

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire ESF 2014-2020 Programme Delivery



Introduction

The vision of the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Strategic Economic Plan is to grow the economy by 50% and generate 50,000 new jobs in 10 years to 2021 (50:50:10).

The 2014-2020 European Union (EU) Programme is key to helping the LEP realise its ambitions of developing education and skills amongst all age groups, to ensure the future economic prosperity and competitiveness of Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire. With direct impacts linking secure employment, higher living standards and improved health and wellbeing amongst other positive outcomes for individuals and communities.

The £55million ESF allocation is specifically to address skills, employability and social inclusion in the SSLEP area. There is also an amount of ESF from the allocation made to Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP (GBSLEP) for investment in Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire due to four Staffordshire districts being in both LEPs.

SSLEP has been working with three national Opt-in organisations for the delivery of ESF programmes. The Big Lottery; Department for Work and Pensions (DWP); Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) have procured, and are now managing and match funding employment and skills provision funded by ESF. To date 12 contracts have been awarded, totalling £37m.

This document is a simple guide to the ESF programmes that sets out the range of learning, training and employability options for residents and businesses in the SSLEP area and showcases examples of the delivery to date. For more detailed information about providers and referral routes please see our ESIF ESF Delivery Programme guide on the SSLEP website at

www.stokestaffslep.org.uk/resources/publicationlibrary

Outputs and Outcomes

Outcomes for Skills, Employment and Inclusion

The key outcomes as a result of this EU investment will be:

- Improved economic participation across the labour market
- Reduced income disparity and increased social inclusion
- Increased employment levels and productivity

The key measurable outputs to ensure investment is on track will include:

- Participants on the programme
- Unemployed participants
- Employed participants on the programme
- Young people participating in the programme

The key measurable results to ensure investment is making a difference will include:

- Number of people supported into work
- Number of people with improved basic/higher level skills
- Number of people in employment
- Reduced skills deficits

Overall outputs and results commissioned through the opt-in partners can be summarised as follows:

| Key Outputs | | |
|-------------|----------------------------------|-------|
| | Total Learners Engaged | 18609 |
| | Total Progression Apprenticeship | 3400 |
| | Total Progression Traineeship | 1191 |
| | Total Progression Employment | 3090 |
| | Total Progression Education | 1720 |
| | Total SME Engagement | 2998 |

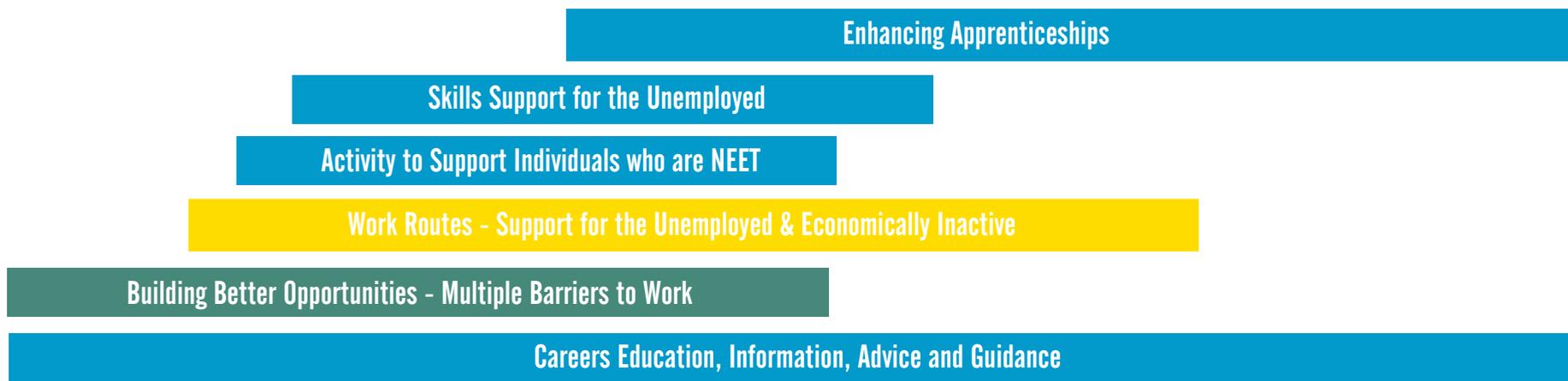
Skills, Employment & Social Inclusion Pathway



Priority 2: Skills for Growth



Priority 1: Inclusive Labour Markets



Key

- Big Lottery Opt-in Programme
- DWP Opt-in Programme
- SFA Opt-in Programme

ESF Opt-In Overview

The Big Lottery - Building Better Opportunities

The programme provides holistic support for disadvantaged people, focusing on those who are furthest from the labour market to access learning, training, volunteering and job opportunities. Personal coaches provide a coordinated individualised approach giving those with multiple barriers tailored support. This may include job search, volunteering, work placements, work skills, improved motivation and confidence alongside support with financial management, housing, mental health and careers advice and guidance.

