Call for expressions of interest to participate in:

Collaborative Approaches to the Management of e-Learning:

A HEFCE Leadership, Governance and Management Programme (LGM) Project led by JISC infoNet in partnership with JISC Development, the Association for Learning Technology (ALT) and the Higher Education Academy.

An invitation to English HEIs and FE Colleges in direct receipt of HEFCE funds.

Background

HEFCE has provided a total of £38,900 LGM funding to support a project that will identify and promote good practice in the management of ICT to support lifelong learning. The project aims to develop a community of practice based around a series of study visits and a discussion forum. We are looking for expressions of interest from institutions that would like to take part in the project.

Who should be involved?

We would like to involve a core of institutions that give us a range of institutional types/sizes and a reasonable geographic spread but our main emphasis is on finding examples of good practice. The core institutions should be committed to this as an exchange partnership and be prepared to host one visit and send representatives to each of three other visits. We have initial funding for four visits over the next year and will be looking to extend the project pending a successful evaluation of the outcomes.

All English HEIs and FE Colleges in direct receipt of HEFCE funds are welcome to apply.

What are the selection criteria?

We are looking for institutions that can demonstrate good practice in the management of ICT to support lifelong learning. We would like to hear from some institutions that are collaborating with regional (or other) partners or offering Foundation Degrees but that is not the main emphasis of the project. We are interested in the effective use of information systems to support learners but this brings with it a range of issues relating to people, business processes and change so feel free to interpret the brief in a broad sense. If you can answer yes to at least three of the following questions we’d like to hear from you:

- Is this an achievement you and your partners are proud of and feel others can learn from?
- Are your ideas/methods/approaches transferrable to other situations?
- Can you demonstrate practical, transferable results rather than a project outline or work in progress?
- Have you integrated a range of support systems to create some form of ‘Managed Learning Environment’?
- Can you show how the work ties in to your institutional strategy?
- Are you able to explain clearly the costs and benefits of what you are doing?
- Could you convince sceptics that what you have achieved is worthwhile?
- Are you committed to sharing practice and learning from others?
What is the timescale for the project?

We will be arranging a start-up meeting in Newcastle during the second half of July 2005 at which we will review the range of topics of mutual interest, design the format of the visits and plan the remainder of the project. Rough dates for the visits are:

- Visit 1 – autumn 2005
- Visit 2 – early spring 2006
- Visit 3 – late spring 2006
- Visit 4 – summer 2006

We hope to supplement the formal visits with a range of on-line discussions or conferences on topics of interest to the group and there will be a publication on the outcomes of the project prepared during summer 2006.

What are the benefits for participants?

We hope the benefits of the project will include a lot of knock-on effects from collaboration that we can’t yet predict but here are some suggestions:

- The opportunity to ‘showcase’ the good practice going on in your institution.
- The opportunity to learn from others facing similar issues and to obtain the input of a range of ‘critical friends’ to help your own institutional development.
- The opportunity to contribute to a publication.
- Becoming part of a network or Community of Practice that can help support you in future developments.
- Funding of £2,000 to meet the cost of hosting a visit and free travel to other visits.

What do I do next?

If you would like to take part in the project all you need to do is send an email to jiscinfonet@northumbria.ac.uk no later than Friday 20th May and tell us the following:

1. A little bit about your institution (and your collaborative partners if appropriate).
2. Which aspects of your work you would like to showcase.
3. How you think you meet the criteria.
4. Your role in the institution. N.B. If you aren’t a senior manager in your institution we require confirmation from a member of your senior management team that the institution is willing to commit to the project.
5. An indicative list of the job titles and roles of the staff whom you expect to take part in hosting the visit and participating in the visits to other institutions, one of whom should be clearly identified as the institution’s lead contact.
6. Your availability during July 2005 to attend the start up meeting. We will endeavour to select a time and venue that enables you to avoid the necessity of an overnight stay.

We’ll let you know the outcome by 1st June or soon thereafter.