processes and a collaborative ethos takes time. We recognise that providers can find collaboration challenging, especially in the context of individual provider regulation. The NCOP chairs and leads, at their June 2018 meeting, observed that as the higher education sector becomes increasingly competitive there are limited opportunities for providers to work in such an open and collaborative way. By using our funding to support effective local collaboration we can provide additional incentives and support to overcome the challenges presented by working in partnership.

16. The NCOP provides a route through which schools and colleges can access impartial outreach and information, advice and guidance (IAG), without issues of competition acting as a barrier. This is important as schools told us that they find it complicated to navigate the different outreach offerings available from a range of providers. They also said that they found that the NCOP added most value where it integrates with the curriculum, current parental engagement and/or careers work.

17. We heard from many stakeholders that the short term nature of many initiatives, including the NCOP, can dissuade schools and other local partners from engaging. Responses to the survey underlined the need for longer term funding to support sustained interventions for learners, to measure the impact of these interventions, and to allow the

⁵ See <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/1112/access-and-participation-guidance.pdf>

⁶ See

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20180405115436/http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/2018/nco/year1/>

programme to embed. The chairs and leads viewed closer alignment with access and participation plans positively however they acknowledged the challenge of aligning NCOP with institutional outreach as set out in the plans over the longer term as the commitment to NCOP has only been agreed on a short-term basis.

Proposals for the future of the NCOP

We propose, in principle, to provide funding for the continuation of the NCOP for academic years 2019-20 and 2020-21 at £60 million per annum of which £10 million would be used to support outreach hubs.

18. Guidance from the Secretary of State for Education to the OfS (February 2018)⁷ stated that ‘the goals for higher education published under the previous Government remain in place and our expectation is that the OfS will want to consider these when developing its own ambitions for the sector’. It also said that ‘the partnerships being funded through the National Collaborative Outreach Programme will provide an important contribution. These projects deliver in those wards of the country where progression to higher education is lower than it should be given typical GCSE attainment, including in our twelve Opportunity Areas. We are keen to see the pace and depth of this partnership approach continue in these areas’.

19. We propose, in principle, to provide funding for the continuation of the NCOP for academic years 2019-20 and 2020-21 at £60 million per annum of which £10 million would be used to support outreach hubs.

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21. An online survey⁹, conducted as part of the wider review of access and participation in June 2018, found that as a whole respondents think NCOP is effective in all measures:

⁷ See <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/1112/access-and-participation-guidance.pdf>

⁸ See <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/1112/access-and-participation-guidance.pdf>

⁹ See <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/improving-access-and-participation/our-future-approach-to-access-and-participation/>

How effective has NCOP been in the following aspects?



22. The NCOP was established with the aim of rapidly boosting participation for those from underrepresented groups, with a focus on the geographic areas where this work can have the most impact. However in addition it has established a collaborative infrastructure for providers to work with each other and with schools and colleges and thereby establish greater coherence and efficiency for higher education outreach. Our proposals for the second phase of the programme build on this potential by expanding our ambitions for the partnerships supported by the programme. By broadening their role, in addition to the delivery of focused work with the existing NCOP target groups, we aim to support ongoing, sustainable collaboration which reflects the imperatives in the Higher Education and Research Act, complements our reforms to access and participation plans, and responds to government guidance.

