**Education & Skills Funding Agency**

**ESF 2019 – 2022**

**Community Grants Programme**

**D2N2**

**Specification Round 5**

This document sets out the requirements of the Community Grants Fund programme.

Applicants are advised to read this document thoroughly, along with the Application Guidance before submitting an application.

**Background:**

The Futures Group have been awarded a contract by the Education and Skills Funding Agency, to act as a Grant Co-ordinating Body to manage and distribute small grants programme to third sector organisations of between £5k - £15k per round within the D2N2 area of East Midlands region.

Please click on the links below to find out more about the Local Enterprise Partnerships.

<http://www.d2n2lep.org>

The Funds will be made available during 5 application rounds in April 2019, November 2019, October 2020, August 2021 and April 2022

* £1.84 Million in D2N2

We believe that third sector organisations are best placed to reach those who are most excluded in society, who face multiple and complex barriers to progressing into work, training or volunteering; and are best placed to enable those individuals to progress in life, education and work.

**Community Grants.**

ESF Community Grants are intended to support people from the hardest to reach communities and individuals experiencing multiple disadvantages to access opportunities to engage and progress in learning.

ESF Community Grants will be made available in the form of small grants, (not exceeding £20,000), to appropriate third sector organisations to mobilise disadvantaged or excluded unemployed and inactive people to help them progress towards employment.

**The Panel will favour applications that demonstrate:**

* Meeting the Local Enterprise Partnership priorities
* A proven track record in working with the target group
* Robust progression routes to achieve outcomes for beneficiaries in Adult Education Budget funded learning, Apprenticeships, volunteering and employment
* Active relationships with the National Careers Service
* Strong referral partnerships and pathways
* Value for money

Organisations will be commissioned through open and competitive processes.

The process used to select successful applications will be based on competitive rounds and will involve a simple scoring method, eligibility assessment and application appraisal overseen by an independent panel. All decisions will be endorsed by the Steering Group, who will ensure (as far as possible) a regional spread of funding. The decision of the Steering Group will be final. Appeals will not be considered.

**Funding Guidance**

1. **To fund community-based projects lasting no longer than 6 months to support those over 16 and are unemployed/inactive.**

The Grant could support a range of creative, innovative engagement, activities that remove barriers, raise confidence and self-esteem and real progression opportunities for beneficiaries, these may include, (this is not an exhaustive list):

* Initial help with basic skills
* Training, advice and counselling
* Confidence building, assertiveness, anger management
* Job search assistance including the provision of equipment and other assistance necessary to secure employment; such as clothing, DDA compliance, travel training
* First contact engagement activities
* Creative & industry specific workshops for example: Hospitality/Hair and Beauty/Horticulture/Creative Arts/IT/Photo Shops
* Leadership training, for example: Sports delivery/Coaching/Mentoring/Mediation
* Employability workshops and Job Clubs
* Job Clubs including Initial help with Skills for Life/Self Awareness/Team Building/Job Searching/Job Preparation
* Taster work experience including the opportunity to undertake voluntary work

1. **Eligible Learners & Priority Groups**

Eligible Learners must be:

• Unemployed and claiming benefits, or Economically Inactive - those who are self-employed are not eligible

• Over 16 (there is no upper age limit)

• Have the right to live and work in the UK

• Not engaged in any other government funded programme or training scheme

• Must not have been previously enrolled onto a Community Grant course

Priority will be given to applications that target participants who are:

• 16-24 NEET

• Over 50

• With Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

• From Ethnic Minority Backgrounds

• Are women

• Unemployed for over 6 months

• Furthest removed from the labour market with significant barriers to employment

All learners must provide identification that proves they have the right to live and work in the UK which could be a UK passport, a UK birth certificate, if they are an EEA nation settled status granted under the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS); you can check a person’s Right to Work evidence at this website: <https://www.gov.uk/legal-right-work-uk>

It is the Grant Recipients responsibility to make sure the learners are not already in employment, education or training. Learner eligibility will be checked by the Futures Group with the ESFA and non-eligible learners will be rejected.

1. **Grant payments and expenditure**

Grant payments are made in 3 staged payments.

* 25% at the start of the contract
* 50% when you have completed 50% of your agreed Engagement targets
* 25% when you have submitted your proof of spend, receipts, learner completion records, ILPs, timesheets and learner case study

Grant Recipients must submit a separate invoice to trigger each payment.

Grants can be used to fund a proportion of overheads, general running costs and salaries related to the delivery of the project during that 6-month period and can be used to purchase equipment not exceeding £1,000 per single item.

At the end of the programme the Grant Recipient will be required to submit a proof of spend and **ALL** expenditure receipts relating to spend on the grant, including staff timesheets, wage slips and in some cases, bank statements where necessary to prove expenditure. This will be checked against the budget planned in the original application.

