

6 September 2004

JISC Circular 7/04

Circular for Regional eLearning Pilot Projects around Distributed eLearning

To: Heads of Higher Education Institutions funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)

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Learning Resource Managers
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HE Regional Associations
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HE Academy and Subject Centre Managers
Aimhigher Partnership Regional Leads
Regional Development Agency Managers for Progression, eLearning, and Partnerships
Association of Colleges Regional Representatives
Learning and Skills Council Regional Directors
Sector Skills Development Agencies
New Technology Institutes
Open University Regions
Regional Museums, Libraries and Archives Councils

Introduction

- 1 This circular invites funding proposals to pilot eLearning tools and systems to support lifelong learners and facilitate widening participation. Proposals will come from partnerships of learning organisations led by a higher education (HE) institution in England. Projects will start between January and April 2005 and run until 31 March 2006.
- 2 Total funding of £3.6 million is available for this work, with up to £350,000 available for a pilot(s) in each English region. More funding may be available where proposals can demonstrate that the region faces particular challenges.
- 3 The deadline for receipt of proposals is 12 noon on Monday 15 November 2004. Projects should start before 1 April 2005. Interested parties are invited to town meetings which are being held in each region. It is hoped that these meetings will provide a forum for discussion of the call, the bidding process and the regional priorities, and enable institutions to discuss project ideas with potential partners. For further information, and to reserve a place, please see:
www.jisc.ac.uk/regionaltownmeetings.html
- 4 This circular is supported by a briefing document, which will be made available on the Distributed eLearning strand page on the JISC website at www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded_documents/delpilots_briefing.doc. This briefing document outlines the technical approach JISC wishes projects to adopt, and provides information on current and previous projects and initiatives of relevance to the current call.

Background

eLearning Programme – Distributed eLearning strand

- 5 Distributed eLearning is the effective use of technology to assist learners to access, piece together and manage the learning they do throughout their life, in a range of institutional, informal and work-based settings.
- 6 The Distributed eLearning strand of the eLearning Programme has been funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to facilitate lifelong learning and wider participation in HE by providing learners with:
 - A more seamless learning experience
 - Better learning tools
 - Easier access to personal learning information such as portfolios
 - Access to greater quantities of quality-assured learning materials

Teachers will also benefit from guidance on how to use eLearning resources within appropriate systems.

- 7 JISC's eLearning Programme aims to identify how eLearning might facilitate learning and to advise on its implementation. It focuses on four areas: eLearning and pedagogy; technical frameworks for eLearning; innovative use of eLearning; and distributed eLearning. The Distributed eLearning strand has emerged through a desire to move eLearning into the mainstream of learning and teaching practice, and to reflect the growing regional aspect to HE.
- 8 The aims of the Distributed eLearning strand are:
 - To develop models to show how local, regional and national systems will work together to provide coherent access to eLearning resources
 - To establish regional pilots to evaluate the integrated use of eLearning systems, tools, repositories, and content to support widening participation and lifelong learning
 - To extend the generic eLearning technical framework for use at regional level, and develop national services to support region use, eg repositories and question banks
 - To develop tools for teachers and learners to support lifelong learning, and to develop content to populate the repositories and question banks
 - To develop practical guidelines for implementing eSystems and sharing eLearning content to support widening participation and regional partnerships

A strategic overview of the Distributed eLearning strand is available on the JISC website at: www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded_documents/eDistributed-strategic-overview.doc.

Related programmes and initiatives

- 9 The Regional eLearning Pilots will build on previous and current JISC development programmes in Managed Learning Environments (MLEs) for Lifelong Learning, eLearning and the Integrated Information Environment. The pilots will also build on existing initiatives such as the Aimhigher Partnerships and the Lifelong Learning

Networks (see below). Further information on the outcomes of these programmes/initiatives and the tools and ideas that could be explored through the regional pilots is available in the support briefing at:
www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded_documents/delpilots_briefing.doc.

