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**West Dunbartonshire Council – Working4U Employability Grant programme**

**Key Information, Guidance and**

**Sources of Useful Data.**

**May 2024**

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# Introduction

The West Dunbartonshire Employability Grant Programme aims to support unemployed people to move towards and into work and support those in low paid employment to progress. It is an approach which recognises that to help local people to develop the skills and confidence employers are looking for we all need to work together at a local level to provide the best possible services to those who need them most utilising No One Left Behind and UK Shared Prosperity Funding to achieve this.

The national funding for employability has changed significantly with the Scottish Government and also the UK Government choosing to distribute funding at a more local level and through a local strategic employability partnership. The Strategic Employability Group will decide on the local priorities and areas for action but will also ensure that local employability providers continue to have the opportunity to access funding for services through a co-commissioned process. The key Scottish Government policy framework for this approach is called **No One Left Behind.** The UK Government have launched **UK Shared Prosperity Fund** which succeeds the old EU Structural funds supporting the levelling up opportunity and prosperity vision to overcome geographical inequalities**.** Both approaches will guide the future direction and delivery of employability services in the years to come.

In West Dunbartonshire, the strategic partnership is the **West Dunbartonshire Strategic Employability Group** consisting of strategic employability partner agencies from the West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Structure. Its purpose is to support the implementation of local and national employability policy through collective leadership, joint planning and co-commissioning. In doing so the partnership, works closely with the **West Dunbartonshire Creative Design Group** (CDG).

The CDG consists of local employability delivery partners. The purpose of the CDG is to support the West Dunbartonshire Strategic Employability Group to deliver against its identified employability needs in West Dunbartonshire.

Employability delivery partners will make the best use of resources available to deliver effective needs-led employability services that help West Dunbartonshire residents make a successful transition towards employment, into employment and sustained employment.

The West Dunbartonshire Strategic Employability Group has created an Employability Grant Programme to support a co-commissioned approach to employability.

The West Dunbartonshire Employability Grant Programme will:

* Augment the current employability pathways in West Dunbartonshire by outlining clear aims and guiding principles to applicant organisations for new services.
* Add value to the funding and other resources already available locally and create opportunities for innovation and collaboration.
* Support the aims and objectives outlined in:
	+ No One Left Behind: [No One Left Behind delivery plan](https://www.gov.scot/publications/no-one-left-behind-delivery-plan/)
	+ UK Shared Prosperity: [UK-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus)
	+ West Dunbartonshire Strategic Plan: [West Dunbartonshire Strategic Plan 2022 - 2027](https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/4322598/strategic-plan-2022-27.pdf)
	+ Economic Development Strategy: [West Dunbartonshire Economic Development Strategy](https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/council/strategies-plans-and-policies/economic-development-strategy/)
	+ Community Planning West Dunbartonshire Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2017 -27: [Community Planning West Dunbartonshire Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2017-27](https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/4313518/west-dunbartonshire-plan-for-place.pdf)
	+ Child Poverty Plan: [Local Child Poverty Action Report 2022-2023](https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/media/miimtl5a/wdc-local-child-poverty-report-2022-2023.pdf)

This document and the associated grant application form outlines the West Dunbartonshire Strategic Employability Group intentions, principles and priorities to be met through the West Dunbartonshire Employability Grant Programme supporting employability and skills provision in 2024 and 2025.

# Grant Outcomes and Principles

**The key outcomes** the West Dunbartonshire Employment Grant Programme will contribute to are:

* To maximise the role that employability plays in delivering national and local aims of tackling poverty, promoting inclusion and social justice, and creating a fair and prosperous Scotland;
* To reduce inequality in the labour market by supporting those further from the labour market to increase their income from employment, by providing relevant employability support through training for employment.
* To improve labour market outcomes by reducing local Economic Inactivity, supporting those who want to work to enter employment.
* To reduce levels of child poverty by supporting parents from the priority family groups to increase their income from employment, by providing relevant employability support related to training for employment;
* To provide training to those in low income employment, especially parents, to help ensure participants are able to progress to better paid work, or work which better suits their circumstances;
* To reduce levels of long-term unemployment by providing employability support to those who are at risk of being long-term unemployed and are claiming reserved benefits; and
* To help reduce the Disability Employment Gap by supporting disabled people to enter and remain in the workforce.
* To expand provision that supports the green jobs and net zero commitments;

**There are 6 NOLB principles** that will underpin the delivery expectations for all provision supported by the West Dunbartonshire Employability Grants Programme.

