



European Union

European
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Skills Funding
Agency

Careers Local Enterprise Grant Guidance Notes & Eligibility Criteria

Contact & Submission Address:

Careerslocal@nottscc.gov.uk

Economic Development Team
Nottinghamshire County Council
County Hall
West Bridgford
Nottingham
NG2 7PQ

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supported by



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Please read all sections of these guidelines before filling in the Careers Local Enterprise Grant Application Form

1. Introduction

This guidance is intended to provide information to potential applicants of the Careers Local Enterprise Grant (CLEG). Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) are the managing agent for the Careers Local Enterprise Grant. The total amount of funding available until July 2018 is £1.574m.

The CLEG will provide grants to Educational Institutions (EI's) such as schools, specialist schools, academies, pupil referral units, alternative learning centres, virtual schools and those home educated (through registration with the local authority) across Derby City, Derbyshire, Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire.

The grant is intended to fund activities to support young people at risk of becoming 'Not in Employment, Education or Training' (NEET) to develop their employability and enterprise skills. The grants should not be used to duplicate any other provision and all applications will need to show the added value the activity will bring and why it cannot be gained through mainstream provision.

The fund is intended to be delivered through three distinct funding windows, each of which will be open for four weeks these are given below:

- Late February – Late March 2017
- June 2017
- September 2017

This timetable maybe subject to change depending upon the levels of interest shown by EI's.

This document provides further information on how to apply for the available funding.

2. Background and Rationale

The CLEG has been designed to support EI's to provide employability and enterprise activities for young people aged 15 – 19 who are at risk of becoming NEET.

The reasoning for doing so, is to ensure that the ten goals that all Young People should be able to achieve as identified within the D2N2 Employability Framework can be realised, recognising that young people who are at risk of becoming NEET may require additional support in order to access opportunities available to them.

Therefore, the CLEG by enabling EI's to provide this additional support to young people at risk of becoming NEET will help realise the strategic objective of the D2N2 Employability Framework of ensuring that skills provision is optimised for young people and employers.

It should be noted that the D2N2 Employability Framework is intended to complement and integrate with existing activity and not to duplicate what is already in place, to enable the

strategic realisation of a shared ambition for young people across Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, more information about the D2N2 Employability Framework can be accessed by following the link below:

<http://www.d2n2lep.org/skills/employability-framework>

3. Eligible Costs

The CLEG is intended to support activities which will increase the employability and enterprise skills of young people at risk of becoming NEET. NCC does not wish to be descriptive but would expect activity to include a focus on the D2N2 Priority Sectors <http://www.d2n2lep.org/Key-Sectors> and increase knowledge and engage employers from these sectors in any activities.

The grant should only be used for eligible activities, such as:

- Personal development course and activities,
- Using local labour market intelligence,
- Job Search CV and interview techniques,
- Personalised support and careers advice,
- Careers fairs and events,
- Participation in industry sponsored competitions,
- Enterprise activities,
- Experience of the workplace,
- Conversations with employers and working people,
- Volunteering and other work experience,
- Staff development at Educational Institutions which will enhance the ability of that Institution to provide careers education information advice and guidance.

The above list is not exhaustive, if you are in any doubt about the eligibility of your proposal you should contact us at careerslocal@nottsc.gov.uk before submitting the application. If ineligible activities are discovered at a later date then NCC reserve the right to withhold payment or reclaim any funding which has been paid.

NCC have procured a quality assured list of employability and enterprise providers which EI's can purchase services from. This will remove the need for EI's to go through their own procurement process and be confident that they are complying with European Social Fund Rules.

Where EI's wish to purchase from outside of this framework they must be able to demonstrate that services have been procured in a compliant manner, and that services are quality assured (see section 9 for details) to the satisfaction of NCC as the Managing Agent. NCC will need to be reassured that the correct procurement process has been followed to reduce the risk of not being reimbursed by the Skills Funding Agency who fund the grants via NCC.

Funding provided to EI's through the CLEG should be used to fund activities which directly enable the young people at risk of becoming NEET to develop employability and enterprise skills, or to support activities which demonstrate the efficacy of interventions for the purposes of monitoring and that these support costs are reasonable, as judged by the Managing Agent (NCC).

Incentive payments while not prohibited, must be justified to the Managing Agent with suitable evidence provided regarding the efficacy of such payments in regard to enhancing employability and enterprise skills of young people at risk of becoming NEET.

EI's may use CLEG funding for minor capital purchases, if intending to do so an EI must notify the Managing Agent prior to making a purchase. Any such expenditure should be related to the provision of activities aimed at developing the employability and enterprise skills of young people at risk of becoming NEET, justification for the expenditure will need to be provided to the Managing Agent.

It is expected that all activities can be directly related to an increase in employability and enterprise and you will be expected to show how the activity has achieved this.

