



LEARNING LANGUAGE,  
MAKING CHANGE

# PROPOSAL FOR STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

ENGLISH FOR ACTION

Learning Language, Making Change



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

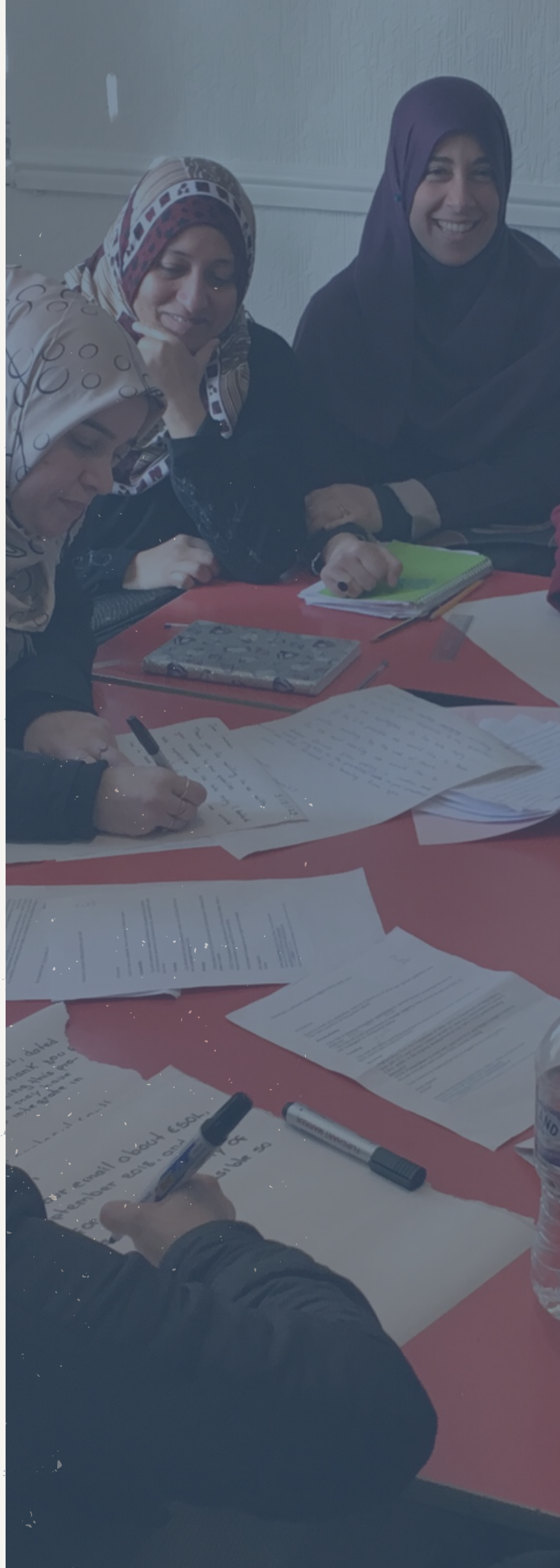
For the last 15 years, **English for Action** have run free English language courses for adult migrants and refugees in community locations across London. We want to be part of a city where migrants can thrive, and language is not a barrier to people realising their potential.

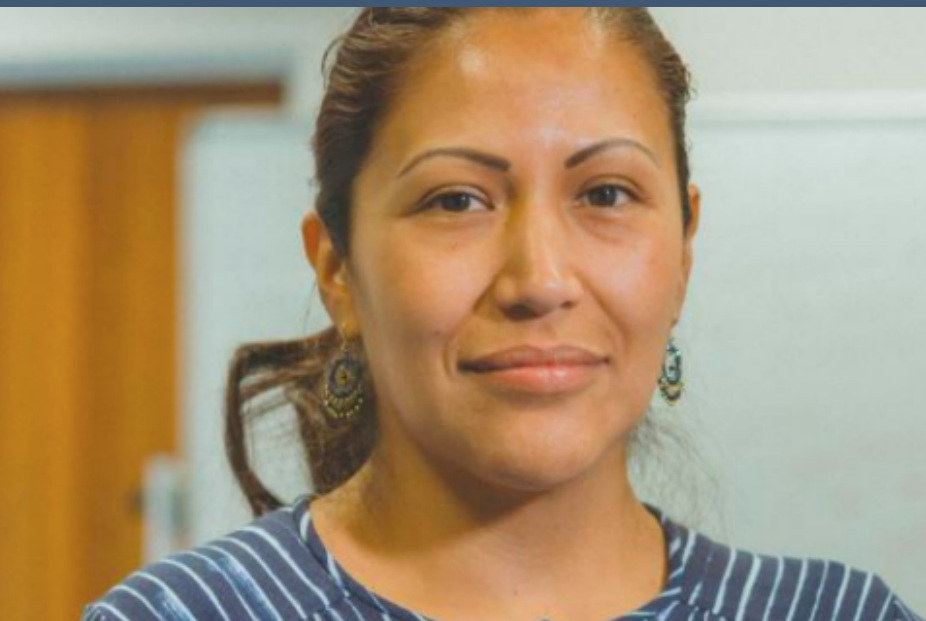
**We believe language and education give us the power to change our lives.**

We are seeking to develop strategic partnerships with organisations that show a clear commitment to building stronger and more inclusive communities.

