

Building Better Opportunities

Project outline

For use in England only



Project reference	Project 1 of 4 - Employment support for the over 24s
LEP area	Black Country LEP (BCLEP)
ESF Thematic Objective	9: Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty
ESF Investment Priority	1.4: Active inclusion
Funding available	£10,670,000
Project start period	March 2016 to August 2016
Latest date for completion	December 2019
Date open for applications	Friday 5 June 2015
Deadline for stage one applications	12 noon on Monday 3 August 2015

Important information about this project outline

This project outline represents just one strand of the overall funding that is available through Building Better Opportunities. As this is a joint programme with the European Social Fund, we will only consider applications that clearly meet a project outline and meet the requirements set out in our **programme guide**.

As you read this project outline, please note the following:

- This project outline is subject to any changes made to the ESF Operational Programme in England when it is officially adopted by the European Commission. The Fund will upload any updates to <https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/esf>. It is your responsibility to review the page regularly to keep abreast of any changes that may impact on your application.
- You must apply for the full amount of **funding available** shown, which we will award to just one applicant or partnership to deliver the project described in this outline.
- The project must be delivered in the **LEP area(s)** shown and within any specific **project location** we've identified within this outline.
- You must plan to **start** and **complete** your project by the dates indicated. By 'complete' we mean that you must have spent and claimed all of the grant and closed your project.
- Your proposed project must align with the **project description** we've provided within this outline and include any specific activities listed.
- You must submit your stage one application by the **deadline** we've given above.
- Your proposed project should include appropriate links to potential employers and self-employment opportunities. The specific interventions must enable a comprehensive assessment of an individual's needs that are tailored to help them move towards work and out of poverty.
- You must demonstrate that the activities you are proposing will be additional to any national and statutory provision. This could include for example: wrap around support that works with people to overcome the barriers that prevent them engaging effectively with statutory provision, or more in-depth and intensive support to the most disadvantaged people, which they can access alongside the statutory provision they are entitled to.
- Activities must be locally accessible and be led by skilled front line staff.
- The people who will benefit from the project must come from the eligible participant groups we've identified in our programme guide, with a specific focus on those unemployed or economically inactive, furthest from the labour market, and most at risk of social exclusion. We may also specify particular **project participants** within this outline that must benefit from some or all of the activities you'll deliver.
- You must be confident that you'll be able to deliver the **project outputs and results**, taking into account the value, length and nature of the project we've described. We will monitor the delivery of the project to ensure these outputs and results will be met over its lifetime.
- You should have experience of delivering similar services and of identifying and working with people who face significant challenges in engaging with the labour market. You must demonstrate an understanding of the needs of local people, and show how you will work with existing local providers of related services and engage those most in need in the local area.
- Organisations can be involved in more than one application, either as a lead or a partner. However, lead partners might set their own requirements on partners' involvement in other applications so please check local requirements with the lead partner.
- Subject to satisfactory performance, there may be the potential to extend the project duration and/or increase the funding available for this project once activities have commenced.

If you think your organisation, or a partnership led by your organisation, would be able to deliver the project we've described then you can request a stage one application form on our website www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/esf.

Project background

In the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area four priorities have been identified for social inclusion and employment. Based on a needs and gap analysis, consultation, and aligning with the Black Country Strategic Economic Plan, these priorities have informed the areas of focus of the projects to be delivered through Building Better Opportunities. This project will focus on employment support for people 25 years old and above.

The over 25s make up the largest group of unemployed and workless residents in the LEP area. In total, there are 84,420 over 25s in receipt of out of work benefits (Nomis, August 2014) and there are currently:

- 21,800 over 25s, of which 8,090 are over 45s claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA);
- 44,340 people claiming Employment Support Allowance (ESA);
- 7,360 lone parents in receipt of Income Support;
- 13,410 people who are long-term unemployed.

Long-term claimants are supported by the Work Programme, but currently 70 per cent of JSA claimants and 90 per cent of ESA claimants are returning to Jobcentre Plus after two years (Public Accounts Committee the Work Programme, 2014).

Unemployment has an impact on local economic growth through the Black Country's low employment rate. It is a root cause of child poverty across the Black Country, since the majority of children in poverty live in households in receipt of out of work benefits. The number of children living in poverty locally is as follows: Wolverhampton 30.6 per cent, Sandwell 29.6 per cent, Walsall 28.5 per cent and Dudley 22.1 per cent. The England average is 20.1 per cent (HMRC, 2011).

