

# SKILLS BOOTCAMPS

APPENDIX A - SPECIFICATION AND GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

## Technical

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 Following the Government's decision to Grant Fund MCAs Wave 4 Skills Bootcamps funding, the Combined Authority has identified unique projects to support organisations, sector representative groups, employers and/or delivery partners in the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area to address skills shortages. This Technical specification includes the following projects:

### Project 1: Welding

- 1.2 Funding of up to £100,000 will be available for this project based on demand highlighted through evidenced employer need, regional market intelligence, and provider resource.
- 1.3 The fund is seeking applications from organisations who can collaborate to co-design and co-deliver innovative approaches to address 'in-demand' skills across the Technical sector. These can be new or existing collaborations and can consist of any combination of employers, training providers, colleges, universities, sector representatives and / or other community of charity organisations - there is no set formula.
- 1.4 Employers applying to the fund must be located and operate in the West of England (LEP) region and training providers and other organisations must be able to demonstrate that they have clear links to employers in those regions. Applications to this fund will **open from 12 noon Monday 30<sup>th</sup> January 2023 until 12 noon Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2023.**
- 1.5 Applications should not exceed the maximum cost per learner set for the project:
- Welding: £4000
- 1.6 This specification is purposefully designed to encourage innovation and places employer skills needs at its centre. Skills Bootcamps offer a great deal of flexibility. Non-accredited solutions are encouraged when responding directly to the bespoke needs of the employer or region.

**It should be noted that responding to this application is not a guarantee of funding. The application is a competitive process with each response assessed by a panel of assessors against pre-determined criteria as detailed within the application form.**

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Over the course of this Parliament, the Government are providing GBP 2.5 billion. (GBP 3 billion when including Barnett funding for devolved administrations) for the National Skills Fund. The fund will help businesses hire the workers they need; as well as supporting adults to flourish and fulfil their potential through high quality training.
- 2.2 Skills Bootcamps aim to secure benefits for adults by giving them access to in-demand skills training and a guaranteed interview (in case of a new job) for a more sustainable, higher-skilled job and higher wages over time. The benefits for employers include helping them fill specific skills shortage vacancies, enabling them to become more productive, more quickly.

## 3. REGIONAL DIGITAL SKILLS PRIORITIES

### **Welding**

Welding makes up part of the engineering sector regarded as critical to the regions ongoing prosperity. Historic and projected job loss continues in this sector but slower in the West of England Combined Authority than nationally. In November 2022 there were over 145 roles advertised within the region requiring welding skills.

Fourteen of the world's 15 major aerospace firms have bases in the region, mostly focused on the UK's largest aerospace cluster at Filton in North Bristol, which includes Airbus, BAE Systems, GKN, Renishaw, Rolls-Royce and Rotork. Approximately, 180 aerospace companies in 2021 were located in the area. Furthermore, large scale developments such as Hinkley C and Gravity continue to draw expertise from the area.

With the need for thousands of welders at large infrastructure projects with Hinkley C and Gravity there is an increasing need for this technical skill. Between Jun 2021 - Dec 2021 there were over 300 unique job postings for welders, however in the same period a year later this number has increased by 75% rising to 670 unique job postings, with a higher posting intensity meaning employers are posting one job to multiple sites as demand increases.

## 4. SCOPE & FUND OBJECTIVES

### 4.1 FOR SKILLS BOOTCAMPS

The key objectives of funding for all projects are:  
For key performance indicators please see section (10)

- 4.1.1 To deliver training programmes lasting no longer than 16 weeks, based on employer/sector 'in demand' skills which may be either accredited, with an awarding body or non-accredited aligned to industry standards.
- 4.1.2 Non-accredited courses should adopt a recognised skills framework for quality assurance for example, Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA) or International Skills and Competency Framework (SFIA).
- 4.1.3 Skills Bootcamps should be a minimum of 60 Guided Learning Hours (GLH)\*. Guided Learning Hours are the time a Learner spends being taught or instructed by, or otherwise participating in education or training under the immediate, real-time guidance of a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate supplier of education or training, whether online or in person. Pre-recorded content does not count towards GLHs.  
  