23. Our goals for the second phase of the programme are to:

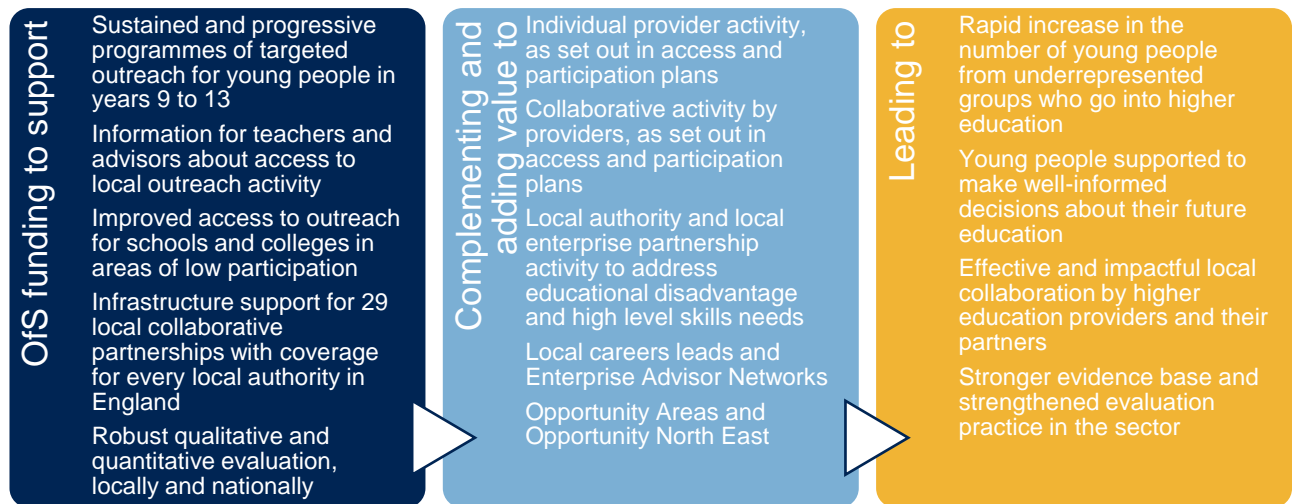
- rapidly increase the number of young people from underrepresented groups who go into higher education
- support young people to make well-informed decisions about their future education
- support effective and impactful local collaboration by higher education providers working together with schools, colleges, employers and other partners
- contribute to a stronger evidence base around 'what works' in higher education outreach and strengthen evaluation practice in the sector.

24. The programme will achieve these goals through:

- the provision of impartial, sustained and progressive higher education outreach by a range of institutions tailored to the needs of young people within target areas
- providing open, transparent and impartial routes for schools and colleges to access outreach activity from a range of higher education providers avoiding duplication and eliminating gaps in outreach provision

- supporting a local partnership infrastructure now and in the future which can act as a vehicle for activity on a range of agendas relating to access and participation, including activity set out in institutional access and participation plans
- robust evaluation at both a local and national level, including capacity building support.

25. Figure 1: Overview of NCOP approach



26. Appendix 1 gives details of the proposed funding model, indicative allocations, and geographic coverage.

27. The NCOP utilises analysis, originally undertaken by HEFCE¹⁰, to identify gaps in higher education participation through a focus on Key Stage 4 attainment levels for particular geographic areas. This enabled the identification of where (to ward level) activity should be directed to make faster progress on widening access. Using this data during phase one NCOP funding was directed to the 997 wards in England with the greatest potential for rapid improvement, supporting a greater intensity of outreach activity in these areas to boost the numbers entering higher education.

28. NCOP partnerships are expected to engage with 20 percent of the target learners in any given year. During the period 1 August 2017 to 30 June 2018 the partnerships engaged 102,000 NCOP target learners in a sustained and progressive programme of higher education outreach. This is 22 per cent of the total target population and therefore on track with programme expectations.

29. Staff working in the NCOP partnerships are surveyed each year by the national evaluation and there has been a marked increase in the numbers reporting that the programme is having a positive impact on young people's decision making around higher education and on parents' and teachers' awareness knowledge and awareness of higher

¹⁰ During the first phase the NCOP targeted wards (ONS 2001 CAS Wards) that had low levels of young participation (POLAR3 quintile 1) and lower than expected levels of young participation, considering Key Stage 4 attainment and ethnicity (q1 or q2) or low levels of young participation (POLAR3 q1) and lower than expected levels of young participation, considering Key Stage 4 attainment only (q1 or q2). For more information see <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/polar-participation-of-local-areas/>

education.¹¹ The evaluation also found that the targeted approach has ‘helped to address ‘cool’ and ‘cold’ spots, with some schools and colleges engaging in outreach for the first time or after a number of years’¹². The external evaluation team will be looking to test these self-reported indications of success through field visits, triangulation of findings with year two of the participant survey, and evaluations being undertaken elsewhere.