HEFCE's regional initiatives

- 10 HEFCE works in partnership in regions, sub-regions and areas in order to deliver its national strategic objectives. It recognises the significant synergies between its work and that of Regional Development Agencies, Government Offices and Higher Education Regional Associations (HERAs), and seeks to build on these.
- 11 Progression and widening participation are particularly amenable to being considered at the sub-national level. HEFCE acknowledges the importance of local and regional partnerships between schools and sixth-form colleges, further education (FE) colleges, HE institutions and others. The Council therefore funds the Aimhigher programme, together with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and is working with the LSC and the DfES to develop a Joint Progression Strategy, to encourage progression (particularly from vocational routes) into HE. This includes piloting lifelong learning partnerships, which will provide a well-defined local route into HE.
- 12 HEFCE, the Learning and Skills Council and DfES are currently exploring the scope for developing Lifelong Learning Networks in individual regions. These are envisaged as groups of institutions, including HE institutions and FE colleges, that come together across a city, area or region to offer new progression opportunities for vocational learners. HEFCE is currently engaged in consultation on these networks with HE institutions, FE colleges and other interested bodies.

Aims and objectives of the distributed eLearning regional pilots

- 13 The aim of the regional pilot projects is to explore the use of eLearning systems and tools across a number of institutions within a region to facilitate wider participation in HE and provide better opportunities for lifelong learners.
- 14 The objectives of the regional pilot projects are:
 - To facilitate wider participation in HE and provide better opportunities for lifelong learners within a region through the provision of:
 - Regional lifelong learner records and other mechanisms to facilitate progression between institutions
 - Shared learning resources or services across institutions
 - Systems which deliver tools and information from a range of sources to the learner at home or in the workplace
 - To explore how eLearning systems, tools and resources can be used cross-institutionally within a region
 - To identify the issues which need to be addressed in order to offer regional, cross-institutional eLearning systems and services

Project themes

- 15 Proposals are invited from institutions collaborating within a region to pilot eLearning tools and services to facilitate wider participation in HE and provide better opportunities for lifelong learners. Proposals should be focused on the following themes:

- Theme 1: Facilitating progression
- Theme 2: Collaborative teaching and sharing of resources across institutions
- Theme 3: Supporting the independent lifelong learner

These are outlined in more detail below. Proposals which address more than one of the themes are welcomed, but must make clear which theme is addressed by each piece of proposed work.

- 16 Each proposal should consist of a regional collaboration of HE institutions, FE colleges and other learning organisations. HE Academy Subject Centres should be included as appropriate.
- 17 Proposals should build on existing partnerships and collaborative eLearning developments. Proposals should not seek to undertake extensive research or development projects as the focus of this call is on practical demonstration pilots of distributed eLearning across regions. Proposals should be supported by demonstrable commitment to further development of the project beyond April 2006.
- 18 Proposals which will implement aspects of eLearning to support the emerging Lifelong Learning Networks in a region are welcomed.

Theme 1: Facilitating progression

- 19 Under this theme we are looking for pilots which make it easier and more straightforward for learners from a wide range of backgrounds to find out about, apply for, and access HE. Pilots may also wish to support progression from HE into further study or employment. This could be achieved by providing:
 - A lifelong record of learner information which supports learner transition to HE or into employment. This record could also be linked to credit accumulation and transfer records
 - Services to assist personal development such as personal development planning, electronic application or enquiry to HE and the construction of online portfolios
 - Administrative systems and services which facilitate the integration of HE and work-based learning
 - Administrative systems and services which facilitate learner enrolment and progression on courses that are taught collaboratively between FE colleges and HE institutions, or which are taught in FE and accredited by an HE institution

Theme 2: Collaborative teaching and sharing of resources across institutions

- 20 Under this theme we are looking for pilots that extend the range of learning opportunities and learning materials available to learners by sharing learning resources or other learning services across institutions. This could be used to support:
 - The delivery of shared courses which are taught across more than one institution, such as foundation degrees
 - The delivery of specialised modules or lessons which have been developed at one institution and are delivered as part of courses taught at other institutions
 - The delivery of courses or modules on which students at two or more institutions collaborate on shared projects or other work

- Collaboration between staff at different institutions on tasks to do with the development and authoring of shared learning resources or modules
 - The adaptation and reuse within an institution of learning resources developed at another institution
 - The sharing of questions and tests across institutions, using a question item bank and brokerage service
- 21 These pilots may wish to collaborate with relevant HE Academy Subject Centres who are also funded under this programme to explore sharing and reuse of learning resources.
- 22 Pilot projects are expected to engage in the sharing of existing content as far as possible; large-scale content authoring is not covered by this call.

