

Building Better Opportunities

Project outline

For use in England only



Project reference	Project 2 of 4 - Holistic support for those furthest from the labour market (Durham)
LEP area	North East
ESF Thematic Objective	9: Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty
ESF Investment Priority	1.4: Active inclusion
Funding available	£2,413,100
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

The North East Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) (nelep.co.uk/whatwedo/strategic-economic-plan) sets out a vision for the area's economy to provide over one million jobs by 2024, representing 100,000 new jobs. It also sets out targets to close the gap on productivity, private sector employment density, the economic activity rate and the employment rate. The North East ESIF Strategy (nelep.co.uk/whatwedo/european-strategy) sets out the local framework for delivering on these aims in the context of Europe 2020 targets to generate smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

The evidence base shows significant inequalities in the employment and income rates for people over 50 and under 25, people who experience enduring mental health conditions, ethnic minorities, and women, people who live in the most deprived areas, rural communities and disabled people (particularly people who have learning disabilities). The interplay of personal barriers, often for people with protected characteristics, leads to multifaceted disadvantage.

Health inequalities are particularly acute in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area, with 28.1 per cent of economic inactivity attributable to long term sickness against 21.5 per cent nationally (Office for National Statistics Annual Population Survey, January 2014-December 2014). These people are furthest from the labour market and are likely to need more focussed and targeted support, perhaps over a longer period, to help them into work. There is also a significant focus in the SEP and local ESIF strategy on the relatively low uptake (particularly among females) of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects and related gender inequalities in industries requiring these skills.

The geography of County Durham means that support infrastructure and resources are spread across a large geographical area, with a diverse range of social and economic characteristics. Transport and access to services remains a critical problem for excluded individuals and communities. Communities in County Durham tend to be resilient but potential participants will often face social and digital exclusion, health and wellbeing inequalities and low levels of aspiration.

There are pockets of excellent practice in the North East LEP area, but this can be sporadic and not always well aligned. Widespread consultation with partners including the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Skills Funding Agency (SFA), local authorities, public health and the voluntary and community sector has identified a need to tackle key gaps where there is a lack of provision or where significant improvement and alignment to meet the real need is required. Avoiding duplication will be critical, including consideration of emergent proposals around the Mental Health Trailblazer and European Social Fund activities, including the DWP opt-in, community grants and open calls. The project should contribute to aligning these activities, sharing best practice and addressing gaps. It will take a person-centred approach, recognising the multiple barriers to employment people face, as well as addressing more specific issues around health, financial and digital inclusion.

There are four projects being delivered in the North East LEP area through Building Better Opportunities:

- Northumberland (Holistic support for those furthest from the labour market);
- Durham (Holistic support for those furthest from the labour market);
- Tyne and Wear (Multiple barriers to employment);
- Tyne and Wear (Health barriers to employment). This project will be part of tranche two of the BBO programme.

Applicants should ensure they are fully aware of the other projects we will be funding in the North East LEP area (even if they only plan to submit an application for this project). Cross consortium working within the LEP area (and where appropriate membership of more than one consortium) is encouraged to align provision across the three geographies.

Project aim

This project aims to provide support to the most disadvantaged groups in Durham, who are furthest from the labour market and who experience significant barriers to work. The project will address four themes, with a proportionate level of activity as detailed below. The themes reflect areas of highest need in the North East LEP area. However, a person-based approach will be required to recognise each individual's complex and overlapping needs and provide tailored support to address their key barriers to employment. The provider will need to clearly define the detailed approach for the respective themes to ensure participants can be directed to the most appropriate provision.

Multiple barriers to employment (approximately 50 per cent of available funding). Support to help people address entrenched and multiple barriers to work. This part of the project will be targeted at those furthest away from the labour market (mapped to a range of identified needs, such as addiction, physical and learning disability, support for those with protected characteristics and including provision for the over 50s). It will include signposting and referral on to mainstream support systems and other Social Inclusion provision.

Health Inequality (approximately 30 per cent of available funding). Activities to help people tackle health barriers to employment. Activities will support people to manage health issues to enable individuals to become fit for work. They will also support people with long term health conditions, disabilities and mental health issues to progress towards economic activity, for example by providing appropriate training and guidance on work-readiness and brokering work experience or voluntary placements.

Financial inclusion (approximately 10 per cent of available funding). Activities focused on addressing the root causes of poverty which create barriers to work. This is likely to be linked to the issues of debt, food and fuel poverty, and the imminent roll out locally of Universal Credit. Activities should support people to improve their financial capability (the knowledge, skills, confidence and motivation to be able to manage their money well) and improve their awareness of and use of appropriate financial products and services.

Digital Inclusion (approximately 10 per cent of available funding). Activities focused on supporting people to improve their Basic Digital Skills (including the capabilities required to realise the benefits of the internet), with an emphasis on progression into economic activity. Activities will address the challenges people face to going online including access and motivation (knowing the reasons why using the internet is a good thing) and focus on increasing basic online skills such as managing information, communicating, transacting and problem solving.

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:

- supporting early action before multiple problems and barriers become entrenched;
- outreach activities and access to locally provided services;
- targeted initiatives to address entrenched and multiple barriers, helping people to move towards and reintegrate with mainstream support systems and the labour market including through apprenticeships, skills training and work experience;
- volunteering opportunities to provide confidence building, recognition of basic skills, training, mentoring, higher level skills, work experience and to enable potential referral to other support networks or local initiatives;
- activities to increase awareness of and participation in STEM-related provision by training to improve numeracy and problem-solving skills;
- additional and innovative approaches to pre-employment training, including improving the employability and transferable skills of unemployed, inactive and disadvantaged people. This could include work-ready skills including confidence, time-management and raising

aspiration;

- new approaches to work experience and participation in learning;
- responding flexibly to employer demand in the local labour market where the LEP and their partners identify specific opportunities and priorities, including growth sectors, industries related to STEM subjects, and meeting identified replacement demand;
- signposting and referring participants to mainstream services and wider packages of support, including using self-employment as a route into the labour market.

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

Project location

The project should be delivered across Durham and applicants will need to consider how to address challenges in reaching participants in rural areas, particularly where public transport links are limited. The project will be one of four operating in the North East LEP area alongside a project in Northumberland and two in Tyne and Wear. Alignment between the three geographies and four projects is considered fundamental to the successful delivery of this project.

Project participants

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

The project will have a specific focus on those out of work and people who are most at risk of social exclusion. This includes, but is not limited to:

- people in households where no one works;
- long term unemployed people;
- young people not in employment, education or training;
- disabled people;
- ethnic minority groups;
- offenders (not in custody) and ex offenders;
- people aged over 50;
- people with multiple disadvantages (for example, education, health, employment, social support, housing and local environment).

Whilst we can support activities for young people between the ages of 15 and 18, there is a new statutory requirement for this age group to remain in education, employment or training. We can only pay for activities working with young people who are aged 16-29 and who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) and young people aged 15-18 who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET. Young people below the age of 15 are ineligible participants. Unless the project is specifically aimed at young people, those aged 29+ remain eligible participants.

Project outputs and results

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

- At least 581 people are engaged in activities to improve their work readiness, including at least:
 - 291 men;
 - 290 women;
 - 290 people who are unemployed;
 - 291 people who are economically inactive;
 - 87 people who are 50 or older;
 - 116 people with disabilities;
 - 11 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.