30. With respect to the way in which activity is targeted, after an extensive review, we recommend that the current targeting methodology is retained and that partnerships continue to be expected to engage with at least 20 percent of the target population. However, we recognise that there are some learners over the age of 18 who are studying in further education and have the potential to progress to higher education. Therefore, we propose extending the programme to enable partnerships to work with such learners.

31. The funding level was originally set at £60 million per annum based on an estimate¹³ of cost per target learner of the delivery of progressive programmes of outreach by the percentage of the target population NCOP partnerships would be expected to engage. Based on our monitoring, we believe that the partnerships, having set up their programmes and with their full complement of staff, are now able to meet their learner engagement targets within a slightly smaller overall budget, and to expand into broader work. Therefore, they are in a position to deliver more in phase two within the proposed funding level. Our proposals for how they will do this through the development of outreach hubs, and joined up careers advice, are set out in paragraphs 32 to 38 below.

We propose to provide infrastructure support to establish ‘outreach hubs’ within the 29 local partnerships who between them will provide coverage for every local authority in England. In addition to delivering the above outreach these ‘hubs’ will help teachers and advisors find out about the outreach activity which is available in an area; pro-actively support schools and colleges in areas of low participation to access higher education outreach; and provide a platform for other local collaborative activity.

32. The programme evaluation¹⁴ found that the NCOP has ‘fostered the development of new partnerships as well as strengthened existing relationships. It has brought diverse partners together from within and outside the education sector, including employers and community groups’.

33. The clear feedback we have received, from many sources, indicated the benefits of collaborative approaches and the need for a longer term investment commitment to enable these to be as impactful as possible and to allow for genuine alignment with access and participation plans and other local agendas. However collaboration can be challenging both practically and organisationally. In particular demonstrating impact and overcoming issues of competition can be barriers to effective collaboration.

¹¹ Internal report on NCOP evaluation, CFE Research (Oct 2018)

¹² Internal report on NCOP evaluation, CFE Research (Oct 2018)

¹³ The estimate was calculated based on cost information provided by existing outreach programmes operating in 2015-16.

¹⁴ Internal report on NCOP evaluation, CFE Research (Oct 2018)

34. We therefore propose to provide support for local collaborative outreach hubs across England to which the OfS can make a long-term commitment. These hubs will be based on the existing NCOP partnerships, subject to brokering around boundaries and alignment with pre-existing partnership structures. NCOP partnerships will be able to propose alternative arrangements however our expectation is that the partnership lead institution will oversee the work of the hub for the first two years of operation. Appendix 1 includes a map of proposed outreach hub geographies.

35. Alongside and complementary to the delivery of the targeted NCOP outreach outlined above it is envisaged that the outreach hubs would seek to:

- a. help teachers and advisors find out about the outreach activity which is available in an area by:
 - acting as a single point of contact for all secondary schools and colleges within their geographic remit
 - hosting a website with details of the local outreach offer and signposting to other information to support schools and colleges.
- b. pro-actively support schools and colleges in areas of low participation to access higher education outreach by:
 - facilitating access to existing outreach provision, either locally or nationally
 - working collaboratively to help develop new or expanded outreach provision to meet this need, utilising the combined resources of the providers in the area drawing on the investment set out in their access and participation plans.
- c. provide a platform for other local collaborative activity by:
 - engaging strategically with local authorities, local enterprise partnerships, employers and others to understand the landscape of educational disadvantage and high level skills needs within the area
 - in as much as is possible developing innovative and locally tailored approaches to address the challenges identified through the above engagement, drawing in additional funding and support from available sources to support this.

