

# Building Better Opportunities

## Project outline

For use in England only



<b>Project reference</b>	Project 1 of 5 - Working with People 50+ with Low or No Skills
<b>LEP area</b>	Lancashire
<b>ESF Thematic Objective</b>	9: Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty
<b>ESF Investment Priority</b>	1.4: Active inclusion
<b>Funding available</b>	£2,910,000
<b>Project start period</b>	March 2016 to August 2016
<b>Latest date for completion</b>	December 2019
<b>Date open for applications</b>	Friday 5 June 2015
<b>Deadline for stage one applications</b>	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](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/esf).

## Project background

Despite employment and job growth, Lancashire still contains significant pockets of deprivation, linked to low skill levels and limited employment opportunities. An analysis of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2010) shows extremes in Lancashire, from the affluent areas of the Ribble Valley and Wyre to several places that contain large areas of severe ingrained deprivation. These areas are associated with lower skill levels and economic activity rates. Six Lancashire authorities are ranked in the 50 most deprived in the country, with three of these (Blackpool, Burnley and Blackburn with Darwen) falling into the 10 per cent most deprived.

As higher qualifications become expected as a requirement for employment, the impact of low or no skills will be exacerbated. This is demonstrated by employment rates by qualification level, with almost 85 per cent of those qualified to NVQ4+ in employment compared with an employment rate only half this number for people who possess no qualifications. The 69.4 per cent of those qualified to NVQ2 who are in employment in Lancashire mirrors the national rate (70 per cent), suggesting that this is the minimum qualification level at which people can have a confident expectation of joining the workforce. The weak competitive position of low-skilled people means that almost half are not in employment and of these around 80 per cent are economically inactive. The main reasons cited by the unqualified individuals for inactivity include ill-health, disability and care responsibilities, but these are unlikely to be absolute barriers to employment.

Without intervention there is a real danger that economically excluded individuals and communities will not benefit from economic growth and increased employment opportunities. Significant intervention is required to break the cycle of deprivation and to create and link opportunities to local residents. Experience has shown that investment in employability, skills and social inclusion infrastructure can help even the most disadvantaged individuals into employment. Integral to the Lancashire European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIFs) Strategy is an approach to ensure that the residents of Lancashire have the opportunities and skills to access current and future opportunities, supporting increases in productivity and income levels.

Health issues (both physical and mental) contribute to the barriers faced by people who are out of work. Over 200,000 of Lancashire's working age population have long term health problems that limit their day to day activities; in addition another 165,000 provide unpaid care for family or friends with an illness or a disability. Reducing the time that individuals are economically inactive will increase their chances of returning to employment; someone who has been off sick for 6 months or more has an 80 per cent chance of being off work for five years.

Lancashire residents over the age of 50 appear to be particularly disadvantaged in the labour market, as is demonstrated by their economic activity rates. For those aged between 50 and 64, the economic inactivity rate is 35 per cent, compared to a national 30 per cent. As with other indicators, this figure varies by geography: in Blackburn the figure is 41 per cent and in Wyre 45 per cent. Qualification levels for those aged 50-64 again are not significantly different from the national average but with major geographic variations. For example 24 per cent of those aged 50 and above in Blackburn are without qualifications, compared to the national rate of 15 per cent. In Burnley the number with NVQ1-only is 22 per cent compared to the national average of 12 per cent. By comparison, the rate of those aged 50 and above in Ribble Valley and Wyre qualified to NVQ4+ is well over the national rate: 41 per cent and 45 per cent respectively compared to 31 per cent nationally.

As detailed in the local ESIF Strategy, there is a clear relationship between employment and middle/higher level skills. In particular, jobs growth in Lancashire is predicted to be at the NVQ3 level and above, with employment opportunities for those with low and no skills declining.

There are five projects being delivered in the Lancashire area through Building Better Opportunities:

- Older people (one project in tranche one and a further project in tranche two of the

Building Better Opportunities programme);

- Young people (one project in tranche one and a further project in tranche two);
- Disadvantaged groups (this will be in tranche two).

Applicants should ensure they are fully aware of the other projects/themes we will be funding in the Lancashire area (even if they only plan to submit an application for this project).

### Project aim

This project aims to engage with older people (aged 50 and above) who live in the Lancashire LEP area and have low or no skills, thereby preventing them from engaging with training and employment opportunities. It will support them in moving towards and into employment. This project should be focused on the barriers to training, work and employment, taking an integrated approach to addressing these barriers.

### 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:

- intensive and/or wrap around support focused on confidence building and mentoring;
- providing innovative activities that stimulate and motivate people to progress towards and into employment, volunteering or further learning;
- additional support to ensure that individuals secure basic skills, including managing and overcoming barriers such motivational support and health issues;
- support focusing on digital inclusion (activities including increasing computer literacy, developing basic ICT skills to enable access to and participation in employment and training opportunities);
- supporting people to improve their financial capability (the knowledge, skills, confidence and motivation to be able to manage their money well) and their awareness and use of appropriate financial products and services;
- support to remove barriers to employment due to health-related issues (particularly mental health);
- providing outreach activities and access to locally provided services. This may include addressing issues related to, for example, health, language, transport, childcare and basic skills;
- providing Social Enterprise and business shadowing and peer support/business mentors;
- providing volunteering activities.

The Project must align with other ESF and mainstream funded activity in Lancashire including other Opt In activity delivered through the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). This project has been designed to be part of an 'escalator' approach to social inclusion and should prepare participants to engage with training and employment opportunities delivered through the SFA and DWP, as appropriate.

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

### Project location

The project should be delivered across the Lancashire LEP area. It should include and focus specialist provision for individuals located in areas that have populations of people aged 50 and over who have low or no skills above the national average (more detail is available on the Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership website <http://www.lancashirelep.co.uk>).

## Project participants

All participants must be people who are 50 or over with low or no skills who are unemployed or economically inactive as defined in our programme guide. The people who will benefit from this project should come from within the Lancashire LEP area with a specific focus on those out of work and people who are most at risk of social exclusion.

## Project outputs and results

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

- At least 702 people are engaged in activities to improve their work readiness, including at least:
  - 351 men;
  - 351 women;
  - 351 people who are unemployed;
  - 351 people who are economically inactive;
  - 702 people who are 50 or older;
  - 140 people with disabilities;
  - 68 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.