* Provide flexible and person-centred support.
* Be more straightforward for people to navigate.
* Be better integrated and aligned with other services, particularly with health, justice and housing provision.
* Provide pathways into sustainable and fair work.
* Be driven by evidence, including data and the experience of users.
* Support more people – particularly those facing multiple barriers – to move into the right job, at the right time.

In addition all provision supported through the grants programme should also comply with the following **additional principles** that the West Dunbartonshire Strategic Employability Group feel are critical in providing the best support to people to enable progress towards sustainable outcomes:

* ‘Travel to work’ should be considered with participants to help overcome barriers (both physical and perceived) and support access to opportunities out-with their local area and across West Dunbartonshire and the wider Glasgow City Region.
* Applicants should be prepared to become an active partner, making use of the West Dunbartonshire Strategic Employability Group resources such as training and development activity, events and be prepared to participate as appropriate in the West Dunbartonshire Creative Design Group and Community Of Practice (Frontline Workers Forum).
* Applicants should be prepared to use the range of national products such as the Employability Shared Measurement Framework, The Service Standards and Customer Charter developed by Scottish Government.
	+ Employability Shared Measurement Framework [Employability Shared Measurement Framework December 2022](https://www.employabilityinscotland.com/media/pgujxbke/for-publication-shared-measurement-framework-updated-december-2022.pdf)
	+ Employability Service Standards [Employability Service Standards](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.employabilityinscotland.com%2Fmedia%2Fcxsp3uch%2Fpublication-employability-service-standards.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)
	+ Employability Customer Charter [Employment support services: customer charter](Employment%20support%20services%3A%20customer%20charter)
* Applicants should also be prepared to make use of the Working4U pages within the West Dunbartonshire Council website and associated social media platforms to advertise activities and promote regular good news stories.
* Applicants should be prepared to evaluate quality of their provision ensuring lived experience shapes service design and delivery.
* Ensure that the design of services have considered the needs of those with protected characteristics.
* Provide additionality to existing provision available in West Dunbartonshire with connectivity, where permissible, to established provision and building progression routes into Further/Higher Education, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships and other appropriate provision, as well as supporting access to employment.
* Provision must not put at risk participants current eligibility for benefits or lead to a reduction in overall income.

# Priorities

Unemployment affects people across all areas of West Dunbartonshire however there are communities more impacted than others. Whilst the grant programme will support provision open to the priority groups above regardless of where they stay, there is also a need for provision targeting our most deprived communities (SIMD 2020).

The West Dunbartonshire Strategic Employability Group Data Group has developed a comprehensive set of data around people, health, skills and the local labour market known as the West Dunbartonshire Challenges and Themes document which highlights the key priorities.

Applicants should consider how they would address the relevant challenges when developing their proposals. The West Dunbartonshire Challenges and Themes document is part of the suite of documents that we have made available to support you in completing your application. Applicant should be clear about the target groups they are supporting and specific about the nature of that support (why it’s relevant to the specific target group).

# What types of bids are we looking for?

We invite applications that complement existing service and provision in West Dunbartonshire.

Working4U currently offers end to end Key Worker support providing tailored employability support for all ages. Current training provision includes:

* REHIS Food Hygiene
* REHIS Health and Safety
* REHIS Emergency First Aid
* Steps to Excellence
* Customer Service Training

We welcome bids supporting the key priority areas as detailed in the Data Challenges & Themes supporting document.

* Vulnerable Young People
* Long-term Unemployed
* Economically Inactive
* Families facing Poverty
* Individuals with Disabilities
* Long-term Health Conditions
* Neurodiversity
* Care Experienced
* Minority Ethnic Communities
* Community Justice
* Areas of Multiple Deprivation

We are particularly keen to receive bids around the following specialist themes/projects below however other innovative projects will be considered.