4. Applicant Eligibility

Any EI in Derby City, Derbyshire, Nottingham City or Nottinghamshire is eligible to apply. For the purposes of the CLEG EI's are defined as:

- Schools,
- Specialist Schools,
- Academies,
- Pupil Referral Units,
- Alternative Learning Centres,
- Virtual Schools,
- Home Educated (through registration with Local Authority).

All EI's must:

- Be working to the principles of the D2N2 Employability Framework,
- Developed an approved Enterprise Action Plan with strategic local employer involvement, in line with the D2N2 Employability Framework,
- Apply for a grant, setting out the activities to be funded and impact on young people at risk of NEET,
- Evaluate and report on the impact of the activities delivered for young people in terms of their employability and enterprise skills, to NCC for monitoring purposes.

5. Grant Budget and Grant Rates

The total budget for the CLEG, jointly funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) is £1.574 million available until July 2018.

The maximum grant payable will be £10,000 per EI. In limited exceptional circumstances and with the authority of the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) a grant up to £20,000 may be payable.

Exceptional circumstances may include the following;

- Higher service costs due to challenges posed by provision within rural areas.
- EI's which have a significantly greater proportion of young people at risk of NEET within the target age group.
- EI's which require a greater intensity of activity to meet the needs of Young People at risk of NEET due to displaying higher levels of disengagement.

The list of circumstances provided which may be considered as qualifying for additional funding are indicative only, and as such do not cover the full range of exceptional circumstances. In the event that EI's are unsure over qualification for exceptional payments, please contact NCC through the channels given in section 11 of this guidance.

Due to the limited amount of funding available there is a limit of one grant per EI over the lifetime of the fund to ensure an equitable distribution of grant payments, this will be reviewed in autumn 2017 to ensure maximum spend. EI's part of a family of schools or a Multi Academy Trust, can apply on behalf of the other eligible EI's in their group.

All of the funding must be spent by June 2018.

Each upper tier authority has been allocated funding based on an agreed methodology. The allocation of funding is as follows

Derby City	£220,485
Derbyshire	£510,281.27
Nottingham City	£332,735.82
Nottinghamshire	£510,748.91
Total	£1,574,251

The grant allocations will be reviewed on a regular basis and if the funding for a particular area has not been allocated NCC reserve the right to re-allocate to other area(s) subject to discussion with partners.

6. Application Process

The CLEG will be managed through three applications windows, each of which will be open for a period of four weeks with the windows scheduled to open in February 2017, June 2017 and September 2017. This is subject to the level of interest expressed by EI's across Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, with NCC reserving the right to remove or add funding windows accordingly.

NCC will make a public call for bids upon the opening of a funding window, giving a clear indication of the opening and closing dates of the funding window.

All applications must be submitted on the CLEG NCC application form and submitted via careerslocal@nottsc.gov.uk, application forms submitted after the closing date for each window, will not be considered for the elapsed funding window, but will automatically be put forward for consideration in the next funding unless the application was submitted after the closure of the final funding window in which case there will not be another opportunity to bid for funding.

In the event of application forms being put forward automatically for consideration in future funding rounds, NCC will contact applicants upon the opening of the next funding window to check that they still wish to make an application into the CLEG.

7. Selection Process

Upon receipt of an application form, NCC will assess for eligibility and completeness, in the event that there is a question regarding eligibility or something missing from an application form a query will be raised by NCC with the applicant. Upon a query being raised, the applicant has five clear working days to respond to the query, at the end of this period if the information received by NCC is judged to be insufficient the application will be rejected.

Additionally, any applications made which clearly, in the view of the NCC, do not fit the eligibility criteria outlined within sections 3 & 4 of this document, will be rejected without the need for a query period to be raised.

Once a funding window has been closed, NCC will endeavour to process all applications in a timely manner, with all applications being considered together at an assessment panel. The panel will be comprised of representatives from Derby City Council, Derbyshire County Council, Nottingham City Council, Nottinghamshire County Council and the D2 and N2 Skills & Employment Boards.

There will also be a query mechanism for the assessment panel to address applicants, in the event that they require further information regarding any of the answers provided within the application form. As with the query process described above, in the event of a query being raised at this stage the applicant has five clear working days in order to provide a sufficient response, applications which do not receive a satisfactory response will be rejected.

All applications will be scored and ranked according to a 'RAG' rating system, by the assessment panel, with funding awards only being offered to EI's whose applications are ranked as 'Green'.

Once the assessment panel has reached a funding decision, NCC will endeavour to notify all applicants of the outcome via an email from careerslocal@nottscc.gov.uk within 15 days of a decision being made, with successful applicants then receiving further communication regarding the grant offer.

In the event that an EI wishes to challenge the decision of the assessment panel, a written submission outlining the grounds for challenge should be sent via email to careerslocal@nottscc.gov.uk within 5 working days of the funding decision being communicated. NCC will consider the evidence submitted and escalate as appropriate for a final decision, but reserve the right to uphold the original funding decision.