36. These partnerships will be well placed to support schools and colleges meet their commitments within the Gatsby Benchmarks¹⁵. There is scope to develop a minimum offer that the partnerships will support, through signposting and brokering access to higher education outreach, all schools and colleges in England to meet the higher education requirements of Gatsby Benchmark number 7¹⁶. This would require partnerships to draw on

¹⁵ For more details on the Gatsby Benchmarks see <http://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-career-guidance>

¹⁶ Gatsby Benchmark 7: Encounters with further and higher education says that 'All students should understand the full range of learning opportunities that are available to them. This includes academic and vocational routes and learning in schools, colleges, universities and the workplace.

- By the age of 16, every pupil should have had a meaningful encounter with a provider of the full range of learning opportunities.
- By the age of 18, all students who are considering applying for university should have had at least two visits to universities to meet staff and students.

institutional outreach backed by access and participation plans as well as signposting to institutional recruitment activities where appropriate. We will explore the feasibility of a minimum offer as part of the implementation of these proposals.

37. We will set clear expectations that the outreach hubs adopt and adapt models of strategic collaborative activity which have begun to develop within the NCOP. We will particularly focus on rolling out the model developed by the North East Collaborative Outreach Programme (NECOP). This partnership has helped to establish cross organisational collaboration between NECOP, the North East LEP, the CBI, Edge Foundation and several schools in the region through the Next Generation Learning pilot. This focuses on Gatsby Benchmark 4: 'careers in the curriculum' through improving teachers' and young peoples' understanding of job opportunities in the region through project-based learning and the skills required to support the Regional Skills Strategy.

38. The Hubs would also be encouraged to explore adopting other models of activity such as that developed by Future Quest, led by the University of the West of England. It has a strand of work focused on strategic change which sees the senior leadership of UWE working with the local authorities, the third sector and senior leadership of schools and multi-academy trusts to prioritise and develop a long-term sustainable plan collectively across the city region. Within this they are working with the West of England Enterprise Advisor Network to give local schools access to support to build careers plans and make connections to local and national employers.

39. We estimate, based on the funding provided to HEFCE's earlier programme, the National Networks for Collaborative Outreach (NNCO)¹⁷, that OfS funding of £10 million a year is required to support this aspect of the programme. As NCOP funding is already supporting a network of local partnerships across England there would be considerable duplication if separate 'outreach hub' funding were awarded during phase two of the NCOP. However partnerships will need some additional funding to support the additional demands being placed on outreach hubs. It is therefore suggested that, in principle, of the total annual NCOP budget of £60m, £10m is used to support the work of the outreach hubs. This would be distributed to NCOP partnerships on a formulaic basis linked to the young population in the area with additional weighting for areas which are POLAR4 quintile 1 or 2 (see Appendix 1 for full details). Partnerships would be able to use this funding to support their core partnership infrastructure and develop their approaches to meet the wider requirements of this aspect of the programme.

40. We anticipate that the monitoring and evaluation of outreach hub activity will be undertaken alongside NCOP targeted outreach for the first two years. Developing this aspect of the programme from 2019-20 will allow local partnerships to shape their approach to schools and colleges on the basis of two years of steady state funding. Once developed, this should lead to efficiencies across the programme as a whole.

¹⁷ See <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20180405121614/http://www.hefce.ac.uk/sas/ncco/>

We propose to strengthen our guidance around the quality and coherence of outreach provided within the NCOP and will require partnerships to develop a local progression framework.

41. The activities and approaches delivered under the NCOP can be shaped to meet the needs of local areas and the young people who live there. We want to retain this for the second phase however we also want to drive up the quality and coherence of the outreach activity provided. We also want to ensure we have a shared understanding of what NCOP is providing locally and nationally.