Theme 3: Supporting the independent lifelong learner

- 23 Under this theme we are looking for pilots that use eLearning technology to enable learners to access resources and manage all their learning in one place. This may include learning delivered by one or more institution, independent study, informal non-accredited learning and work-based learning. A 'personal learning environment' such as this contrasts with many of the learning environments currently in use, which provide learners with resources and learning management tools that relate to their study at a single institution.
- 24 Examples of activities which learners may want to carry out in a learning environment like this include:
- Finding out about courses, modules and classes
 - Negotiating learning programmes and activities with institutions/departments/teachers
 - Engaging in learning and other related activities including:
 - Planning learning
 - Task and time management
 - Maintaining personal contacts information
 - Communicating and collaborating with tutors, peers and experts
 - Accessing resources (learning activities, learning content, learning services, journals, research data)
 - Engaging in learning activities
 - Carrying out assignments
 - Assessing progress or attainment
 - Reflecting on learning
 - Maintaining a record of learning plans, activities, achievements and qualifications

Deliverables

- 25 The deliverables of these pilot projects are:
- Piloting of systems, tools, repositories and resources across institutions within a region to provide demonstrable examples of distributed eLearning
 - An evaluation report, analysing areas in which the project has been more and less successful, highlighting the implications and challenges of implementing distributed eLearning on a regional scale
 - Illustration of the achievements of the regional pilot. This may include:

- Use cases and scenarios describing users' interactions with the system
- Case studies of the provision of one or more aspect or context of distributed eLearning
- Technical specifications of currently under-specified areas of the eLearning Framework
- An exploration of the implications, benefits and opportunities of distributed eLearning

Technologies which should be used

- 26 Projects should build on developments in at least one of the following areas of technology, which have been explored by current and past JISC programmes. For further information on these technologies, please see the briefing document which accompanies this circular.

Access management

- 27 JISC has been exploring the use of Shibboleth technology to facilitate access management: the complicated systems of authentication, rights and permissions which permit individual staff and students to access and share a wide range of resources over the web. The goal of this work is to provide a common system which removes the need for users to obtain and remember usernames and passwords for each resource bank or learning environment. Shibboleth is an open-source, standards-based system which enables organisations such as universities and colleges to exchange information about their users in a secure manner.

eLearning Framework

- 28 The eLearning Framework aims to define and provide technical standards for a large number of services so that these can be built individually as discrete units and then combined together into a larger system. The services map onto identifiable functions within teaching and learning. For example, assessment or group management might be defined as individual services within the framework, and could be used together (with other underlying services) to manage and deliver assessments to groups of students. This focus on defining, building and combining small chunks rather than building a large monolithic super-system is known as a service-oriented approach.

Tools for content sharing

- 29 A number of tools which make it easier for staff and institutions to share learning materials have been developed under the Exchange for Learning (X4L) Programme. JORUM is a learning object repository, which stores and provides searchable access to learning objects: small, self-contained eLearning resources which support a single learning objective. RELOAD 'packages' learning objects so that they can be used in a wide range of learning management systems. TOIA enables teachers to create online assessments which can be delivered by a range of different systems.

Tools for learners and teachers

- 30 A number of development projects to create tools for learners and teachers are beginning in September 2004. These projects mainly use a broadly service-oriented approach. Examples of tools under development include an online annotation tool, ePortfolio and personal development planning tools, and tools for online academic argument. These development projects will finish at the end of March 2005.