The programme is delivered across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire with a lead provider for the respective districts; Ixion (Connecting Choices), Steps to Work (Evolve) and Business Enterprise Support (Building Better Opportunities).

Department for Work and Pensions - Work Routes

The programme focuses specifically on flexible and tailored support for unemployed and economically inactive people who face multiple barriers to work, and who are not fully supported by existing employment programmes.

Through person-centred support, the programme delivers enhanced engagement and work readiness provision, to motivate, inspire and empower beneficiaries to achieve

their potential by identifying and providing the attributes and skills to find sustainable work.

Education and Skills Funding Agency

ESFA delivery is split across two priorities; Inclusive Labour markets (priority axis 1) and Support for Skills Growth (priority axis 2).

Programmes within priority 1 aim to increase participation in the labour market and thereby improve social inclusion and mobility. Activity focuses on engaging and equipping individuals through education and training to enter sustainable employment or move closer to the job market.

The programmes target specific groups;

- * To help those who are disadvantaged but still relatively close to the labour market.
- * To help young people, and in particular, those who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or those at risk of being NEET.

Programmes within priority 2 focus on improving the skills of individuals within the workplace to meet their goals and the needs of the local economy, through upskilling or retraining. Provision is primarily through training, advising or supporting individuals, and includes those that are in work but at risk of redundancy.

Connecting Choices Stoke-on-Trent & Staffordshire - Ixion



What's on offer?

Connecting Choices Personal Coaches offer intensive, holistic services to meet individual needs through minimum fortnightly meetings. Activities include community-based coaching, digital skills sessions, job search, financial inclusion workshops, into work transition, support and review sessions.

Who is eligible?

Participants must be unemployed or economically inactive.

Where is it delivered?

Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Staffordshire Moorlands.

Website:

www.ixionholdings.com/individual-learners/connecting-choices/connecting-choices-stoke-on-trent-staffordshire

CASE STUDY

Faria heard about connecting choices through her local community PCSO. Before starting on the programme she had low self-esteem and was frightened to leave her house. After attending programme sessions Faria was able to build her confidence and now believes she is capable of reaching her future goal of becoming a children's nurse.

"I am comfortable and more confident after attending the programme sessions; the fantastic team have helped me in many ways. I have now got interviews booked for Keele and Birmingham Universities. It is a programme everyone should attend if given the chance".

Building Better Opportunities Stafford and South Staffordshire - BES



What's on offer?

We're in the business of changing lives and providing residents across Stafford and South Staffordshire with the opportunity to live their best life. Working with those that are unemployed and have multiple barriers to employment, our programme is tailored to each and every person that joins. We take a holistic approach to each individual's needs, this could include activities to develop confidence, self-esteem, team-building, communication skills and digital skills.

As well as support and guidance with budgeting, personal hygiene and self-care, volunteering and work placements, job searches, interview techniques and CV writing, debt management, housing support, benefits advice. Participants are also able to access a range of community learning courses and health and wellbeing courses. Our popular Work Clubs also operate weekly across Stafford and South Staffordshire where participants can access one-to-one support and guidance.

The programme is completely free for all participants, meaning they're able to focus 100% on improving their personal, financial and employability skills.

Who's eligible?

Participants must be aged 18+, unemployed or economically inactive.

Where is it delivered? Stafford and South Staffordshire.

Website: www.bbostaffs.org

CASE STUDY

A proud man, 59-year-old David had always provided for his family. "I was a field engineer until 2016 when I was forced to leave the role and walk away from a 40-year career, all because of workplace bullying."

Following workplace bullying, David was left with mental health problems, no confidence and unable to work. He started to draw his pension early to take care of his family, but as money got tighter he was referred to the Building Better Opportunities programme.

"Building Better Opportunities has given me the chance to open myself up in a safe environment. It's allowed me to try new things without being ridiculed, mocked or shouted at. Each and every morning I felt like I used to put my armour on and not let anyone close to me."



"I was cynical at first but 3-4 weeks in, I was willow weaving and I loved it! Some people might think what on earth, a grown man willow weaving, in fact I may have thought that once upon a time but I don't care anymore."