If the Grant Recipient has not spent the money as set out in your budget the grant may be withdrawn. If the Grant Recipient has spent more than the grant allocation, they will not be provided any more funds. If the Grant Recipient has spent less that your grant allocation, they may only be paid up to the amount spent on your proof of spend.

Grants must not be used to duplicate that which is already available through existing Education and Skills Funding Agency or Department of Work and Pensions provision or ESF Co-financing.

Applicants must not claim funding for any part of any learner’s learning aim or programme that duplicates provision they have received from any other source. This could be from, for example, a different funding stream provided, another government department (for example, the Department for Work and Pensions), the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) or a learner’s employer. Learners must be Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) on the first day of their Community Grants Programme.

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| **Eligible costs** | **Ineligible costs** |
| Project Co-ordinator/Manager  Outreach staff  Administrative staff  Staff Recruitment  Staff Training  Staff Travel (**NOT** to and from home)  Trainers/Tutors/Counsellors/Mentors  Registered child care (unless funded elsewhere)  Exam & certification fees  Participant Travel costs  Participant equipment and clothing relevant to the role  Marketing your activity  Equipment and small items up to £1000 per item  Rent/Energy/Waste  Room Hire  Stationary/Postage/Office supplies  Telephone/Internet  Rental of equipment essential for the project  Refreshments for beneficiaries | Any expenditure before the agreed project start date or after the agreed end date (as stated in your grant agreement)  Loan and current account interest or any financial charge  Consultancy fees or staff time for the completion of the application form  Purchase of buildings  Cost of finance leases  Expenditure not related to the project  Expenditure not supported by appropriate accounting documents  Any statutory training that employers must provide under legislation  Charges for buildings which were previously EU funded  Reclaimable VAT  Travel outside the UK  Insurance (if additional cover is required due to the specific activity)  Employing beneficiaries as part of the project  Anything that duplicates existing provision or is already mainstream funded e.g. ESFA/DWP/NCS |

**Round 5 Eligible Third Sector Organisations**

Eligible Third Sector Organisations must demonstrate they are incorporated and be not-for-profit (Charity, CIC, Company Limited by Guarantee) with fewer than 49 FTE staff and have a turnover of less than £750,000 per annum.

Mandatory reasons for exclusion are included on the application form.

**Capacity Building**

We arecommitted to supporting members of small Voluntary and Community Sector organisations to build their capacity to further engage those furthest from the labour market and support their progression towards learning and work.

Capacity building is part of your offer and includes:

* Signposting to training for staff and volunteers in third sector organisations to help applicants support their participants to progress towards learning and work\*
* Advice and support on managing your grant, paperwork and audit compliance and protecting learner data.
* Networking opportunities to learn and develop provision, build partnerships and strengthen your offer.

We strongly recommend that Grant Recipients take up this offer, based on feedback on the limited knowledge regarding of the range of opportunities available to participants when helping them to progress into learning and work.

**Added Value**

This grant programme will focus on the engagement of workless adults in under-developed areas and communities, and on individuals under-represented in the labour market. It will be used to provide a range of initial engagement activities which will in turn support transition to further learning offered through mainstream provision, extending what is already offered through the Agency’s other mainstream funding. We would like to see applications that demonstrate progression into Apprenticeships, Traineeships and other Adult Education Budget Funded programmes.

We would like to see applications that demonstrate close links and partnership work with National Careers Service.

**Level of Grants Awards**

The maximum level of grant that will be awarded will be £15,000. The minimum level of grant awarded will be £5,000. The Panel will award contracts that range between £5,000 and £15,000. All amounts awarded will be inclusive of VAT.

Organisations will be eligible to submit a subsequent grant application if they are delivering their programme as planned and will have completed their programme successfully before the grant panel meet, or have successfully delivered their previous programme and have fully expended their previous Grant.

**Monitoring and Reporting Requirements.**

Successful applicants will be required to collect and submit key information to Futures on the progress of the Community Grant Award.

Reporting requirements using pre-defined pro-forma, will include:

* Individual Learner Records (ILR’s) to record learner start and completion activity are mandatory and must meet the ESFA monitoring requirements. A template is provided with mandatory fields that must be completed accurately and on time. Inaccurate or incomplete ILR’s will be rejected.
* Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) to record the learner journey.
* Timesheets to document. the learners time on the project
* Quarterly monitoring report, related to key information requirements which will be listed in your contract, including: equality and diversity report related to the recruitment, participation, completion, achievement and progression of participants of the priority groups supported through the grant.
* At least one Case study will be required (minimum of one per programme), which has Participants consent
* ESFA qualitative report regarding learner satisfaction, which is carried out by them directly, even if the learner has expressed that they do not wish to be contacted for marketing purposes
* End of programme report to identify what went well or did not go well, methods of best practice used and recommendations to sustain community engagement. That includes the impact the Grant has had on regional priorities.
* A Proof of Spend Report and expenditure receipts and financial records e.g. invoices to support expenditure, bank statements, staff time sheets, job descriptions and records of other expense payments which should be made available as requested as per your contract.