Lifelong learner records

- 31 The MLEs for Lifelong Learning Programme has funded the development of demonstrator projects which support the lifelong learner in moving through education, training and the workplace within a region. Technical developments from the

programme include a mechanism for automatic transfer of student data between the records systems of different institutions, and the definition of learner profiles.

Working within the eLearning Framework

- 32 In order to facilitate and support interoperability, we would like projects to work within the eLearning Framework and to adopt a service-oriented approach, using open standards and specifications (see above). However, JISC recognises that these pilot projects are functioning in the real world and must aim to deliver benefits to learners within the limited timescale available. It is therefore accepted that a pragmatic approach must be taken, but this should aim to work within a service-oriented approach and the eLearning Framework where practicable. For an example of a project which has done this, see the LeAP Project Case Study on implementing web services in an education environment from the Tasmanian Department of Education. This case study is available at:
www.education.tas.gov.au/admin/ict/projects/imsdoecasestudy/default.htm
- 33 Where possible, projects should use open-source software, though it is recognised that meeting the needs of learners and institutions within an established context may require the use of some proprietary systems which are already in place.

Building on current projects

- 34 Projects may wish to pilot the most fully-featured and innovative tools and applications available within the framework at the time of project initiation, rather than being tied to tools already in existence at the time of authoring the proposal. In order for this to happen, proposals should indicate which tools currently under development within the eLearning programme the project would like to use, even if that development is at an early stage. The Distributed eLearning team at JISC will then work with successful projects to develop a detailed technical plan once the outcomes of these development projects are known.

Priority areas for development

- 35 The town meetings (see below) will be used to identify priority areas for development in each region or sub-region. These may be defined in terms of targeting: groups of learners (geographic, demographic or other groups); key subject or skills areas; or the transition between certain types of institution or methods of learning. Once decided, these will be published on the JISC website. Bidders should indicate clearly how their proposal meets the priorities that have been agreed for their region.

Accessibility Issues

- 36 In line with Government legislation and social exclusion initiatives, JISC is committed to providing resources that are accessible to a diverse range of users. In order to achieve this, all software and IT resources including the project website should meet good practice standards and guidelines pertaining to the media in which they are produced.
- 37 Advice and recommendations for ensuring that IT-based systems, tools and resources are accessible by all can be found in the resource section of the Technology for Disabilities Service (TechDis, www.techdis.ac.uk/). Further advice and consultancy is available from the TechDis Centre itself.

Terms and conditions of grant

- 38 As a general rule, JISC does not seek to retain intellectual property rights (IPR) in the project deliverables created as part of its programmes. However, funding is always made available on the condition that project outputs are made available, free at the point of use, to the UK FE and HE community in perpetuity, and that these may be disseminated widely in partnership with JISC.
- 39 In the case of any software development carried out as part of these pilots, it is extremely desirable that any software components of the deliverables are released

under appropriate open-source licences to ensure that they can also be freely shared with organisations and communities with which JISC has close working arrangements. All software that is developed will be expected to be made available free of charge to the education community in perpetuity and all code developed will be made available through open-source models. Projects should license outputs under an Open Source Agreement that promotes their reuse (eg LGPL for data libraries, GPL for applications). For information on these licences, see: www.gnu.org/licenses/licenses.html