42. To support this we have developed:

- a set of quality outreach principles to which we would expect all NCOP targeted outreach activities and programmes to adhere
- guidance to support each partnership to develop a local progression framework for their partnership's outreach activities and programmes.

43. It is anticipated that in combination these would support NCOP partnerships to develop an approach to sustained and progressive higher education outreach within the programme that:

- aligns with the existing outreach activities and approaches supported by higher education providers through their access and participation plans
- complements and aligns with the needs and expectations of schools and colleges around impartial careers information, advice and guidance and the Gatsby Benchmarks¹⁸
- raises standards of professional practice within those delivering activity on behalf of the programme
- differentiates higher education outreach from provider recruitment activity
- links to the expectations of the OfS around the standard of high quality evidence and evaluation
- recognises the role of further education colleges as partners who can support in-reach, to their existing students, as well as outreach to the wider community
- meets the needs of schools, colleges and communities creating sustained capacity for support once the higher education intervention is gone
- aligns with the revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education
- embeds student engagement and co-production

¹⁸ For more details on the Gatsby Benchmarks see <http://www.gatsby.org.uk/education/focus-areas/good-career-guidance>

- is documented in a way which enables the OfS to understand and where appropriate provide challenge to partnerships around the quality and coherence of their approach throughout the lifetime of the programme.

We propose to provide significant support for robust qualitative and quantitative evaluation, both locally and nationally, contributing to a strengthened evidence base and a 'step change' in the sector's approach to measuring the effectiveness and impact of its outreach work.

44. There are a number of emerging issues relating to the evaluation of the programme that we are actively working to address now, and in anticipation of a revised approach in phase two. These include capacity and capability to implement randomised control trials and other rigorous quantitative method, accessing national data sets, more rigour in qualitative approaches, and working with GDPR.

45. This proposal sits alongside our broader evidence and impact strategy for access and participation, which sets out the various regulatory, financial and other levers we have to effect change and achieve our goal that the OfS and higher education providers value evidence and evaluation and use knowledge to improve the impact of access and participation. As part of NCOP Phase two we will embed our four core approaches within the programme and the evaluation (i.e. how we can more effectively pressure, persuade, incentivise, and enable change) – and will look to ensure that our overall outcomes for NCOP partnerships and providers are sufficiently aligned in order that we can confidently say that we and partnerships:

- Commit resource to evidence-informed strategy (or practice), development and collaboration
- Use research and evidence to inform investments (and activities)
- Use evaluation to understand and improve impact.

46. As part of our emerging evidence strategy we are commissioning work on how more rigorously to ascertain the value for money of access and participation work, one aspect of which will be on the return of investment. As one strand of this, the RCTs supported within the NCOP programme are also working with economists at University of Sheffield to ascertain the cost-effectiveness of the interventions they are trialling, data on which should emerge in 2019.

47. In the next six months there is significant primary research, data linking and analysis planned. By the end of phase one we can expect to have a much richer understanding and picture of what is working and where, building on longer term tracking and analysis of outcomes/ impact, which will enable us to provide more robust evidence on correlation or causality.

Appendix 1 – Proposed funding model, geographic coverage and indicative allocations

Proposed funding model

Each partnership will receive an NCOP funding allocation for targeted outreach and outreach hubs calculated using the approaches outlined below. All funding is indicative subject to the amount of overall funding provided by the Department for Education, confirmation of geographical coverage with each partnership, and the agreement of an approved partnership operating plan.

Targeted outreach

Indicative funding of £50 million per annum is allocated pro-rata on the basis of weighted population data to each of the target areas assigned to each NCOP partnership.

Identifying target areas: For continuity we do not propose to change the geographic targeting of the NCOP from phase one of the programme. Targeted outreach is directed to a set of 997 Census Area Statistics wards (Caswards) in which both young participation is low (they are POLAR3 quintile 1¹⁹) and progression to higher education is also low relative to GCSE and equivalent results (Gaps (accounting for GCSE attainment only) quintile 1 or quintile 2 or Gaps (accounting for GCSE attainment and ethnicity) quintile 1 or quintile 2)²⁰.