David's self-esteem has grown throughout his time on the programme and he now once again enjoys working with his hands. David sells his own handmade wooden garden items, having completed an Introductory to Carpentry course through Building Better Opportunities.

Evolve - Steps to work



What's on offer?

Support to participants with multiple barriers to regain their confidence and move closer to the jobs market. Support includes confidence and motivation, one-to-one mentoring, and CV and application form support.

Who's eligible?

Participants must be unemployed or economically inactive.

Where is it delivered?

Lichfield, Cannock, Tamworth and East Staffordshire.

Website: www.stepstowork.co.uk/evolve

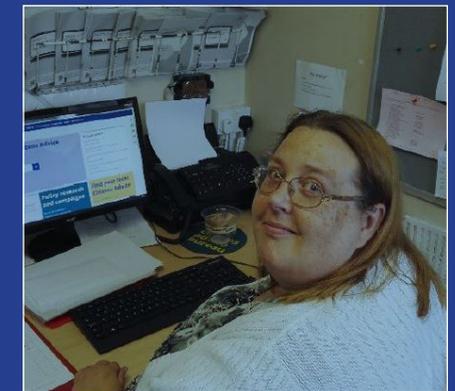
CASE STUDY

Alison is 42 and is married with two children; she's been unemployed for 10 years and has been caring for her elderly mother and children. Alison became an Evolve client 5 months ago. At the outset, she was quiet and reserved and said she'd love to have a paid job, but couldn't work out how this would fit in with her role as a carer. She was very worried about her finances, didn't have access to the internet at home and couldn't easily look for jobs. Although she used computers elsewhere, she felt isolated and the lack of a computer at home had started impacting on her daughter's schoolwork.

We discussed how Alison could review her caring responsibilities and the other options available.

Following sessions on benefits and budgeting, Alison realised she was being overcautious financially and they could now afford the internet. A friend has

given her a spare PC and she is getting the internet installed next week! Until we redid her CV, Alison didn't realise the extent of her skills and experience and how much she has to offer an employer. Alison is now independently job searching and we're arranging a mock interview soon.



What's on offer?

Nu-Futures delivers new opportunities to get young people on the road to success.

The programme supports 15-24 year olds who are out of, or at risk of becoming out of, work, education or training. It provides experience and skills to support young people start work or an apprenticeship. Nu-Futures is not your usual classroom environment and we use work experience, days out and local activities to broaden the experiences of the learners. Nu-Futures can be started at any time.

Who's eligible?

Young people aged 15-24, or aged 15-20 for care leavers or those in care.

Where is it delivered? Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.

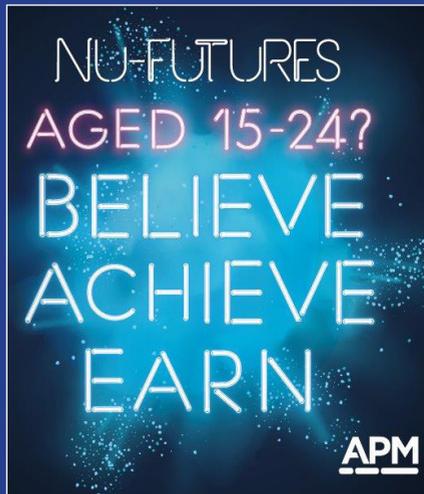
Website: www.apm-uk.co.uk

CASE STUDY

Jess was looking for her next step to progress her ambition for a career in accounting when she joined Nu-Futures, and is now enrolled on a Business Administration course starting this summer.

Alan has been working with the Nu-Futures team to find his motivation to engage fully in the options available to him. With some support, coaching and mentoring, Alan has built his confidence and has since been invited for his first ever job interview with Tufnell's in Stafford!

Chloe, another successful Nu-Futures student said, "Nu-Futures is fun, it's interesting. I like the staff and the days out are great. Nu-Futures are helping me find an apprenticeship in hairdressing as that's what I want to do."



What's on offer?

Work Routes helps unemployed and economically inactive people to start and sustain employment. It's a voluntary programme which is tailored to meet the needs of local jobseekers. A range of personal support and training is offered to overcome barriers to work, with the programme lasting up to a year.

Who's eligible?

Individuals must be either unemployed or inactive and must fall into one or more of the following categories: Long term unemployed and/or inactive (26 weeks or longer); Basic Skills need (Below NVQ level 1 or equivalent); Have at least one barrier to employment.

Where is it delivered?

Throughout Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.