8. Grant Offer

If the application is successful, NCC will notify applicants initially via an email, followed by the sending of a hard copy Grant Offer Letter and Grant Funding Agreement. Any award will be made on the basis of the terms and conditions outlined within the Grant Offer Letter and Grant Funding Agreement. These documents will typically include a schedule / timeframe for grant payments, start and finish dates, and the maximum amount or percentage of grant offered.

Once received, applicants will have 10 clear working days from the date of the Grant Offer Letter to sign and return the Acceptance of Grant Funding Agreement acknowledgement to confirm acceptance of grant. After this date the offer will be automatically withdrawn. The applicant will then have to re-apply to a future round if they still wish to proceed after this date.

NB Projects can only start once the Acceptance of Grant Funding Agreement acknowledgement has been signed and returned to NCC

NCC reserves the right to withhold, vary or reclaim funding in the event that an applicant:

- Fails to comply with conditions of the grant agreement,
- Fails to disclose information relevant to their application,
- Provides information which is misleading or incorrect.

9. General Conditions of Grant

Prior to any grant award, each EI must provide evidence that the goods / services have been procured fairly and transparently in accordance with answer 3.10 provided within the application form and the procurement conditions specified within the Grant Agreement, the evidence provided must be to the satisfaction of NCC as the Managing Agent.

No grant funded work is to be carried out other than in accordance with the agreed project outlined in the application and as agreed in the Grant Offer letter.

NCC must be notified immediately of any variations needed to the agreed offer and before any variation to the application takes place. Variations to the agreement must be approved in writing prior to such work commencing. NCC reserves the right to refuse the grant for changes to the specification which it deems not appropriate for the CLEG.

Applicants are encouraged to use services from approved providers procured from the CLEG provider framework.

In the event an applicant wishes to appoint a provider from outside of the approved framework, the applicant must supply evidence that the intended procurement process demonstrates:

- Fairness and Transparency
- Value for Money
- Quality Assurance

NCC do not wish to be overly prescriptive regarding the evidence that applicants should provide. However, applicants should take into consideration the above criteria, to ensure that the evidence provided meets these criteria in order to minimise the risk of not being reimbursed by the Skills Funding Agency who fund grants via NCC.

Applicants will also need to provide sufficient reasoning to explain why the services they require cannot be obtained through the approved procurement framework. Furthermore, NCC as the Managing Agent reserve the right to refuse requests from applicants to procure from outside of the provider framework.

If an applicant proposes to change supplier of goods / services or the value of the contract(s) are different from that agreed, NCC reserve the right to request that a new procurement is enacted.

Approved projects must be completed by the date specified in the offer letter unless agreed otherwise by NCC. The applicant must inform NCC immediately if the deadline cannot be met. NCC will then consider the most appropriate action but is under no obligation to alter the conditions in the original offer letter and grant agreement.

If within 1 month of the completion date specified within the offer letter, the EI has not spent the entirety of the amount awarded to them, they will be contacted by NCC regarding the outstanding amount, who reserve the right to withhold payment if they are not satisfied that the EI will spend the allocation prior to the deadline.

10. Payment of Grant

Applicants will submit their grant claim in accordance with the terms and conditions set out within the Grant Offer Letter and Grant Funding Agreement and any subsequent approved change requests.

The applicant must submit the claim for grant assistance by the date(s) stated in the Grant Offer Letter. Grant will generally be paid in accordance with the phasing of the payments agreed between the applicant and the procured organisation(s).

Payment of the grant will only be made when NCC receives appropriate supporting evidence for each phase, which includes:

- The agreement between the applicant and the procured service provider(s) detailing the type of support being provided, the timescale for delivery and the total cost, including VAT;
- The original invoice(s), OR a certified copy of the original invoice(s), from the procured service provider(s) to the applicant for the full costs of the goods / services delivered evidencing expenditure defrayal (Bank statement or equivalent). Invoices dated before the date of the offer letter will not be eligible for payment;
- Procurement evidence outlining that the goods / services were compliantly sourced and procured (as per section 9 above).
- Monitoring evidence relating to the young people being supported by the CLEG as detailed in the grant agreement.

If the actual costs are less than those outlined in the application and agreed in the Grant Offer Letter, the maximum amount of grant to be paid will not exceed the actual amount on the receipted invoice. Additionally, if the costs of the proposed project exceed the amount stated in the application, NCC is not obliged to increase the grant amount.

Final payments will be subject to the applicant having satisfactorily completed the project and complied with all terms and conditions of the Grant Offer Letter and Grant Funding Agreement and there being no dispute between the applicant and its procured organisations. The Agreement covers matters of dispute resolution.

11. Application Submission and General Support

If you would like to discuss the general eligibility of your proposal or have any other queries regarding making a proposal, please contact us via email at careerslocal@nottscc.gov.uk or call Kevin Bartlett on 01159 773051.