Our volunteer programme is a fulfilling opportunity to support migrants and refugees in the local communities in which we currently work. With multiple ways to get involved, there is something for every volunteer. Being part of this programme will bring people from different backgrounds together, to build relationships with others who live and work in the same area. **Now is a time when people are seeking opportunities to feel connected, and we can provide that for your employees.**

The cost of this proposal is £16,000 for one year. This covers management of the partnership, training and ongoing support for volunteers, and evaluation at the end of the year to plan for the future together.





"So many doors can be opened for you if you know English. This country is full of opportunities - you just need to find the right way to take them."

- Veronica, English for Action

## BACKGROUND

English for Action currently provide free ESOL classes to **485 students a week** across **34 different online classes and community locations**, such as schools and children's centres. For the last two years, we've been making the most of needing to teach online. We've provided people with tech devices so they can keep on learning, and training in how to use them.

People leave our classes with improved English and qualifications, increased confidence, new friends in their area and better knowledge of the services, facilities and support available to them.

We teach **people from over 30 different countries**, including Somalia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iraq, Sierra Leone, Colombia, Ecuador and Poland. We celebrate languages in class, and students are encouraged to speak in their mother tongue if it helps them learn. Most of our students are women with young children, or older migrants, and many either don't work or earn less than the London living wage. They all face barriers to accessing mainstream language support. This is often because they don't have the 'right' immigration status, or can't afford the cost of childcare while they study.

We also support our students to make positive changes in their lives and communities. Recently, we've helped one student convert her physiotherapy qualifications so she can now practise in the UK. One class in Tower Hamlets wanted to learn to ride bicycles, and so we organised bike riding lessons in Victoria Park. We hold film clubs, yoga sessions, conversation clubs, sessions on workers' rights and more. Our activities are creative and flexible to the students' needs.

## OUR YEAR



**485 STUDENTS A WEEK**



**34 ENGLISH CLASSES PER WEEK**



**12 CRECHES**



**7 BOROUGHES OF LONDON**



**95% OF STUDENTS IMPROVED THEIR ENGLISH**



**47% ACCESSED ESOL FOR THE FIRST TIME**



# VERONICA'S STORY

Coming to London had been a dream of mine since I was 13 years old. But when I came here I knew no English - I was saying 'good morning' even if it was evening! It's not easy coming to a country where you don't speak the language because it is important for everything - for communicating with other people, to find better jobs, even to go to the shop.

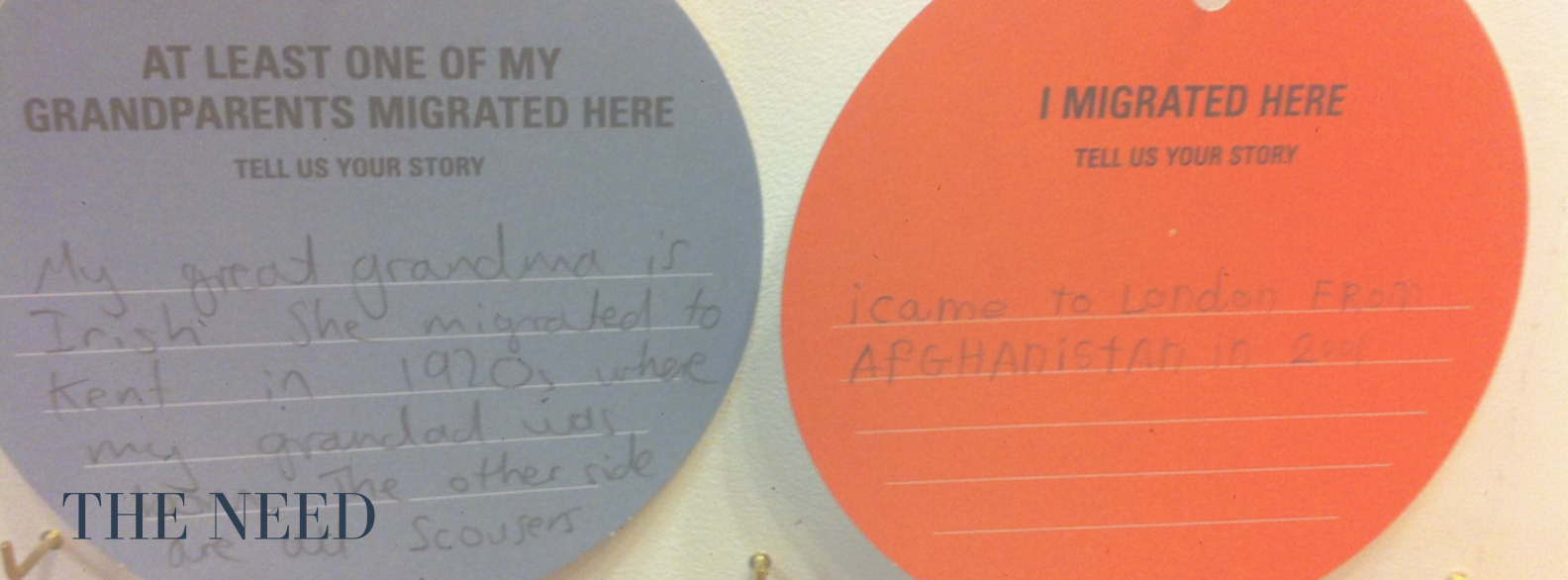
I was first introduced to English for Action (EFA) when my daughter started school and I was told about free English classes with a creche for babies. I didn't have enough money to pay to have anyone look after my son while my daughter was in school - so having him sit in a buggy next to me during the class helped me a lot. To be honest, I think that was the best opportunity I had in my life here.

