

ESF Community Grants Programme Prospectus



Education & Skills
Funding Agency



Introduction to Community Grants Programme

Hartlepool Borough has been awarded the contract to deliver the ESF Community Grants Programme in the Tees Valley. The programme is jointly funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

There is a total of £2.7m of grant funding available over the lifetime of the programme. This prospectus outlines the background to the programme, the detail of the programme's themes and expected outcomes.

Background to the Tees Valley

The Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) covers over 3,300 square miles and is located on the North East coast. It comprises five Local Authority Areas - Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees.

The Tees Valley has a total population of 672,500 and offers over 303,500 jobs across some 16,500 businesses and through self-employment. With a £12.3 billion economy and world class expertise, Tees Valley already makes a major contribution to the UK economy.

Tees Valley has a world-class reputation across its key sectors which are:

- Advanced Manufacturing;
- Process, Chemicals and Energy;
- Logistics;
- Health and Biologics;
- Digital and Creative;
- Culture and Leisure, and;
- Business and Professional Services.

The area also has an established infrastructure and supply chain in the offshore, advanced manufacturing and engineering, chemicals and process and logistics sectors and key emerging sectors include life sciences, digital, energy and renewable, construction and business services.

All of these sectors are key to the economic development of the area and are all seeing growth and significant investment. High volume replacement jobs are expected in, but not exclusive to: Public administration, defence and education; IT, media and other service industries; Production industries; Professional and business services and Healthcare with 46% of high volume replacement jobs being across a range of levels, including entry level jobs offered as part-time opportunities and Apprenticeships. However, there are skill shortages across most of our key sectors, and many employers cite a lack of access to skilled workers as their greatest barrier to growth.

As well as continuing to improve productivity, innovation and exports, the area needs to create more and better jobs as levels of unemployment are relatively high. To unlock future growth the sub-region needs to:

- To be better connected with a need to improve road and rail connectivity for the region, in order to ensure Tees Valley firms can access UK and European supply chains, particularly in the Northern Powerhouse and that Tees Valley residents can benefit more fully from emerging job opportunities;
- A workforce that is fit for purpose to replace an ageing workforce in priority sectors and to ensure that our people have fit for purpose skills for both existing and emerging sectors; and
- A supportive business environment with start-up, growth and inward investment companies who need access to appropriate advice and support that is both coordinated and simple to access. There is a need to further diversify the economic use of existing town centres to attract and retain the vital knowledge intensive business sector. Both place and culture must be used to create a Tees Valley proposition in which people will want to live, work and visit.

The Tees Valley ESIF Strategy, which was published in April 2016, provides synergy between our European aims, our agreed City Deal, Devolution Deal and Growth Deal – and the funds we have at our disposal through the Tees Valley Investment Fund, Local Growth Fund and local partners' investment. This will support the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan which over the next decade aims to create 25,000 jobs and £2.8 billion of additional Gross Value Add (GVA).

ESF Community Grants Programme

The ESF Community Grants Programme was established to contribute towards the Tees Valley ESIF Strategy, Tees Valley Strategic Plan and tackling unemployment and economic inactivity across the sub-region.

The programme aims to make available small grants (up to £20,000 with a minimum grant value of £10,000) to third sector and other small organisations for the purpose of mobilising disadvantaged or excluded unemployed and inactive people to enable their progress towards employment. The eligibility criteria to apply for a Community Grant is shown below:

- **Small Organisation:** Organisations that employ fewer than 49 full time equivalent staff and have an annual turnover equal to or under EUR 10 million or balance sheet equal to or below EUR 10 million.
- **Third Sector Organisation:** an organisation which operates within the Third Sector (which is the part of an economy or society comprising non-governmental and non-profit making organisations or associations including charities, voluntary and community groups).

The Recipient Organisations that access grants need to be well placed to reach excluded individuals facing barriers, which hinder their access to mainstream provision by:

- Engaging with marginalised individuals and support them to re-engage with education, training, or employment;
- Supporting a range of activities aimed at assisting the disadvantaged or excluded to move closer to the labour market by improving their access to mainstream ESF and domestic employment and skills provision; and
- Providing support to the hardest to reach communities and individuals, especially those from deprived communities, to access employment or further learning and training.

The programme will be delivered in all Local Authority areas in the Tees Valley and is a partnership between all five Local Authorities, with Hartlepool Borough Council acting as the Accountable Body.

The ESF Community Grants Programme must not duplicate existing externally funded provision in the Tees Valley including Routes to Work, Big Lottery Fund and Youth Employment Initiative and complement all of the mainstream provision such as Adult Education Budget and services funded through the Local Authorities. **Please note that no profit can be made through grants issued within the Community Grants Programme.**

The payment schedule for successful grant recipients is shown below:

- 33% upfront after an executed Grant Agreement;
- 33% in the middle of your project subject to a satisfactory audit from the Project Team, and;
- 34% at the end of your profile when the targets have been achieved and all financial and performance evidence has been checked and approved by Hartlepool Borough Council.

