

[News story: Next phase of multi-million pound college improvement fund launches](#)

More colleges will benefit from a multi-million pound initiative to drive improvements across further education as the second round of the Strategic College Improvement Fund (SCIF) [launches today](#) (6 November).

The Government is transforming technical education in this country, introducing new, gold standard T Levels from 2020 – the technical equivalent to A Levels – and supporting the creation of more high quality apprenticeships.

The SCIF was launched in June 2018 following calls from the sector for a peer-to-peer support programme where stronger colleges help weaker ones to improve. It follows a successful pilot phase, which saw fourteen colleges receive grants totaling over £2million. Outcomes from the pilot showed strong support for the partnership model, and led to colleges reporting that the fund helped build awareness of good practice, fostered mutual learning and enabled rapid action to improve quality.

Alongside the National Leaders of Further Education and National Leaders of Governance programmes, the £15 million SCIF is playing a vital role helping to share best practice, expertise and boost standards so more people can access high quality education and training. Colleges in need of support can apply for funding to work with a stronger ‘partnering’ college to tackle the issues they face and improve quality.

Apprenticeships and Skills Minister Anne Milton said:

Colleges are an extremely important part of our education system, and are absolutely central to our technical education reforms. They play an essential role in making sure people of all ages and backgrounds have the skills they need to get on in life.

I’m thrilled to invite even more colleges to apply for funding from the SCIF. By working together with top colleges, they will get the support they need to make sure their learners get the very best education and training. This will mean more opportunities for people right across the country to access high-quality education and training.

David Corke, Director of Policy at the Association of Colleges, said:

We’ve been working closely with the Government on this initiative and it’s now great to see the development of a peer improvement

programme from a sector capacity and capability point of view. It is important to continue to share best practice and look at ways we can continually drive up quality within the sector.

Sixth Form Colleges Association Chief Executive Bill Watkin said:

The Strategic College Improvement Fund has already made a difference to several colleges and the students who attend them, with its focus on identifying where needs are and how those needs can best be met. The SCIF is a valuable framework that supports the sharing of good practice, ensuring that areas for development can be addressed through collaborative approaches with well-matched partners.

We are delighted that Round 2 has been launched and highly recommend that colleges take this opportunity to work with each other to raise, and sustain, standards across the sector.

Deputy Further Education Commissioner SCIF Lead Teresa Kelly said:

It is very exciting that the SCIF has been taken up so positively by the sector and is proving to be a significant tool for quality improvement in colleges. Through the SCIF many colleges are now harnessing the best practice that exists within the sector and applying proven best practice in order to improve the quality of their offer and provision.

The SCIF is enabling colleges to deep dive into developing and improving practical classroom based teaching techniques that will improve the student experience and ultimately the overall performance of the sector.

The list of successful colleges and their partners from the first application round will be published later this month.