**"At EFA, the teacher has the time and patience to spend 10,15 minutes with you after class. They have the passion to teach people."**

It's a nice environment to study there. It's friendly and fun and the teachers are dedicated. At other courses, you finish a lesson and you have to leave right away. But sometimes you have doubts or questions. I've been able to study with the same teacher - he's maybe missed three classes all these years! If he can go with you to an appointment, he will go with you.

EFA has also helped me with my business. Four years ago, my husband and I decided we wanted to be more independent and we started a cleaning company. But I felt stuck trying to find a way to expand the business and went to my EFA teacher because I thought he could help. He told me about a charity that runs a free course to support people who have a business idea and I took that and it was amazing. We now have seven staff and hope to continue to expand the company. Our dream is to also give jobs to people new to London. Because people come here, and they don't know where to start. That is what happened to me. It's hard to find a job if you don't know how to start or speak the language. I think so many doors can be opened for you if you know English.





## THE NEED

The main barrier our students identify to improving their lives and the lives of their children is a lack of English. Without good English they can't access healthcare, support their children's education, or improve their housing. They are unable to get jobs befitting their professional experience and skills, which in turn would provide a stable income and pull them out of poverty. Most of our employed students work for low pay with anti-social hours as cleaners or in catering, but many were in highly skilled professions before moving to the UK. Changing countries and learning a new language can mean that social networks and local knowledge needs to be built up again.

## THE VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMME

A range of exciting online Learning and Development opportunities for employees to volunteer, with flexibility to fit around work schedules. Support and training provided.

- **Longer term volunteering opportunities** where employees are paired with small groups of students who want extra support (in groups of threes/fours). This could be a pairing based on them speaking the same mother-tongue to support with comprehension and homework, or higher level students who want some 1-1 conversation sessions to practice, all done online.
- **Drop in opportunities:** Employees can drop into our English classes, the weekly online conversation club we run, or they can plan some skills sharing such as running a one-off meditation session or providing someone with basic tech support - training them to use their new smartphone or tablet or how to access and use online video software like Zoom.
- **Workshops:** Up to two 2-hour online workshops designed between English for Action and our partner. These would be delivered by a group of employees, trained and supported by our teachers. Workshops would address particular challenges faced by students, such as building confidence and improving employment prospects.
- **Support and training** from our Volunteer Coordinator. **Follow up and evaluation** of the programme together at the end of the year with our Development Manager.

# BENEFITS OF PARTNERSHIP

English for Action is founded on great partnerships. We recognise that relationships between people who live and work in a community can result in everybody being able to thrive. Starting this partnership together will build huge social impact within migrant and refugee communities in London, in the boroughs where your offices are and where your employees live and work.

For a small financial investment, as a small and flexible charity, a little goes a long way. Covering the costs of our volunteer programme will allow 485 students to get the best out of their English classes, at a time when they really need to keep learning.



"We work with English for Action because they tackle some of society's biggest challenges. I'm inspired by the pro-active nature of the charity and its ability to be flexible to the needs of its students. They develop deep relationships within the communities they work in, with an ability to connect with, and establish links between, local people. The last workshop we ran with their students was a great Learning and Development opportunity for our staff. "

**Tom Smith - Salesforce**  
Director of Product Marketing

## NEXT STEPS

Get in touch with Phoebe or Stephanie to discuss the areas which interest you and how we can get started together.

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