Successful Organisations will be required to report on:

* Number of participants supported through the grant, by priority grouping
* Number of participants helped into employment.
* Any qualification level and modules achieved.
* Any numbers progressing into further learning/education.
* Preparation of a minimum of one case study showing how your grant has supported a specific group or individual participants.
* Contribution to reports regarding impact the grant has had on regional priorities.
* Outcomes achieved by individual clients including any soft outcomes using RARPA principles.

All organisations will be required to provide requested information by deadline dates, which will be included in contracts awarded.

It is a requirement of the ESF programmes that all documentation must be retained by the organisation until at least 31st December 2030 to comply with audit purposes.

The provision is subject to quarterly audits by the ESFA and may be subject to inspections by Ofsted.

Failure to comply can lead directly to financial penalties being imposed by the ESF auditors.

**Publicity**

All ESF funded providers and their sub-contractors/grant recipients need to comply with ESF publicity requirements and promote the ESF project to a wide audience at local and where applicable national levels.

Requirements include:

* Displaying an ESF Poster at the grant recipient’s main delivery location.
* Displaying the ESF logo and publicising EU support in line with ESF branding guidance on any document, including any attendance or other certificate, including I.T or Web based mediums, concerning the administration of the ESF activity.
* A copy of the programme publicity material produced (flyers/leaflets) must display the Futures, ESF and ESFA logo’s and be sent to Futures for approval prior to the first 25% of the grant payment.

Organisations need to be mindful that non-compliance with publicity requirements puts funding at risk.

**Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG).**

Your organisation is required to access Matrix accredited IAG from the National Careers Service. Futures will advise successful organisations of their local IAG provider.

**Quality**

Organisations will need to demonstrate in the application process that they have a track record of delivering high quality, appropriate provision that meets the needs of their customer group. This need to be in line with Recognising and Recording Progression and Achievement principles (RARPA) to ensure provision of high quality services that progresses participants.

The RARPA approach is based on the application of a simple 5 stage process to all programmes of learning which are as follows:

1. Aims appropriate to individual learners
2. Initial assessment to establish learners starting point
3. Identification of appropriate challenging learning outcomes
4. Recognition and recording of progress and achievement during the programme
5. End of programme learner self-assessment, tutor summative assessment, review of overall progression and achievement in relation to appropriately challenging learning objectives identified at the beginning or during the programme

**Health & Safety**

We expect Grant recipients to meet Health & Safety standards dependent on the activity being delivered.

**Equality and Equal Opportunities**

Action to promote equality and diversity is an integral part of the Agency’s business objectives. All organisations will need to show that they are committed to the removal of barriers, eliminating discrimination, addressing disadvantage and raising the aspirations of both present and potential learners.

**Geographical Targeted Areas**

Funding will only be made available to voluntary and community organisations that provide delivery in any of the sub regions listed below.

D2 - Derby & Derbyshire

* Amber Valley
* Bolsover (SCR)
* Chesterfield (SCR)
* Derby City
* Derbyshire Dales (SCR)
* Erewash
* High Peak
* North East Derbyshire (SCR)
* South Derbyshire
* Derbyshire County Council

N2 – Nottingham & Nottinghamshire

* Ashfield
* Bassetlaw (SCR)
* Broxtowe
* Gedling
* Mansfield
* Nottingham City
* Newark and Sherwood
* Rushcliffe
* Nottinghamshire County Council

**Start & End Dates**

Contracts will run between 1st April 2022 and the 30th September 2022. No delivery will be allowed beyond this date.

**Timetable**

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| **Round 5** | |
| Application Process Open | 10th January 2022 |
| Application Packs Available until | 10th February 2022 |
| Completed Application Forms Returned | 10th February 2022 by 4pm |
| Due Diligence is carried out | 11th-25th February 2022 |
| Panel Scoring | Between the 28th February - 11th March 2022 |
| Panel Ratification Meeting | 17th March 2022 |
| Results Announced | By the 23rd March 2021 |
| Contracts Awarded | 1st April 2022 – 30th September 2022 |
| Delivery can begin | 1st April 2022 |

*N.B Dates are subject to change*

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| ALL APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED ELECTRONICALLY.  The closure dates and deadline times for application packs available and completed application forms to be returned are non-negotiable. Applications **received after the closure times will not be accepted.** |

**Application Forms** and queries about the process can be obtained by emailing: [comm.grant.apply@the-futures-group.com](mailto:comm.grant.apply@the-futures-group.com)

**Completed Application forms** must be emailed to [comm.grant.apply@the-futures-group.com](mailto:comm.grant.apply@the-futures-group.com)

**Ensure that you use the correct email addresses.** (See above) Applications sent to any other email address or sent to us in any other way will not be accepted.

The conditions in this Specification may change subject to any instructions given by the Education & Skills Funding Agency and/or European Union.