\*In this sense Guided Learning Hours are classed as contact hours.
- 4.1.4 Programmes should be flexible to work around adult's existing commitments with a focus on widening participation capturing even the most rural locations, therefore blended, online or face-to-face solutions are acceptable.
- 4.1.5 All courses must be able to evidence employer engagement at the design and delivery stage and support learners to positively progress, with the offer of an interview after the course (in case of a new job).
- 4.1.6 To address the needs of adults (19+) who are full-time and part-time employed, unemployed, returning to work after a break or self-employed, and provide individuals with wider access to opportunities to retrain, update or formalise their skills or acquire specialist skills with offer of a guaranteed job interview (in the case of a new job) to all learners on completion of their learning outcomes.
- 4.1.7 To address the needs of employers and the wider economy, to deliver targeted interventions to meet short-medium term demand to fill vacancies and drive productivity. Skills Bootcamps will help fill medium-higher level vacancies and bring individuals closer to better jobs, by linking them with line of sight to a job/different role, additional responsibilities or new opportunities/contracts.
- 4.1.8 To meet vacancy needs and bring individuals closer to better jobs (including those currently in employment), by linking them with line of sight to a job/different role, additional responsibilities or contracts.

- 4.1.9 The Combined Authority's Skills Bootcamp funding is available to providers, employers and residents employed or looking for employment within the West of England LEP area.

### **The key objectives of funding for project Welding**

We are specifically seeking proposals that support learners to develop skills in welding. Learners will be required to produce fillet and butt-welded joints in several positions, using either TIG or MIG welding techniques.

This Skills Bootcamp should be delivered within 16 weeks and will typically be made of c.60 guided learning hours (contact hours).

Delivery methodology can be creative about the duration of Skills Bootcamps, intensity, place/mode of delivery to best meet the needs of participants and recruiting employers. The onus will be on providers to explain the rationale for the type of delivery they have chosen.

All learners should be provided with a certificate that identifies learning outcomes and where applicable a portfolio of work to aid future employment or progression at interview.

Wrap around support should include careers information advice and guidance (CEIAG), developing interview techniques and CV writing skills.

If learners are unable to complete the training, they should be signposted to further services including the Combined Authority's Skill Connect hub and the National Careers Service, for information on further opportunities.

An Initial Assessment (IA) should be used to ensure the right learner is on the right course and should ask questions to establish if the learner is able to study at the required level. Where needed additional support should be provided to overcome learning barriers. However, if the gap is too wide referrals are to be made to [skills@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:skills@westofengland-ca.gov.uk)

All learners to have an opportunity to attend a real interview for live positions, after they have completed all the learning outcomes for that course and if their intended destination is a new job. If learners require additional support with CV writing or interview techniques they can be referred to [skills@westofengland-ca.gov.uk](mailto:skills@westofengland-ca.gov.uk)

Progression should be recorded up to six months after completing the Skills Bootcamps or when intended destination is met, whatever happens sooner. Returns will be made through paperwork submitted to your Combined Authority contact.

#### **Minimum expected employer involvement:**

**Collaborating** with a training provider and taking some responsibility for the design and delivery of the learning objectives.

A **guaranteed interview** will be expected from the employer involved with the planning and delivery of the training. However, if this is not practical due to unforeseen circumstances, then a different employer can offer an interview. This alternative employer should not be affiliated with the training provider. Interviews are expected when the outcome is a new job.

**Track learners' progression:** take responsibility to support the training provider if applicable to track learners' progression up to six months of completion of the Skills Bootcamp.

## 5. KEY REQUIREMENTS

### 5.1 VALUE FOR MONEY

Through the application form you will be expected to provide a breakdown of costs for both core delivery and wraparound support. You should ensure that the cost per learner does not exceed the maximum amounts stated in section 1.5 of this specification.

### 5.2 PROGRAMME DESIGN & CONTENT

You will be expected to outline your programme through the application form, based on the below criteria. Word counts will require you to succinctly outline your bid. Provide evidence for any claims you make, claims un evidenced will not be taken into consideration during the assessment process. Short sentences and bullet points are advisable.

**You will be required to submit a letter from each employer explaining their involvement in the programme. The letters will need to be submitted alongside your application.**

**This process is about succinctly evidencing what you can do, not producing lengthy wordy bids.**

5.2.1 Outline your approach to the design/delivery of the Skills Bootcamp model to support new jobs and new skills in local economies:

5.2.1.1 State what data/information and consultation you have used to determine the Skills Bootcamp need, for example labour market intelligence, sector skills briefings, previous experience.

5.2.1.2 Detail the content of your Skills Bootcamp and how this meets the aims and objectives of the initiative as defined within Section 4.1 of this specification.

