

## **Developing a Strategy of Regional Support for RE: Regional Expression of Interest (EOI) form**

### **Introduction**

This RE Regional Expression of Interest form should be read in conjunction with *Implementing a Strategy of Regional Support for RE*, the report and recommendations agreed by the Religious Education Council (REC), the National Association of Teachers of RE (NATRE) and Culham St Gabriel's Trust (CSTG). The report gives the background to the regional strategy, and is available on the CSTG website at ...,

Networks of RE practitioners in any region of England or Wales will be able to benefit from the regional strategy by expressing an interest in developing their work and by applying for resources to make their developmental ideas possible.

In the summer term of 2014, up to four regional pilots will invited to exemplify the regional strategy. In the academic year 2014-15, subject to evaluation and review of the pilots, practitioners in all regions of England and Wales may be able to use this Expression of Interest (EOI) form to apply for resources to support regional work in RE.

## Background briefing for pilots and applicants

The paper *Implementing a Strategy of Regional Support for RE* identifies the following aims for regional hub activity:

- (a) To create informing, connecting, inspiring and energising regional networks of teachers of RE;
- (b) To promote practical wisdom through two-way engagement between RE research and RE pedagogy, leading to improvement in standards of teaching and learning in RE;
- (c) To build capacity of RE leadership locally, regionally and nationally, by developing confidence, expertise and vision.

The paper is clear that regional hubs are definitely not intended to be a new organisation and should not become a new bureaucratic structure.

Pilots and applicants might also find it useful to bear in mind the following practical points that regional networks could think about and address:

- The central focus of regional activity needs to be the RE teacher's needs and intentions in improving teaching and learning.
- Hubs can be started and maintained by any RE partner but need a leader whose time to coordinate the activity is identified, recognised and paid for – a professional partner to 'hold the ring'.
- Hubs can be as small or large as they like. There is no 'right' size. It might help to think of regions as hubs, subdivided into smaller action research sets or action learning networks. Hubs and sets can be territorial but they can also link teachers in schools that are statistical neighbours, members of an academy consortium, partners with the same university, or RE teachers living in the same area.
- Linking teachers locally and nationally through carefully integrated use of social media, such as #Teachmeets, @reonline\_tweets, @rethinkREnow and #REchatuk can support and build insights.
- The difference that hubs can make to teachers' capacity could be crucial. Hubs can transcend discussions about 'what works in the classroom' and get to 'why it works' and 'how it can work better'. The action research element of critical questioning and quality assurance can be had through university/school interaction.
- Pedagogical understanding and commitment in teachers needs openness and inclusivity. Hubs may decide to focus on a particular pedagogical model offered by a nearby university; but it is also good to encourage teachers to be versatile pedagogically, and to keep developing their repertoire of different pedagogical models.

The paper *Implementing a Strategy of Regional Support for RE* also contains two regional 'scenarios' which give an idea of the diversity of approaches that can be used. On its final

page, in Appendix 5, the paper offers a conceptual diagram of the possible ingredients of regional hub activity.

### **Before you express an interest in funding**

Before applying for resources to help develop a regional strategy for RE, it is strongly advised that applicants take the following three steps:

1. Read the paper *Implementing a Strategy of Regional Support for RE* in order to gain a strong shared understanding of the purpose of regional hubs.
2. Contact CSTG Consultants on regional strategy, Alan Brine on [alan@cstg.org.uk](mailto:alan@cstg.org.uk) or Mary Myatt on [mary@cstg.org.uk](mailto:mary@cstg.org.uk) , to organise a meeting or conversation that will help you with your aims.
3. Reflect on the three developmental questions:
  - a. What am I/are we trying to achieve for the improvement of RE?
  - b. How will I/we organise the improvement, and who are the strongest regional partners to work with?
  - c. What are the success measures?

### **Expression of interest in funding (EOI)**

After taking the three steps identified above, please complete this brief EOI form to express an interest in benefiting from Culham St Gabriel’s resources to support regional development. Please note, the upper limit for each pilot is £2,000. Projects which require more substantial funding should use the normal individual or corporate grant application process.

Region:
Your name and professional position:
Your contact details:
If successful, the details on the person or organisation to whom the funding should be sent:
In RE terms, I would describe my region as (delete as appropriate):

- An area where much is already happening and is already coordinated
- An area where much is already happening but could be better joined up
- An area where more needs to happen

Title and brief description of your proposed regional activity for improving RE (maximum 100 words):

Next, please complete the questions below, making use of your conversations with CSTG consultants and your reflections on the three developmental questions.

Please write up to 200 words in answer to each of the following three developmental questions:

What am I/are we trying to achieve for the improvement of RE?

How will I/we organise the improvement, and who are the strongest regional partners (individuals, schools, networks or organisations) to work with?

What are the success measures?

Please identify the timescale for your activity.

Starting date:

Finishing date:

Please identify the cost of the activity up to a maximum of £2,000, and break the cost down into specific actions.

Once you have completed this EOI form, please send it by email to one of the CSTG consultants, Mary Myatt [mary@cstg.org.uk](mailto:mary@cstg.org.uk) or Alan Brine [alan@cstg.org.uk](mailto:alan@cstg.org.uk) . The trust will then decide on your EOI and respond to it as rapidly as possible.