- 40 It is intended that the deliverables created as part of this programme will, as appropriate, be deployed by JISC as part of a long-term strategy for providing access to community resources and, where this is possible, arrangements for archiving of deliverables will be set in place. However, wherever possible, projects will be encouraged to set in place mechanisms to ensure the continued availability and currency of deliverables after funding has ended. In the majority of cases JISC will not be able to commit to the long-term delivery or maintenance of project outputs after the end of the programme, though guidance will be given about opportunities for continuation funding and embedding within institutions.
- 41 JISC will undertake programme-level evaluation in partnership with the funded projects, which will be required to cooperate with the programme evaluation. Each project will be required to build in project-specific evaluation and (where appropriate, eg for software deliverables) testing activities in its project planning. The scale and nature of this evaluation and testing will naturally be dependent on the size and scale of project activity, and should be appropriate to programme aims.
- 42 Institutions should note that staff may be required to spend limited amounts of time on programme-related activities in the year following the end of the funding period. This time might be needed for cooperation with the programme evaluation, or for writing reports or providing input to JISC publications. It is expected that this staff time should be provided as an institutional contribution to the project and will not be additionally funded by JISC.
- 43 JISC will draw up an overarching dissemination strategy in partnership with the projects and other JISC initiatives. However, projects will be expected to engage in project-specific dissemination to the post-16 education sector as appropriate (see paragraphs on Public relations).
- 44 JISC will look for phased outcomes as the projects progress. The nature of the project outputs will be expected to:
 - Provide a lasting benefit to the community
 - Have a scale and nature concomitant with the level of funding provided
 - Contribute to achieving JISC's strategic aims. The JISC Strategy can be viewed at: www.jisc.ac.uk/strategy_0406.html
- 45 Projects will be expected to adopt the JISC programme management guidelines (available at www.jisc.ac.uk/proj_manguide.html). These include IPR and copyright guidance, adherence to good project management practices, regular reporting and participation of projects in steering committees. A Programme Manager based in the JISC Development Team will provide management support to projects.

Public Relations

- 46 JISC endeavours to ensure that a coherent message is given to the community covering the breadth and depth of its activities. Projects must adhere to JISC PR Guidelines. These include advice on developing publicity materials and producing press releases, and will be issued to funded projects.
- 47 Each project must create a web page or website to explain the project aims and objectives and to disseminate information about project activities and results. The

Project Management Guidelines give guidance on the scope, content and design of websites. Where appropriate, project deliverables and core project documents may be posted on the website. As the project website is primarily a dissemination vehicle, deliverables and documents posted are considered to be copies, and the masters will be deposited in the appropriate JISC repository. The lead institution or one of its partners must agree to host the website on their server for a minimum of 3 years after the end of the project and to assist JISC in archiving it subsequently.

Timetable

- 48 Proposals must be submitted by 12.00 noon on Monday 15 November 2004. Projects are expected to start between January and April 2005, and run until the end of March 2006. An interim report will be required at the end of September 2005, and the final report at the end of March 2006.
- 49 The key stages during the bidding process are as follows:
- Before 15 September: register for the appropriate town meeting on the JISC website (see www.jisc.ac.uk/regionaltownmeetings.html)
 - 23 September onwards: attend appropriate town meeting to receive further information on the bidding process and to meet prospective collaborators from other institutions
 - After 15 October: check the JISC website for the priority areas and bidding process for your region, which will have been decided on following discussion at the town meeting
 - By 15 November: submit proposal in line with the arrangements for your region
 - By mid-December: successful bidders will be notified
 - January 2005: work with JISC to develop a detailed technical plan
 - January–April 2005: start project

Eligibility

- 50 Proposals are invited from regional collaborations of HE institutions, FE colleges and other learning organisations as appropriate, including relevant HE Academy Subject Centres. The funds for this programme have been made available by the HEFCE, therefore the lead institution in each consortium must be an HE institution funded by the HEFCE. A list of these institutions is available on the HEFCE website at: www.hefce.ac.uk/unicoll/HE

Funding available

- 51 Funding of £350,000 per region is available to pilot regional eLearning tools and services that address strategic targets for widening participation and lifelong learning in HE in England. Additional funding may be allocated where higher population or regional geography requires more resources. The bidding model adopted by the HERA in each region will determine the number of bids per region which are likely to be funded.
- 52 It is envisaged that additional funding of £40,000 per project will be available for pilots wishing to explore the use of Shibboleth technology for access management. This will be confirmed at the regional town meetings (see below). If you wish to take advantage of this, please clearly describe how you envisage using Shibboleth within your proposal and mark expenditure on this effort separately within your budget. Information on Shibboleth technology and how it might be used in the pilots is available in the briefing document.