There are an estimated 1,300 third sector organisations within Tees Valley that would benefit from targeted and small grants to further their delivery and enable them to build capacity. This ESF Community Grants Programme will build upon the work of previous and existing small grants programmes to further enhance the community and voluntary sector within Tees Valley. The programme will therefore improve community capacity building, and partnership working in the sector.

The intent of the ESF Community Grants Programme is to enable disadvantaged or excluded unemployed and economically inactive people to progress towards employment. Grants will support a range of activities aimed at assisting the disadvantaged or excluded to move closer to the labour market by improving their access to local employment and skills provision and progressing eligible participants into a positive destination of Education, Employment or Further Training.

Grants will provide support to the hardest to reach communities and individuals, especially those from deprived communities, to access employment or further

learning and training. Small third sector organisations that access grants are likely to be well placed to reach excluded individuals facing barriers, which hinder their access to mainstream provision.

All grants need to be awarded by 31st March 2022 and awarded projects must complete their project activities and report their agreed outcomes and results no later than 31st July 2022.

The projects funded by the ESF Community Grants Programme must be delivered by the Recipient Organisation within the Tees Valley. A wide range of activities can be delivered including, but not limited to:

- First contact engagement activities that benefit participants who are not normally in contact with official organisations for example but not exclusively Jobcentre Plus. For example, this could be through arranging events or training in places that feel comfortable for the participants.
- Projects to improve confidence, motivation and social integration through a range of different activities such as sports, gardening, music, art and other creative activities.
- Developing local networks and groups to support people to progress into employment or access learning through Job Clubs.
- Softer skills development including assertiveness, anger management, self-esteem and motivation which are all vital attributes for the world of work.
- Innovative approaches to attract under-represented participant groups into learning such as those from ethnic minorities.

It is the responsibility of eligible organisations wishing to apply for the grant to outline what activities it will deliver that meets local need, effectively engages the target group, adds value to existing provision and which will ensure that all outcomes are achieved for the ESF Community Grants Programme.

Target Groups and Outcomes

The key deliverables are shown below:

Deliverable	Volume	Amount
ST01 Learner Assessment and Plan	2,105	-
CG01 Community Grant Payment	-	£2,700,000
PG01 Progression into Employment *	356	-
PG03 Progression into Education **	295	-

* To claim this you must provide documentary evidence showing the participant has started in paid employment including participant details, job title, employer name and address, start date and hours contracted. For self-employed participants, you must provide evidence of registration with HMRC for self-employment and documentary

evidence to support start on self-employment. This must be achieved within 28 days of the participant's completion of the ESF Activity.

** To claim this you must provide documentary evidence of the participant starting in a programme of education and training at a higher level than completed on the ESF programme or for a minimum of 20 GLH at the same level showing provider/college name, qualification title or course, participant details, start date and planned GLH. This must be achieved within 28 days of the participant's completion of the ESF Activity.

The table below shows the split of deliverables against each Local Authority in the Tees Valley:

Local Authority	Starts (Learner Assessment & Plan)	Progression into Employment	Progression into Education
Darlington	308	52	43
Hartlepool	490	83	68
Middlesbrough	466	79	65
Redcar & Cleveland	313	53	44
Stockton on Tees	528	89	75
TOTAL	2,105	356	295

The Recipient Organisations will need to ensure that grants are targeted to benefit participants within the Priority Groups in the percentages and participant numbers which are set out in the table below.

Priority Group	Percentage	Participants
Participants over 50 years of age	14%	295
Participants with disabilities	22%	463
Participants from ethnic minorities	12%	253
Participants who are Women	36%	758

Please note that you must also endeavour to support long-term unemployed participants. A participant is classified as long-term unemployed if:

- Aged 18 to 24 Years – Claiming 6 months or more
- Aged 25 or Over – Claiming 12 months or more

There is a total of £2.7m available in grant funding which equates to £1,282 per participant. Although activities aimed at all of the target groups listed above are eligible, applicants should outline in their application if their project will contribute to meeting one or more of the Priority Groups.

The grant has initially been allocated across the five Local Authority areas based on need as shown within the table below. However, allocations across all five areas may be subject to change, and funding may be re-allocated to other areas, throughout the lifetime of the project if grant funding is not utilised within a relevant Local Authority.

Local Authority	% of the Project	Value of Grants Available £
Darlington	14.65%	395,550
Hartlepool	23.27%	628,290
Middlesbrough	22.14%	597,780
Redcar & Cleveland	14.88%	401,760
Stockton on Tees	25.06%	676,620
TOTAL	100%	£2,700,000

Further Information

If you would like further information on applying, please refer to the ESF Community Grants Application Guidance Document.

Alternatively, organisations are welcome to contact Hartlepool Borough Council's ESF Community Grants Project Team on:

Email: ESF.CommunityGrants@hartlepool.gov.uk