Website: www.workroutes.co.uk/stoke-and-staffordshire

CASE STUDY

Customer Journey, Catherine, 56

Catherine joined ESF Work Routes after 20 years of unemployment. She had spent most of her time caring for her husband, who sadly passed away in 2016. Work routes spent time helping Catherine build her confidence, working on her CV and focusing on her skill set, which she had developed through her caring responsibilities. After just five weeks on the programme, Catherine secured herself a job. "I can start to build a new me following my husband passing away. He would be so proud."

Customer Journey, David, 21

When David joined ESF Work Routes he was in a difficult situation in terms of housing – he was never sure of where he would be sleeping next and

was also suffering with depression and anxiety. David worked with the Health and Wellbeing Advisor to help him try and overcome some of his mental health barriers. They also helped David to revamp his CV, and apply for jobs; after two weeks David landed himself the right job. "This has changed my life because it has built my confidence, now I see myself differently. It's made me feel different towards work, I believe I can do anything now."





Absolute Apprenticeships - Interserve

What's on offer?

Guidance and support for jobseekers to find a local apprenticeship in an industry that appeals. Support is given to overcome barriers to work.

Who's eligible?

Participants must be unemployed or economically inactive. They must be legally resident and have the right to take paid employment in the UK.

Where is it delivered?

Throughout Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.

Website: www.absolute-apprenticeships.co.uk

CASE STUDY

Jessica Dunn has been able to take full advantage of the support being offered by Interserve on the ESF programme.

After leaving school, Jessica went to college to complete a photography course. She wanted to work within business and retail, so to support her ambition she undertook voluntary positions in charity stores whilst claiming financial support through Job Seekers Allowance. She admitted that she was nervous about applying for jobs, but hoped that with the right support in place she could secure an opportunity as an apprentice.

Jessica signed up for a 6 week training course which included business administration and work experience, and after four weeks was offered an apprenticeship.



Fresh Start, Support for the Unemployed People Plus

What's on offer?

Support for key disadvantaged groups and communities to improve social inclusion and employability, with a focus on areas of multiple deprivation. Dedicated learning mentors and tutors will help address personal and social barriers to employment and provide guidance about the qualities most valued by employers.

Who is eligible?

Participants must be aged 16 or over and have been unemployed for more than twelve months. They must be legally resident and have the right to take paid employment in the UK.

Where is it delivered?

Throughout Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

CASE STUDY

Martin is 23 and still lives at home with his parents. He has never worked since he left school and was quiet, shy and had previously suffered from anxiety when he joined the ESF Fresh Start programme with People Plus. Lacking in confidence and work experience, Martin not only wanted to undertake regulated learning but also go on a work placement - preferably somewhere in the city that he knew.

Martin enrolled onto the Customer Service level 2 qualification, and

having since finished the course he has been attending a work placement carrying out administration duties; filing, creating new files, answering the telephone and general assistance within the office. His confidence has soared and he interacts well with other members of staff. His timekeeping is excellent and he is now confident to use the bus and his appearance is smart. Martin is working with a People Plus Employer Engagement Executive to find employment opportunities within an administration setting.

What's on offer?

Training can be offered to SME's and is tailored to the needs of the business. Basic skills training can enhance employee effectiveness, whilst intermediate and higher level skills can help employees take on more responsibility and progress their careers and support the competitiveness of the business.

Employees with low level or no qualifications can benefit from literacy, numeracy, ESOL, employment skills and vocational skills training or qualifications to help them progress to higher level skills, and allow career progression.

Intermediate and higher level skills training employees can benefit from a wide range of training courses like leadership and management, technical skills training and higher levels skills relevant to the business.

On-the-job vocational training is designed to meet individual needs and includes taught learning, workplace assessment, distance learning and on-line training.

Who is eligible?

Participants must be aged 16 or over and be in paid employment within an SME. They must be legally resident and have the right to take paid employment in the UK. There are no prior attainment restrictions for participants.

Where is it delivered?

Throughout Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.

Website:

www.serco-ese.com/skills-support-for-the-workforce/regions/stoke-on-trent-staffordshire

CASE STUDY

Qommunicate is engaged with German Manufacturer and Distributor, Hoppecke, supporting them in their ambitions to grow their UK market share. Hoppecke are a well-known brand and market leader for industrial batteries and innovative energy products with their UK Headquarters based in Newcastle-under-Lyme.

