**Sustainable Steps Wales – Green Careers**

**Additional Questions and Answers**

This document answers questions people raised during our events in January, we have tried to help you navigate by putting questions under headings.

You can also read the programme guidance which is available here: [www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/sustainable-steps-wales-green-careers](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/sustainable-steps-wales-green-careers)

**Partnerships**

1. How do we find out who’s interested in this programme after briefing events?

Answer: We have emailed an on-line form to interested organisations asking them to share contact details if they are looking to find partners. We are sharing the list on 31 January and 21 February 2024 to everyone who has given us permission to do so.

1. Will you be holding further events to bring organisations together to develop networks and partnerships?

Answer: We are not planning further events at the moment. If you are arranging an event, we would be happy to attend. We are also available to discuss ideas over the telephone, face to face or on Teams.

1. How developed does the partnership need to be to put in an expression of interest?

Answer: We expect you to have agreed who your key partners are and for everyone to understand what each partner will do. Those invited to make a full application (stage 2) will develop those relationships further and probably bring in additional partners.

1. Partnerships – do you have an optimum number of participants?

Answer: We expect the numbers and roles of partners to vary, depending on experience and the location. Please [read our programme guidance](https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/sustainable-steps-wales-green-careers) as it gives some idea of the type of experience we will look for in your partnership. You may have a small group of key organisations which manage the project and a wider group of those with smaller roles. We will want to know about all of them.

1. Partnerships – We are concerned that smaller groups might not be considered by the larger organisations when putting the partnership together.

Answer: We encourage applicants to involve all sizes of organisations. Whilst a smaller organisation may not have capacity to lead the partnership, they will bring other experience and connections that strengthen the project. Our grant can be shared with partners and we recommend that all partners are reimbursed for their costs to help with your project, we will ask you to show how you plan to do this.

1. Can organisations be partners in more than one bid?

Answer: Yes. However, be sure that you have the resources to participate if more than one project is invited to the next stage and/or is awarded a grant. Could you manage your involvement with two large projects simultaneously?

1. Can partners be from outside of Wales?

Answer: Partners can be based outside Wales, they need to show they have experience working in Wales and to operate in Wales. Projects we fund will be delivered bilingually in English and Welsh. There are examples were activities might be in England. For example, a young person living near the border with England could have a work placement or have training in England providing they live in Wales.

1. What type of agreements would be required with statutory organisations?

Answer: We want to fund projects that complement and have made strong links with other organisations and services. It is up to the partnership to decide on the type of agreement required with statutory organisations and it may vary depending how important the relationship is to the project. Our programme guidance provides a template partnership agreement for those organisations who are managing or helping to deliver a project. In some cases it may be more appropriate to have a memorandum of understanding if the organisation is less involved in the project.

**Lead Organisations**

1. Can the public or private sector be partners and how involved can they be?

Answer: We welcome partnerships which include all sectors, and any organisation which is classed as third sector can be the lead partner.

1. Can a college be a lead partner?

Answer: It depends on the college’s legal status as the lead organisation needs to have a legal status which is classed as third sector. Some colleges are exempt charities which are classed as third sector and therefore they would be eligible. Please do talk to us if you have a particular concern.

1. Does the lead organisation have to have a specific amount of turnover?

Answer: We will be looking for the organisation to have the capacity to deal with the project proposed, and their turnover is a factor we will consider. Please pre-empt our questions around this by identifying what existing and future processes you have in place which will satisfy any potential concern that you think we may have.

1. Does the lead organisation need to have expertise in all areas?

Answer: We do not expect the lead organisation to have expertise in all areas, we do expect them to be working with enough partners to be able to show expertise across the relevant areas from that project. This is why we encouraging partnership working.

**National projects**

1. Can our project be a national project?

Answer : Applicants should have the intention to work regionally and not nationally. We are aiming for a small number of high-quality, regional, projects that collectively cover key areas of Wales. The best applications will demonstrate strong connections with communities, we know young people are more likely to engage if they know and trust the organisations involved. We are looking for projects who can demonstrate clear links with young people and connect them to: other local services, employers and educators. Our funding is limited to around £3million per project and this is likely to limit the breadth of a project. A national bid would create potential to duplicate with others applying regionally. If you are, nevertheless, considering making a national bid, please talk to us at the first opportunity.