Calculating weighted populations: Weighted populations for each target ward are calculated by looking at five young cohorts as reported in school records of state-maintained education²¹, aged 15 in academic years 2011-12 to 2015-16. These broadly equate to the potential population in years 9 to 13 in the academic year 2013-14²². Population data has been updated from that used in the first phase of the programme which used 2005-6 population data. A rural weighting of 1.5 is applied to areas deemed to be within a rural county/combined county²³.

Outreach hubs

Indicative funding of £10 million per annum is allocated pro-rata on the basis of weighted population data within the indicative geographies assigned to each NCOP partnership.

¹⁹ The participation of local areas (POLAR) classification groups areas across the UK based on the proportion of the young population that participates in higher education. It looks at how likely young people are to participate in higher education across the UK and shows how this varies by area. POLAR classifies local areas into five groups - or quintiles - based on the proportion of 18 year olds who enter higher education aged 18 or 19 years old. Quintile 1 shows the lowest rate of participation. Quintile 5 shows the highest rate of participation. For more details see <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/polar-participation-of-local-areas/>

²⁰ Gaps analysis looks at the level of young participation in higher education relative to the GCSE (and equivalent) attainment by areas across England. This results in an alternative classification (quintiles) of local areas that identifies low participation relative to school attainment. For more information on the measures of young participation used here see <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/polar-participation-of-local-areas/>

²¹ Contains data sourced from the Department for Education's National Pupil Database. The DfE does not accept responsibility for any inferences or conclusions derived from the NPD data by third parties.

²² For more detail see https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/182df796-a1cb-4cfc-9af2-7b1a72fac8ef/casward_populations.xlsx

²³ The rural weighting applies to all target wards within Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Cumbria, East Anglia, Lincolnshire, North Yorkshire.

Identifying geographic coverage: This seeks to provide nationwide coverage by allocating each of the 326 English LAU1 regions²⁴ to the NCOP partnership already active in that area, or active in the nearby area, as they are the partnership which is expected to have the most local knowledge. In this way the whole of England is allocated to one of the 29 partnerships. We anticipate that there may be some further refinement of the geographical areas of coverage in consultation with NCOP partnerships prior to programme start

Calculating weighted populations: Populations for each area are calculated by looking at the total number of 15 year olds in the area using the ONS single-year-of-age mid-year estimates²⁵ for 2014 and 2015, adjusted to the academic year 2014-15. For funding, the population is weighted according to the POLAR4 quintile for the area. There is a weighting of five for each student in POLAR4 quintile 1 and quintile 2 and a weighting of one for quintile 3, quintile 4 and quintile 5 which reflects the expectation that partnerships will be more active in low participation areas. Rural weightings have not been applied to this part of the funding model. We anticipate that there may be some further refinement of the geographical areas of coverage, and associated funding allocations, in consultation with NCOP partnerships prior to programme start.

²⁴ Local administrative units level 1, for more details see <https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/geography/ukgeographies/eurostat>

²⁵ See <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/lowersuperoutputareamidyearpopulationestimates>

Indicative allocations to partnerships

All funding is indicative subject to the amount of overall funding provided by the Department for Education, confirmation of geographical coverage with each partnership, and the agreement of an approved partnership operating plan.