Qommunicate is delivering bespoke training to all 60 staff within the business, completely tailored to the manufacturing industry in the following subjects; Leadership and Management, Customer Service, Sales, ICT, Health and Safety and Warehousing. The training takes account of skills gaps from a training needs analysis and will help ensure that Hoppecke retains its workforce and provides them with the opportunity to progress within work (and in education and apprenticeships as appropriate).

HR Manager, Lynne Morris commented "Hoppecke has significant growth plans and in order to equip the leadership team to achieve this, formal management and leadership training is absolutely necessary. It is essential for the business to maintain a competitive edge. We have selected Qommunicate to join us on the journey because we share common values and they have the knowledge and expertise to support our growth."



Skills Support for the Workforce - Retraining for Employees - Stoke-on-Trent College



What's on offer?

A demand led project supporting skills development including re-skilling and up-skilling giving employees the chance to progress and to ensure that the potential for improvements in business productivity and growth are not constrained by the workforce.

Who is eligible?

Participants must be aged 16 or over and be employed within an SME. They must be legally resident and have the right to take paid employment in the UK.

Where is it delivered? Throughout Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire.

Website: www.staffsskillspartnership.org

CASE STUDY

Blue Bay Travel are the UK's leading independent Caribbean specialists based at Trentham Lakes, Stoke-on-Trent. Rapid growth off the back of significant investment has seen them take on more staff, and the expansion led them to engage the Staffordshire Skills Support and Retraining Programme.

Blue Bay Travel have often encountered challenges engaging their key staff due to issues of eligibility for Apprenticeship Programmes or because traditional training programmes were too long or lacked flexibility.

Contracts Manager Nia Campbell worked with Performance Through People to outline the business's key objectives; the result being the development of a 3-day training programme that met her exact requirements.

Nia explained, "By sitting down with Dave and his team we created a package that looked at a range of leadership skills and

techniques that could develop the staff to the next level. PTP delivered this course specifically tailored to the needs of the company, on our premises, exactly when we needed it. I believe this has been a success for Blue Bay Travel, as do the staff involved."



Open Calls Skills for Growth

Higher Skills in STEM and Key Sector Areas

The purpose of the call is to offer support to individuals to progress their skills to Level 4 and above by addressing the shortfall in existing provision and address the following challenges:

- Gaps in leadership and management training, and other higher skills training in sectors where the average skill levels of the workforce are low
- Identifying ways to improve access to science and technology skills, potentially by creating a centre of excellence in one of the SSLEP key sectors
- Establishing ways to develop a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurialism which should be linked to the retention of graduates in the city and county
- Contributing to replacement and growth demand, for higher level skills, particularly within the SSLEP key sectors where international competition means that sustained growth relies on increased productivity and innovation
- Addressing wider participation and progression within work issues, that increases the number of employed women gaining higher level skills in STEM subjects and which focuses on increasing the number of higher apprenticeship starts in the area.
- Identifying barriers to those in work which prevents them from raising their skill levels and put in place support activity which will increase the number of people starting Level 4 qualifications.

Skills for Growth Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Skills Hub

The purpose of the call is to expand the SSLEP's Growth Hub model of business support by establishing a Skills Hub which will;

- Identify and address their skills needs with employers. The approach will be coordinated and supported by providing clear access and support for employers on all skills issues.
- Be a key source of labour market intelligence to inform skills commissioning and improve careers guidance; it will promote skills opportunities and focus on raising productivity by working with employers.
- Enable local employers to be more involved in designing, delivering and enhancing skills for their workforce.
- Be aligned to the SSLEP Growth Hub and Staffordshire Ladder apprenticeship brokerage service which forms part of the Apprenticeship Hub.



ESFA Transition programme 2019-2021

As part of the European Social Fund 2014-2020 the Education & Skills Funding Agency is to run a Transition Programme starting in April 2019 that will support the four investment priorities detailed below. Tender specifications will be published in August 2018.

IP 1.1 Skills support for the unemployed:

Access to employment for job seekers and inactive people, including the long term unemployed and people far from the labour market.

IP 1.2 NEET (15-24):

Sustainable integration into the labour markets of Young People, in particular that not in employment, education or training including young people at risk of social exclusion.

IP 1.4 Community Grants:

To support people with multiple and complex barriers to participation to address these underlying issues and to move closer to or into the labour market.

IP 2.1 Skills support for the workforce:

To increase the skills levels of employed people from the existing level to the next level up, to encourage progression in employment. Including the basic skills needs of employed people, particularly in SMEs and Micro businesses.



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European Union
European
Social Fund



Staffordshire
County Council

Stoke-on-Trent
& Staffordshire
Enterprise Partnership



City of
Stoke-on-Trent