- 5.2.1.3 Describe how your proposed Skills Bootcamps will support training that will address identified skill gaps.
  - 5.2.1.4 Detail how the Skills Bootcamp proposed considers the training needs of i) the unemployed, ii) those looking to move into a new job with an existing employer iii) those looking to move into a new role or additional responsibilities with an existing employer, or iv) the self-employed looking to access new contracts and new opportunities.
  - 5.2.1.5 How have you considered the climate emergency in this proposal.
  - 5.2.1.6 List project staffing structure including job title and FTE.
  - 5.2.1.7 Identify key stakeholders and the role they will play in the design and delivery of your Skills Bootcamps.
  - 5.2.1.8 Complete a training delivery plan that includes numbers to be trained by cohort, number of guided learning hours (contact and non-contact), length of training, delivery location and training delivery dates.
  - 5.2.1.9 Complete a project implementation plan that outlines the key milestones for your project.
  - 5.2.1.10 Complete a risk register detailing the key risks to delivery and the mitigations you propose to undertake in response.
- 5.2.2 Describe prior experience you have had of delivering training Initiatives:
- 5.2.2.1 Provide specific examples of training you have delivered and include % figures for learner retention and achievement.
  - 5.2.2.2 Give any specific examples of prior successful delivery of employer led training.
  - 5.2.2.3 Provide examples of learner success stories.
  - 5.2.2.4 Provide examples of where corrective action has provided successful or positive outcomes.
- 5.2.3 Explain in detail how your Skills Bootcamp is employer centric (places employer outcomes at the centre of the project):

- 5.2.3.1 Provide name and contact details for all employers engaged in the proposed project, to include details of the type of engagement, for example: sponsoring their own employees to participate in the Skills Bootcamps; offering co-investment (e.g., venue, equipment), involvement in delivery (e.g., masterclasses), involvement in proposal planning and design.

If you are a Training Provider in your response you must:

- 5.2.3.2 Describe how you will ensure that employers actively engaged in your programme remain engaged throughout delivery.
- 5.2.3.3 Describe how you will grow your employer networks further.
- 5.2.3.4 Describe methods you will use for linking up providers and employers.
- 5.2.3.5 Describe how you will encourage SME involvement to meet the 60% SME target.

If you are an Employer in your response you must:

- 5.2.3.6 Describe how the Skills Bootcamp will benefit your organisation's aims and objectives.
- 5.2.3.7 Describe how the Skills Bootcamp will benefit others within the supply chain.

**5.2.4 Describe your over-arching approach to learner engagement and enrolment:**

- 5.2.4.1 Describe the marketing approach you will take to market your Skills Bootcamp to the chosen demographic.
- 5.2.4.1 Describe the marketing methods you will use.
- 5.2.4.2 Describe alternative plans you have in place, should you be unable to recruit the numbers in plan.
- 5.2.4.3 Describe how you will ensure that recruitment processes are fair and transparent.

- 5.2.4.4 Describe how you will engage and recruit under-represented groups, such as those with protected characteristics, and those who might face barriers to employment e.g., veterans or serving prisoners due to be released within 6 months of completion of the Skills Bootcamp and those on Temporary Release.
- 5.2.4.5 Describe how you will ensure Skills Bootcamp opportunities are made available to all those eligible.
- 5.2.4.6 Describe the initial assessment process that ensures applicants receive the right training and the right wraparound support.
- 5.2.4.7 Demonstrate how you will support applicants if the Skills Bootcamp is found not be suitable for them or they leave prior to commencing the course.

**5.2.5 Describe your over-arching approach to wraparound support, particularly for under-represented groups:**

- 5.2.5.1 Demonstrate how you will support participants if they leave prior to completing the Skills Bootcamp.
- 5.2.5.1 Describe what support you will provide the course participant enabling meaningful progression. mentoring, coaching, interview preparation, signposting, career advice.
- 5.2.5.2 Demonstrate how you will support participants if they leave prior to completing the Skills Bootcamp.
- 5.2.5.3 Describe alternative delivery arrangements to meet changes in participants circumstances.

**5.2.6 Illustrate how you will support learners to progress:**

- 5.2.6.1 Explain in detail the progression outcomes for the individuals pertaining to your Skills Bootcamp, to include where relevant:
  - Types of new roles and responsibilities available (employer co-funded learners)
  - New jobs available (independent/unemployed learners)
  - New work contracts available (self-employed)

5.2.6.2 Outline strategies for maintaining learner engagement after completion of learning outcomes.

**5.2.7 Describe your cyclical approach to monitoring quality assurance and continuous improvement, to include:**

- Process of evaluation and action planning
- Sharing of good practice
- Implementation of robust, auditable and transparent procedures

**5.2.8 Describe your approach to data collection management and reporting to meet Authority requirements:**

5.2.6.2 Describe who will be responsible for collating data.

5.2.6.3 Describe how you will coordinate data collection and reporting within your supply chain.

5.2.6.4 Describe how you will ensure that all required data is collected and reported to the Authority on a monthly basis.