**Engagement**

1. Does there need to be engagement work with young people at the Expression of Interest stage?

Answer: We would expect your application to show you have consulted with young people and their carers to help decide what is needed in your area. If invited to make a full application you may do more engagement to help design the project further. Development grants are offered to help you do this if you need support.

1. Can we engage with young people under 16 whilst developing our application and delivering the project?

Answer: Yes you can. Providing they don’t end up being the focus of the programme. This programme is targeted at those aged 16 -30 years old. We recognise that it may help with your project to work with younger people. We do expect projects we fund to follow the legal requirements for working with under 16s.

**Development Grant**

1. What can the development grant be used for?

Answer: Examples of how you may use the development grant could include staff costs, such as, travel, time and expenses. You may undertake more engagement sessions with young people and their carers. The grant could pay for meeting room hire and refreshments for hosting partnership meetings. Please talk to us before you incur them, if have any doubts whether costs may not be eligible.

1. How long do we have to spend the development grant?

Answer: The development grant must be spent by the time that you submit your full application. So at the very latest by **5pm on Tuesday 14 January 2025**. If you do not spend all the grant we will ask you to returned the remainder.

**Capital Grants and other funding**

1. Can we fund capital and adaptations to buildings?

Answer: Small amounts of capital funding, such as office equipment for staff are eligible. For young people, it may be possible to get funding from Access to Work. We expect projects to help people get this funding and only use our grant for costs that cannot be secured from other sources. The grant can fund electric vehicles and their running costs, and you can find out more about our requirements on vehicles on our programme webpage.

1. What if Access to Work is not quick enough?

Answers: We hope all projects will plan and design their service so that they can maximise support from other funders. Successful applicants will build relationships with other funders and service providers and provide additional support to the young person trying to access funding. Where there is good reason not to wait for another funder, and you can show it is the result of circumstances beyond your control.

1. Is matched funding required?

Answer: We do not require matched funding, however, we welcome bids that are drawing in matched funding.

**Evaluation**

1. Is there a limit on evaluation costs?

Answer: We will be looking for evaluation costs to be included, but we have not set a limit. If you are invited to make a full application, you will need explain your proposed budget which will include a breakdown of how much you intend to spend on evaluation.

1. Can evaluation be in house?

Answer: Yes – this is possible providing the partnership can show there is sufficient expertise.

1. Will the carbon impact of the project be assessed?

Answer: We do expect projects we fund to assess and monitor their own environmental impact. At stage 2 we will be asking how projects will be keep their environmental footprint to a minimum and explains what steps they have in place. You can find out more on our programme webpage.

**Avoiding duplication**

1. Will The Fund ensure there is no duplication with existing programmes eg Job Growth Wales

Answer: The onus is on the applicant to explain clearly how they will complement other programmes. We would expect applicants to make links with other providers and be ready to direct young people to other programmes where necessary.

1. Will you fund an existing project?

Answer: Projects might be eligible as long as they can show additionality to statutory provision and meet our programme requirements.

1. Will/can regional partnerships connect?

Answer: We would encourage partnerships to make links. Projects we fund will be encouraged to keep in touch also to share learning. We often provide opportunities for projects on the same programme to make links.

1. Can we go for multiple grants from you such as People and Places as well as this programme.

Answer: It is possible to hold more than one grant from us and apply to more than one programme. However, we would need to be convinced you had demonstrated your capacity to deliver all the projects you have applied for.

**Employment**

1. How many young people do you expect to get into employment

Answer: It depends. We are looking for person-centred, quality support which works at the pace of the young people and with those that need extra support. We know this is more expensive and therefore we do not expect projects to work with a high volume of young people. You’ll need to consider the range of needs people may have and account for drop-out rates. While we want to fund as many young people as possible, we ask you to be realistic about your targets and explain what factors you have taken into account. We recommend that you talk to an experienced organisation that has delivered a similar project before if you are unsure.

1. Should employers be paying minimum wage or higher?

Answer: We support Real Living Wage so ideally employers would pay this. However, if the employer has other staff members doing the same job on less than Real Living Wage then they can’t treat the young person differently and in these cases the wage may be less.

1. What percentage of young people are you expecting to retain in employment after the work placement has been completed.