Briefing arrangements

- 53 Town meetings have been organised in each of the nine English regions, to provide further information on this call and to discuss regional priorities and allow institutions to identify potential partners. Each meeting will consist of a briefing on this circular and the regional context in the morning. This will be followed by a workshop at which institutions will be invited to discuss options for regional pilots and identify priority themes and areas of work for each region or sub-region.
- 54 Further information on the town meetings, and a booking form for each, is available on the JISC website at:
www.jisc.ac.uk/regionaltownmeetings.html

Regional coordination of bids

- 55 The HERAs have been invited to coordinate bids to ensure proposals are complementary within a region and appropriate to the regional priorities. How this coordination will work will be decided by the HERA in discussion with the institutions within a region. The regional town meetings will be used to discuss the coordination of bids. The HERA could choose to:
- Organise one regional proposal which has wide representation
 - Organise two or more regional proposals which address one or more of the themes above
 - Organise several sub-regional proposals which address one or more of the themes
 - Allow competitive bidding across the entire region with no central organisation, but suggest themes and priorities which will be considered by the selection panel
- 56 By mid-October, decisions will be reached on how bids in each region will be coordinated. These will be published on the JISC website, and all proposals will be expected to conform with the bidding arrangements decided for their region.
- 57 Partnerships of institutions wishing to be involved in a regional bid should contact their HERA. A list of HERAs is available from the HEFCE website at:
www.hefce.ac.uk/partners/consortia/regional.htm

Bidding process

- 58 Proposals of no more than ten pages of A4 (plus appendices), typeset in Arial or a similar font at 10 point size, should be submitted both as a single-sided, unbound **hardcopy**, and as an **electronic copy** via email. Both copies **must** arrive by the deadline. Proposals **must** also include the completed cover sheet at Appendix A to this invitation to tender, in addition to the ten-page maximum bid. They must also include a letter of support from an authorised senior manager from each partner.
- 59 Proposals must be received no later than **12 noon on Monday 15 November 2004**. Faxed or late proposals **will not be accepted**. Both email and hardcopy proposals should be sent to:

Faye Gardiner, JISC Executive, Northavon House, Coldharbour Lane, Bristol, BS16 1QD. Tel: 0117 931 7427. Email: f.gardiner@jisc.ac.uk

Structure of proposals

- 60 The content of the proposals should reflect the evaluation criteria set out below. To assist in the assessment of all proposals against a common baseline, proposals should be structured as follows:

Introduction – A brief outline of the nature of the work to be undertaken, the length of the project, the proposed start date and a summary of how the project will contribute to the programme.

Consortium details – A brief outline of how the partner institutions are planning to work together to deliver the project, including information on which areas of work each will carry out, how these will be coordinated, and the anticipated benefits for students of each institution.

Project description – A description of the intended project plan, timetable and deliverables, risks, and an explanation of how the project outcomes will be of value to the JISC community.

Bidders should also:

- State how the proposed systems and services meet the regional priorities identified at the town meeting, showing how these will contribute to widening participation, progression and the benefit of lifelong learners
- Demonstrate an understanding of a service-oriented approach and the eLearning Framework, and the ability to implement solutions within this approach
- Include use cases or scenarios that articulate the learning and/or teaching context
- State their position regarding IPR and sustainability issues

Budget – A summary of the proposed budget, which in broad outline identifies how funds will be spent over the life of the project. Staff costs, equipment and consumables, travel and subsistence (if applicable), dissemination, evaluation and other costs should be itemised and an indication of any institutional contributions (eg overheads, equipment, staff time) should also be provided. If you wish to take advantage of the additional funds available for using Shibboleth, please mark expenditure on this effort separately within your budget.

Key personnel – Names and brief career details of staff expected to contribute to the project, including qualifications and experience in the area of work proposed and evidence of any projects of a similar nature successfully completed.

Contact – Contact details for one named individual for correspondence concerning the proposal (please include name, position, institution, email address, postal address, and telephone and fax numbers).

- 61 Proposers are encouraged to produce evidence of the strength of the consortium, such as partnership agreements, strategic plans, working papers etc. These may be included as appendices to the proposal and need not be counted within the ten-page limit.
- 62 In regions in which the HERA has decided to coordinate bids, proposals must also include a letter from the HERA confirming its support for the proposal. This should be included in the appendices.