5.2.6.5 Describe how you will ensure that the data collected is accurate.

## **6. TARGET PARTICIPANTS**

6.1 As a primary target we want training to focus on helping improve career progression and opportunities to enter and progress with this important sector.

6.2 We want to further ensure that training is accessible to a wide range of potential learners, provides new opportunities to enter the sector and training improves the diversity of within the sector.

6.3 Target participants include:

- Adults over 19
- Unemployed
- Employed including self employed
- Recently unemployed
- Underrepresented individuals with the sector e.g., women, BAME and those with protected characteristics.

## **7. ELIGIBILITY**

### **7.1 Employers:**

7.1.1 The fund is open to any business that requires specialist training across all sectors (public, private & voluntary) and sizes. Employers must be located in the West of England LEP geographical area, and the fund must support training for jobs in those regions.

### **7.2 Training providers:**

7.2.1 The fund is open to any organisation with a track record of delivering industry relevant training including (but not limited to), private training providers, employer providers, social enterprises, colleges and universities. Organisation must be able to evidence that they have links with employers in the West of England LEP region.

### **7.3 Learners:**

7.3.1 Skills Bootcamps are open to all adults aged 19 or over on 31 August within the 2023 to 2024 funding year, who are full-time or part-time employed, self-employed, unemployed, as well as adults returning to work after a break.

7.3.2 Providers have discretion to determine whether to use a Skills Bootcamp to support adults who have been unemployed for longer than 12 months if they judge that it will support them effectively. Serving prisoners due to be released within 6 months of completion of a Skills Bootcamp and those on Temporary Release are also eligible.

7.3.3 All Skills Bootcamps must be open to all eligible adults within the communities they serve. Includes adults living outside the LEP Geographical region but working for an employer within the region or training to gain a job within the region.

7.3.4 No prior attainment is required unless specifically prescribed by an employer and/or specifically related to the job and sector within which the vacancies offered are situated. An adult may only undertake one Skills Bootcamp per funding year.

7.3.5 An adult must have the right to work in the UK, this right can be checked on [gov.uk/view-right-to-work](https://www.gov.uk/view-right-to-work).

## 8. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

- 8.1 Skills Bootcamps: will be co-funded at 30% by the employer where the employer is training their own existing employees (defined as someone directly employed by the employer, not a worker, sub-contractor, or freelancer) and the organisation employees 251 people or more.
- 8.2 Small Medium Enterprises (SME): will see the co-funded amount reduce to 10% when training their own staff. An SME is defined as an employer who employs less than 250 employees.
- 8.3 Full funding: Courses are fully funded by Government for individuals not co-funded by their employer, for the self-employed and the unemployed.
- 8.4 Charges to learners: There should be no charge to adult learners.

## 9. TIMESCALES MILESTONES

Date	Delivery action
30/01/2023	Bid process launched - engagement presentation
06/02/2023	Stakeholder Networking and Matching Event
27/02/2023	Bid application process closed
27/02/2023	Bid applications released to evaluators
17/03/2023	Bid assessment process
17/03/2023	Due diligence and grant funding in anticipation for approval
27/03/2023	Clarifications
07/04/2023	Recommendations to go to SOG, SMT and CEOs
24/04/2023	Contracts awarded
05/05/2023	Contracts returned
12/05/2023	Provision Starts

## 10. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REQUIREMENTS

- 10.1 **We expect 100% of learners** who achieve all the learning outcomes to receive an interview (in the case of a new job) with an employer for live vacancies. Additionally, 75% of learners to progress to a job, in-work progression, apprenticeship or new responsibilities in response to the training received within six months of completing all the learning aims. The lead provider will be expected to provide evidence to show this.
- 10.2 **Numbers of SME employers involved (aiming for 60%):**

- 10.2.1 Numbers of and personal details/demographic data for all applicants (\*including those not successful).
- 10.2.3 Details of job interviews/individuals into new roles and the success rate.
- 10.2.4 Track successful candidates at 6 months to determine continued employment/ income status.
- 10.2.5 Providers will be required to participate in further data collection and qualitative interviews for the evaluation which will be conducted by the research contractor set by the DfE.

### **10.3 Data reporting:**

- 10.3.1 We require providers to provide information and data of their Skills Bootcamp which will be shared with the DfE. This will be via management information spreadsheets, and will be used for purposes including payment, evaluation, and audit and assurance.