It has been identified that certain groups are more prone to unemployment. Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities and people with long term health issues and disabilities experience particular barriers to employment.

- BAME communities make up 23 per cent of the local population (Census, 2011). In Wolverhampton this is 35.5 per cent, in Sandwell 34.2 per cent and in Walsall 22.9 per cent.
- The Black Country has over 900,000 people with a long-term health issue or disability (Census, 2011).
- 48,650 local people are in receipt of Employment Support Allowance/Incapacity Benefit.

Therefore there is a need for an individualised, intensive approach, working with those experiencing additional needs to help them address the barriers preventing them moving towards and into employment. Barriers may include, but are not limited to, factors such as substance misuse, mental ill health, poor literacy and numeracy skills, long term health problems and disabilities. There is also a need to target particular disadvantaged groups such as lone parent families.

There are four projects being delivered in the Black County LEP area through Building Better Opportunities:

- Employment support for the over 24s;
- A targeted community approach;
- Addressing family poverty;
- Financial and digital inclusion.

Applicants should ensure they are fully aware of the other projects we will be funding in the Black Country LEP area even if they only plan to submit an application for this project.

Project aim

This project aims to provide support to people aged 25 and over to address barriers and move closer to and into the labour market. It aims to provide an individualised and broad approach to give those with multiple barriers, including Work Programme leavers, tailored support to move closer to employment.

Therefore the project will need to:

- offer support for disadvantaged people to become work-ready and progress to access learning, training and job opportunities;
- engage disadvantaged people and support them to overcome barriers to employment.

Project description

The specific activities to be delivered through this project should be determined by applicants and clearly articulated in the stage one application form, but possible activities could include:

- a holistic assessment of an individual's needs;
- providing bespoke and intensive support for individuals, including information, advice and guidance. Supporting participants to address specific barriers preventing them from moving towards and into employment. This might include improving employability and interview skills and helping participants apply for jobs, as well as addressing wider barriers that are not directly related to work;
- providing help to participants to overcome all sorts of barriers to work (including wider barriers such as mental health or substance misuse issues) and to engage better with public services. Referring participants to other support, as necessary;
- support from project workers with small case loads, enabling in-depth support;
- providing local outreach support accessible to all participant groups;
- activities to link participants to the labour market, such as work experience and open days to meet employers. Providers should work with employers as well as individuals.

Applicants are encouraged to consider a wide range of innovative delivery models.

Project location

The project should be delivered across the Black Country LEP area, focusing on the areas with the highest levels of unemployment. In many cases, these areas will be the same as those covered by the Targeted Community Approach project, so the two providers must coordinate provision. This project is aimed at people with complex barriers and additional needs across the whole of the Black Country LEP area.

Project participants

All participants must be unemployed or economically inactive as defined in our programme guide.

The project will focus on those who are 25 and over who are unemployed or inactive and facing multiple barriers to work. This includes but is not limited to:

- people from BAME communities;
- people with disabilities
- people with long term health problems;
- people who are over 50;
- people who are long term unemployed;

- people experiencing poverty;
- people with poor literacy and numeracy;
- people affected by substance misuse

Project outputs and results

The project must deliver the following outputs and results within its lifetime:

- At least 2660 people are engaged in activities to improve their work readiness, including at least:
 - 1330 men
 - 1330 women
 - 1330 people who are unemployed
 - 1330 people who are economically inactive
 - 421 people who are 50 or older
 - 542 people with disabilities
 - 743 people from ethnic minorities

N.B. each person can be counted against more than one category

- At least 13 per cent of the people enrolled on the project move into education or training on leaving.
- At least 13 per cent of people move into employment, including self-employment, on leaving. Of these, 50 per cent must have been unemployed when joining the project and 50 per cent must have been economically inactive.
- At least 27 per cent of people who were economically inactive when joining the project move into job-search on leaving.
- In addition, you must ensure that anyone who needs access to childcare in order to participate in the project receives childcare support. This will be checked through a survey run by the Managing Authority.

These are the **minimum** targets we expect your project to deliver within its lifetime. Tell us if you will be able to support more people through the project, as this could have a bigger impact. Our assessment of your stage one application will take into account the different types of change that participants of the project will experience. If you are successful at stage one, we will ask you to develop a set of project outcomes that you will deliver alongside the outputs outlined above.