Evaluation Criteria for Proposals

- 64 Proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Quality of proposal and work plan – the extent to which the proposal addresses the issues and demands outlined in the call, and shows innovation as appropriate. The quality of the proposal will be assessed on the basis of the deliverables identified and the evidence provided of how these will be achieved including an assessment of the risks. Included under this criterion will also be the extent to which the proposal demonstrates an understanding of a service-oriented approach and the eLearning Framework, and the ability to implement solutions within this approach. (20%)

Impact – the extent to which the project outcomes meet an identified regional need and will be of overall value to the regional HE, FE and work-based learning communities, and the extent to which they will be useful to the national post-16 learning community. Included in the assessment under this criterion will be the extent to which the project is scalable to other institutions within the region or across other regions. (20%)

Sustainability – the extent to which the proposal shows a commitment to maintain systems or services developed during the project beyond the funded period, and to continue development. (10%)

Partnership and dissemination – the degree to which the proposal demonstrates an openness and willingness to work in partnership with JISC in forward planning, dissemination and evaluation, and the potential for extended partnership beyond the funding period. (10%)

Value for money – the value of the expected project outcomes vis-à-vis the level of funding requested, taking into account the level of innovation, chance of success and relevance to the target communities. (10%)

Strength of the consortium – evidence of the commitment shown by the consortium partners to the consortium and the proposed project, experience of the partners in working together, and the degree to which the work proposed has wide applicability to learners across the consortium institutions. (15%)

Previous experience of the project team – evidence of the project team's understanding of the technical and/or management issues involved, and of its ability to manage and deliver a successful project, for example through work done to date in the area or in related fields. (15%)

- 65 Notwithstanding the weightings of the evaluation criteria, proposals that fail badly on any one criterion may be rejected, and proposals showing exceptional strength in one or more areas with serious weaknesses in others may be funded. In making awards under this call, JISC will take into account the need for an appropriate, varied and affordable portfolio of projects and partners. It is not, therefore, necessarily the case that the projects with the highest raw scores will be those funded in all instances.
- 66 JISC will consider the proposals and endeavour to notify successful bidders by mid-December 2004 at the latest. Projects should begin between January and April 2005. JISC will expect to work with the selected projects to agree the work plan, the tools to be piloted and the detailed technical plan, and to ensure that the project budget is appropriate and suitably profiled. It may be necessary to negotiate some aspects of the project objectives and content with the project teams in the interest of maximising the expected benefits of the programme as a whole.

Further Information

- 67 Enquiries about the Distributed eLearning strand and this call for regional pilot projects should be addressed to:
- Paul Bailey, Programme Director, JISC Executive, University of Bristol, Beacon House, Queens Road, Bristol, BS8 1QU. Tel: 0117 954 5074 or 07789 721150. Email: p.bailey@jisc.ac.uk
 - Sarah Davies, Programme Manager, JISC Executive, University of Bristol, Beacon House, Queens Road, Bristol, BS8 1QU. Tel: 0117 954 5076 or 07785 518564. Email: sarah.davies@bristol.ac.uk
- 68 General enquiries about the proposal submission process should be sent to:

- Faye Gardiner, JCLT Assistant Secretary, JISC Executive, Northavon House, Coldharbour Lane, Bristol, BS16 1QD. Tel: 0117 931 7111. Email: f.gardiner@jisc.ac.uk

69 Enquiries about the arrangements for the coordination of bids in each region should be sent to the relevant HERA. A list of these associations can be found at:
www.hefce.ac.uk/partners/consortia/regional.htm

JISC Executive
September 2004

Name of lead institution/organisation
Name of proposed project
HEFCE region
Project partners
Full contact details for primary contact Name: Position: Email: Address: Tel: Fax:
Themes addressed by proposal
Regional priority areas addressed by proposal
Are you proposing to act as an early adopter of Shibboleth?
Funding requested from JISC (excluding any Shibboleth activity)
Funding requested for Shibboleth activity
Proposed project start date

Outline project description (approx 100 words)