### **10.4 Payment:**

- 10.4.1 Following receipt of the signed grant funding agreement, payments will be made upon results and paid one month in arrears of an eligible claim and where costs have been defrayed and evidenced and upon receipt of satisfactory monitoring reports.
- 10.4.2 45% of agreed unit cost on completion of 5 qualifying days. A qualifying day means that a learner attended day 1 of their Skills Bootcamp and undertook the required study and remains on programme on day 5 (calendar days) having completed a minimum of 5 guided learning hours (contact hours).
- 10.4.3 35% of agreed unit cost on successful completion of the training programme including passing any required assessments.

AND

- 10.4.4 An offer of an interview on completion of the Skills Bootcamp for a job that matches the new skills acquired through the Skills Bootcamp, where the learner is fully funded.
- 10.4.5 An offer of a new role or new responsibilities that matches the new skills acquired through the Skills Bootcamp where the learner is co-funded.

10.4.6 Written conformation/plan from the learners of how the learning has been/will be applied to acquire new opportunities/contracts where the learner is self-employed.

10.4.7 20% of agreed unit cost on receipt of recording of ‘a successful outcome’ (a successful outcome being the offer of a new job, which must be continuous employment for at least 12 weeks), an Apprenticeship, a new role or additional responsibilities with an existing employer, or new contracts or new opportunities for the self-employed, utilising the skills acquired in the Skills Bootcamp, within 6 months of completing the Skills Bootcamp.

10.4.8 The Combined Authority will request evidence throughout the term of the project to support the above e.g., learner registration records, accreditation, certification or digital reporting records, copies of work contracts etc. In cases where irregularities are identified, the Authority reserves the right to carry out further checks and other remedial action to be defined at contract stage.

10.4.9 The Combined Authority will pay:

- up to 100% of the unit rate for eligible learners deemed to be fully funded.
- up to 70% of the unit rate for those eligible learners where their employer is training their own employees. Employers must co-fund 30% of the unit rate, where their employee is undertaking a Skills Bootcamp, this is reduced for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) (defined as an employer with less than 250 employees) who must co-fund 10% of the unit rate where their employee is undertaking a Skills Bootcamp.

First 5 days	Completion of learning aims and offer of interview if applicable	Paid on successful outcome (positive progression)
45%	35%	20%

## 10.5 Evaluation:

10.5.1 The Combined Authority may themselves or commission an independent evaluation to evaluate the impact of the programme. Providers will be expected to work closely with the evaluator, for example collecting and sharing participant data, creation of case studies, information on course design, completing a learner survey

and in some cases taking part in interviews or focus groups to share your experiences. Successful providers will be expected to share their bids with the evaluator following grant award.

## **10.6 Quality Assurance:**

10.6.1 Both the DfE and the Combined Authority will be taking an active role on quality assurance. The DfE will contact providers directly to arrange a quality visit. The Combined Authority may carry out quality visits in conjunction with the DfE or independently. You are to expect at least one quality visit per Skills Bootcamp.

10.6.2 Quality Assurance visits will last a full day and comprise of:

- Observation of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Review of policies and processes.
- Examination of assessed work.
- Learner and Provider discussions.

A written report will be provided within a week of the quality assurance visit. These are not graded and will not be publicly shared.

10.6.3 Skills Bootcamps will join the Ofsted remit for inspection under the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) from April 2023.

10.6.4 The Combined Authority and the DfE can survey adult learners during and at the end of their course to determine learner experience and intended next steps.

10.6.5 The Combined Authority and the DfE can survey participating employers to understand the impact of Skills Bootcamps on employers and the workforce.

## **11. SKILLS**

11.1 This project prioritises the delivery of employment outcomes and expertise of working with employers within the Technical Sector. As part of their proposals, organisations must be able to show their ability to work with employers and deliver industry relevant quality training courses.

11.2 This project also prioritises inclusive training targeted at specific groups disproportionately affected by COVID or underrepresented within the industry. As part of their proposals, organisations must be able to show

their own expertise or be able to demonstrate partnership working to support these target groups and remove barriers to their engagement. Providers must provide and maintain the necessary facilities and employees with appropriate qualifications, clearances (DBS) and experience to undertake the training and to provide the management information required for regular reporting.

- 11.3 Due to the nature of the funding, we expect partners to have significant expertise in the Technical Skills sector and the progression routes within the sector important for the region. This knowledge is invaluable to the region to support individuals and other stakeholders to understand Technical skills needs and progression pathways. As a result, we expect social value delivered as part of this programme. See details within the application form.