Table 1: Indicative allocations to partnerships

| Lead provider UKPRN | Partnership | Lead provider name | Indicative annual allocation 2019-20 and 2020-21 (£) |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|
| 10006840 | Aimhigher West Midlands | The University of Birmingham | 2,444,620 |
| 10007147 | Aspire Higher | University of Hertfordshire | 479,707 |
| 10007166 | Aspire to HE | University of Wolverhampton | 2,260,698 |
| 10007842 | Cumbria Collaborative Outreach Programme | The University of Cumbria | 957,842 |
| 10007851 | Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Collaborative Outreach Programme | University of Derby | 3,303,228 |
| 10007791 | Essex Collaborative Outreach Network | The University of Essex | 2,984,962 |
| 10007149 | FORCE (The University of Hull Federation of Regional Colleges for Engagement) | The University of Hull | 1,704,431 |
| 10007164 | Future Quest | University of the West of England, Bristol | 1,798,404 |
| 10007141 | Future U | University of Central Lancashire | 1,182,342 |
| 10007145 | GROWS (GAP) | University of Gloucestershire | 620,483 |
| 10007795 | Go Higher West Yorkshire | The University of Leeds | 3,371,080 |
| 10004180 | Greater Manchester Higher | Manchester Metropolitan University | 3,767,819 |
| 10005790 | HEPP SY | Sheffield Hallam University | 3,472,074 |
| 10007767 | Higher Horizons+ | University of Keele | 2,811,235 |

| | | | |
|----------|---|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 10007713 | Higher York | York St John University | 633,556 |
| 10007150 | Kent and Medway Collaborative Outreach Programme | The University of Kent | 2,272,614 |
| 10007811 | LiNC Higher | Bishop Grosseteste University | 1,163,920 |
| 10003678 | London NCOP | Kingston University | 1,896,203 |
| 10006842 | Merseyside Collaborative Outreach Programme | The University of Liverpool | 1,578,815 |
| 10007788 | Network for East Anglian Collaborative Outreach (NEACO) | University of Cambridge | 4,496,980 |
| 10007801 | Next Steps South West (formerly SWNCOP) | University of Plymouth | 2,757,098 |
| 10007799 | North East Collaborative Outreach Programme | University of Newcastle upon Tyne | 3,650,228 |
| 10007796 | Pathways | The University of Leicester | 1,495,219 |
| 10007158 | Southern Universities Network | University of Southampton | 3,435,740 |
| 10004930 | Study Higher | Oxford Brookes University | 1,899,303 |
| 10000886 | Sussex Learning Network | University of Brighton | 1,952,376 |
| 10007160 | The Higher Education Outreach Network (HEON) | The University of Surrey | 552,702 |
| 10007163 | Think Higher | The University of Warwick | 411,028 |
| 10007850 | Wessex Inspiration Network | The University of Bath | 645,293 |
| | Total | | 60,000,000 |

Proposed geographic coverage

Map indicating the proposed geographic coverage of the 29 NCOP partnerships. Indicates the wards identified for targeted outreach and the wider geographies allocated to each outreach hub. These may be subject to change as geographical coverage is confirmed with each partnership.

| NCOP Partnership | | |
|--|---|--|
| ■ Aimhigher West Midlands | ■ Greater Manchester Higher | ■ Next Steps South West (formerly SWNCOP) |
| ■ Aspire Higher | ■ GROWS (GAP) | ■ North East Collaborative Outreach Programme |
| ■ Aspire to HE | ■ HEPP SY | ■ Pathways |
| ■ Cumbria Collaborative Outreach Programme | ■ Higher Horizons* | ■ Southern Universities Network |
| ■ Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Collaborative Outreach | ■ Higher York | ■ Study Higher |
| ■ Essex Collaborative Outreach Network | ■ Kent and Medway Collaborative Outreach Programme | ■ Sussex Learning Network |
| ■ FORCE (The University of Hull Federation of Regional ... | ■ LINC Higher | ■ The Higher Education Outreach Network (HEON) |
| ■ Future Quest | ■ London NCOP | ■ Think Higher |
| ■ Future U | ■ Merseyside Collaborative Outreach Programme | ■ Wessex Inspiration Network |
| ■ Go Higher West Yorkshire | ■ Network for East Anglian Collaborative Outreach (NEA... | |