* **Community Outreach/West Dunbartonshire Employability Bus Project** – Working4U have secured a bus which has been kitted out for outreach activity and the delivery of Employability services across West Dunbartonshire. We are inviting bids from partners who will coordinate and manage the use of the bus for outreach, engagement, and employability service delivery across West Dunbartonshire throughout 24/25.
* **Parents** – to support unemployed and low income employed parents move towards and into work. The following priority family groups are most at risk of experiencing poverty, however support for parents would not just be limited to these groups.
* Lone Parent families
* Families with a young mother (aged under 25 years)
* Minority ethnic families
* Larger families (3 or more children)
* Families with a Disabled Adult or Child
* Families where the youngest child is under 1 year
* **Disability/Long-term health condition** – \*specialist support for individuals with a disability/long-term health condition to help secure and sustain employment.
* **Long-term unemployed** – \*specialist support for those who are either Long-term unemployed or at risk of being long-term unemployed to help secure and sustain employment.
* **Community Justice** – \*specialist support for those engaging with the Community Justice Service to help secure and sustain employment.

\*Specialist Employability Support is targeted at people with significant and on-going barriers to employment whose needs are not able to be met by mainstream employability support. Typically, they will require longer-term access to services including significant aftercare and in-work support to sustain employment. Participants may include, but are not limited to, disabled people including those with severe and enduring mental ill health, in recovery from addictions or experiencing long term health conditions and who require support from Key Workers with relevant experience and training.

# Safeguarding

Training providers must have comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures that address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of these priority groups. This includes conducting thorough background checks on staff members involved in the program, implementing appropriate risk assessments, and delivering comprehensive training on safeguarding and child protection to all staff. It is crucial to create a safe and supportive environment, fostering open communication channels for reporting concerns or incidents. Regular monitoring and evaluation should be conducted to identify and address any safeguarding issues promptly. Collaboration with external agencies and stakeholders is also vital to provide holistic support and protection to all participants. By integrating robust safeguarding practices into their bidding proposals, training providers demonstrate their commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of young people and adults throughout the grant programme.

# What Makes a Good Application?

* Please write succinctly and in plain English**.** Use short sentences and avoid acronyms and jargon. There is no need to use formal language. Key to a good application is being as specific as you can and assuming the reader knows nothing about your organisation, track record and project even if you have received local funding before to do similar work.
* Ideally you will provide a clear picture for the reader of what you intend to deliver, how you will do this, and what difference it will make to participants as well as how it contributes to the grant programme strategic outcomes detailed in section 2 above.
* Please provide a strong rationale to show both the need for the services and that there will be a demand from local people to take part in the provision. Identifying, recruiting and sustaining engagement of the number of participants stated is the responsibility of the organisation receiving a grant albeit that local agencies such as the DWP, Working4U and Skills Development Scotland staff may refer clients.
* Please complete all sections of the application form.

# Got a Question

You should be able to find the answers to most of the questions you may have about this Grant Award Programme within the published documentation.

If after checking through the published documentation, you need to ask a question then please email your query to: WDC\_NOLB\_Grants@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

# Eligible Spend

Providers will need to ensure that project participants are eligible for support when participating on this Grant Award Programme, for example participants must be West Dunbartonshire residents and be able to prove their right to live and work in the UK.

Only direct delivery (revenue) costs will be considered as eligible grant expenditure.

# Decision Making

An Assessment Panel consisting of SEG members will manage the assessment and scoring procedure following the Council’s grant processes.

# Grant Payment Process

Public Sector Funding dictates that grant payments require to be accounted for in the financial year of delivery. As such, all expenditure must be complete by March 2025.

A maximum of 25% of project costs may be paid up front: a payment schedule will be discussed with the applicant and will be reflected in the award of grant letter.

Further grant payments can be drawn down based on the project expenditure and performance criteria detailed in the Service Specification.

Payments will be processed through West Dunbartonshire Council’s normal accounting system and payment to applicants will be by BACS.

Regular contract monitoring meetings will be conducted by Working4U to ensure that: the project has been implemented as described; financial records associated with the project are in order; publicity arrangements; equality and sustainability policies have been complied with.

Where the applicant is unable to demonstrate sufficient progress towards achieving agreed outcomes, future funding may be withheld or reduced. Further details will be outlined in the terms and conditions.