Answer: It is difficult to predict how many young people will be retained as it will be dependent on the employer. However, we know it is possible to see many young people retained in employment providing the employer is supported and encouraged. Projects we fund, will have the ambition to encourage all employers to consider this from the outset and provide support to make the experience with the young people to be as positive as possible. It may create buy in from the employer if they pay for all or some of the young person’s wages whilst in the paid placement. When setting your targets you may wish to seek advice from existing employment programmes.

1. Can project partners employ young people?

Answer : Yes it is possible for project partners to employ young people. The project should, however, remain flexible to accommodate the person’s aspirations if employment cannot be found within the partnership.

1. How long should a young person be part of the project? Can they join for just a few months or stay for 5 years?

Answer: As a minimum, we are looking to fund projects that are committed to providing a 12 month work placement for the young person if they want to. Projects should also build in time to support the young person before they take employment and after a work placement, should the employer decide they can’t employ the person longer term. If the young person is also receiving training or undertaking some voluntary work before employment then they may be with the project at least 18 months.

Some young people may join the project for much less time and then move on and we will support this, providing this is the young person’s choice.

We do not expect a young person to be with the project for as long as five years. We are keen to see as many people as possible to benefit from the programme.

1. Can a young person complete more than one placement?

Answer: We would not expect a young person to complete more than one 12 month employment placement. However, if a young person starts a placement and doesn’t complete it, then it is possible for them to do another.

1. Can projects offer different ‘tasters’ for young people to build awareness of different career paths?

Answer: It is possible for a young person to experience more than one opportunity within the 12 months, should this be their preference. Opportunities should be meaningful to the young person and help with their development. Short term tasters may be appropriate for some young people as part of their experience with the project possibly before they start a paid work placement. However, projects should think about the impact on the employer as well as the young person. We are looking for young people to secure employment longer term. It may be less likely that employers will do this if they have less time with the person to build relationships. Negotiating placements with employers may take time for both the project and the employer. It is important both the employer and the young person have positive experiences.

**Education**

1. Can we fund further education or higher education courses?

Answer: Our priority is to enable people to work. Projects can include training/education for young people whilst they are part of the project. This can be before they do a work placement or during. Projects will need to consider whether further and higher courses meet the needs of the young people to help them into employment. Usually, we’d expect the courses to be time limited and projects will need to consider what they can afford balancing it with the number of young people they want to help. We would not expect a project to be funding a higher education qualification which last for three years, for example.

1. Can a young person have been on another employment initiative, such as, an internship or apprenticeship before joining this project?

Answer: Yes it is possible, although, projects may decide to prioritise those that have had little or no previous support, if they are experiencing high demand.

**Application weighting**

1. Is there a preference for jobs that are transformative within the green sector or jobs that improve current ways of working?

Answer: We have no preference. Our focus is on the young person’s development and enabling them into green careers that suit them. We are keen to see what type of roles young people go into, so please have plans to monitor this. Young people told us that they wanted their imaginations stretched, so we expect projects we fund to be proactive to find opportunities.

1. Is there more weight on higher level jobs rather than generic lower skills?

Answer: We have no preference. Our focus is on the young person’s development and enabling them into green careers that suit them. We are keen to see what type of roles young people go into, so please have plans to monitor this.

1. Gender split - How important?

Answer: It is important to us to try as hard as possible to help young women into employment. We are looking for projects to really consider the needs of young women and build this into the design of the project. We know from projects we have funded that it’s much harder to engage young women. If we fund your project then we’ll expect you to make every effort to involve young women and to talk to us if you’re not meeting our aspiration to see half of the young people supported, being women.

1. Will our project be viewed more favourably if we work with those with more complex needs and do we need to prioritise this as much as working with young people with disabilities and young people from ethnically minoritised communities?

Answer: Our primary concern is supporting young people with disabilities and young people from ethnically minoritised communities. The projects we fund will need to plan to work with those with more complex needs although we do not expect all young people will have them. We know other employment programmes exist that cater for those that don’t have such complex needs and it is sensible to take advantage of these services where it seems appropriate.

**Money matters**

1. How does the Fund make payments?

Answer: The development grant will be paid up front in one payment. For projects that we fund at stage 2, we will set up a payment schedule based on the project budget that is provided with the application. Payments are normally made quarterly in advance and are dependent on regular progress updates. Payments can be adjusted as the project progresses.