# How we will Monitor and Evaluate the Grants programme

## Performance Management

The key performance indicators for the programme (below) are outlined in the application form and replicate the current UK and Scottish Government outcomes for grant funds. They also contribute to the grant programme outcomes:

**Key Performance Indicators –**

* Number of people supported on your project
* Number of people experiencing reduced structural barriers into employment and into skills provision
* Number of people supported to access basic skills
* Number of people engaged in life skills support following interventions
* Number of people reporting increased employability through development of interpersonal skills
* Number of people achieved a qualification
* Number of people supported into a work placement
* Number of people commenced formal volunteering
* Number of people entered employment or self-employment (including a Modern Apprenticeship)
* Number of people sustaining employment at 13, 26 and 52 weeks
* Number of people receiving in work support
* Number of people retraining
* Number of parents reporting an increase in their income through employment/changes in employment

Applicants should be clear about the key performance indicators they will achieve ensuring they are relevant to the activity. These indicators should be stretch targets that represent good value for money they should also provide a realistic indication of what will be achieved.

Successful projects may have additional outputs and outcomes which they will also monitor and report on.

## Data and Reporting Requirements

West Dunbartonshire Council uses the Management Information System Advice Pro to record service user information including evidence of outcomes and progress.

As well as providing quantitative and qualitative measures, monitoring of projects serves a number of purposes. It helps identify successful elements of projects, but conversely can help to identify areas for concern and suggestions can be discussed as to how these might be overcome. Monitoring is vital in enabling West Dunbartonshire Strategic Employability Group to gain greater insight into individual projects, but also to ensure and verify that the funds have been spent as envisaged and acknowledged correctly. Monitoring procedures will be discussed and agreed with successful applicants on an individual basis.

West Dunbartonshire Council will run reports from the MIS at a project and programme level on a quarterly basis, which alongside qualitative evidence supplied by providers including case studies will be reported to the West Dunbartonshire Strategic Employability Group, The Scottish Government and the UK Government.

## Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Grant recipients are required to establish their own evaluative processes to drive continuous improvement and monitoring processes will include grant recipients evidencing how they do this and to what effect. This will be discussed both individually at monitoring meetings.

# Key Data Provided to Support Applicants

The remainder of this document provides a range of information and key data to support applicants in the preparation of their applications.

Applicants should:

* Use their own knowledge of working with specific target groups.
* Identify local needs through their own experience of delivering service.
* Propose services which they are confident will be used by, and are useful to the client groups to improve their employability outcomes.

The following document will be of use to prospective grant applicants. It contains links to other useful documents.



# Appendix 1: UKSPF People and Skills Outputs and Outcomes for West Dunbartonshire 2024-25

| **People and Skills Outputs** |  |
| --- | --- |
| Number of people supported to access basic skills  | Number of people receiving support to attend courses aimed at improving their basic skills. - Basic skills include, but are not limited to: skills in English, Maths, Digital and ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages). |
| Number of people retraining  | Number of people training in a different area after having already obtained a qualification or developing experience in a specific role. |
| Number of people reporting increased employability through development of interpersonal skills funded by UKSPF | The number of people who have been supported by UKSPF funded activity who have reported increased employability through the acquisition or improvement of interpersonal skills relevant to employment and skills settings, including but not limited to confidence, communication skills, working with others, time management, motivation to work or do training.  |
| Number of people experiencing reduced structural barriers into employment and into skills provision | The number of people who have been supported by UKSPF funded activity to reduce barriers to employment and skills. These barriers can take a variety of forms and will interact with other characteristics of labour market disadvantage such as gender, age, health, disability and ethnicity to reduce their likelihood of labour market and skills engagement. While not exhaustive, types of commonly experienced barriers might include homelessness, being an ex-offender, being a care leaver or having substance dependency issues. Other types of barriers might relate to access to services such as care services including childcare, transport, digital and financial. Barriers may also relate to lack of interpersonal and employability skills such as confidence, motivation and behavioural issues.  |
| Number of people familiarised with employers’ expectations, including, standards of behaviour in the workplace | The number of people who have been supported by UKSPF funded activity to be familiarised with or acquire improved awareness and understanding of behaviours and attitudes appropriate to employment and skills settings, including but not limited to, standards of workplace behaviour and conduct, working with others, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, etc. This can include pre-employment or skills activity as well as activity undertaken on joining such as formal inductions and training. |
| Number of people engaged in life skills support following interventions  | Number of people engaged in life skills support following interventions. - Life skills support is defined as additional support which improves confidence, resilience or motivation around the process of job searching and may include basic skills (English, maths), digital skills, communication skills, presentation skills, activities which reduce social isolation or encourage appropriate employment related behaviours.  |