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— UP —**

UK Shared Prosperity Fund in West Yorkshire Invitation to Bid

Pillar 3 - People and Skills

26th October 2023



West
Yorkshire
Combined
Authority

Tracy
Brabin
Mayor of
West Yorkshire

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2. Summary

Lead Authority	West Yorkshire Combined Authority
Fund	West Yorkshire UK Shared Prosperity Fund
Invitation to bid Opens:	26th October 2023
Invitation to bid Closes:	12.00 noon, Friday 5th January 2024
Minimum application level	<p>Applications are expected to demonstrate appropriate scale and impact.</p> <p>The minimum and maximum size bid for any single project should be no less than the following figures for each Call area as set out in the Annexes to this document.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Call Area 1 – Work and Health Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum - £250,000 • Maximum - £4,000,000 2. Call Area 2 – Community Grants Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum £2,000,000 • Maximum £4,000,000 3. Call Area 3 – Youth Unemployment Programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum £2,000,000 • Maximum £2,000,000 <p>Applications requesting an amount below the ‘Minimum Application Level’ will be rejected.</p>
Duration of project	<p>Projects must be ready to start delivery from the 1st April 2024.</p> <p>Projects must be financially completed by no later than 31st March 2025. Project costs cannot be incurred beyond this date.</p> <p>Unless you are able to commit to delivery in this timeframe please do not bid.</p>
Application Process:	<p>Applications for funding must be completed and submitted to West Yorkshire Combined Authority using only this email address: ukspfwestyorkshire@westyorks-ca.gov.uk</p> <p>Applications submitted late or submitted via any other method will not be accepted.</p>



3. Introduction

The United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) will provide £2.6bn across the UK for local investment by March 2025. The UKSPF aims to build pride in place; support high quality skills training; support pay, employment and productivity growth; and increase life chances. The West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) has been designated a 'lead authority' by the government and will administer the programme in West Yorkshire.

West Yorkshire will receive £65m of Core UKSPF for delivery, of which approximately **£10m** is being made available for this Invitation to Bid across three Call areas.

As a Lead Authority, West Yorkshire Combined Authority is responsible for:

- issuing invitations to bid
- receiving bids
- entering into a funding agreement with the successful bidders
- undertaking monitoring, assurance and evaluation activity
- paying grants to successful projects and managing their performance.

Full details of the role of Lead Authorities can be found in the [UK Shared Prosperity Fund Prospectus](#).

The West Yorkshire [UKSPF Local Investment Plan](#) (LIP) was co-designed with the five West Yorkshire Local Authorities, based on shared priorities set out in the West Yorkshire, Investment Strategy and Strategic Economic Framework (now replaced by the West Yorkshire Plan), established to achieve the vision for West Yorkshire to be recognised globally as a place with a strong, successful economy where everyone can build great businesses, careers and lives supported by a superb environment and world-class infrastructure.

4. UKSPF Investment Priorities

There are three UKSPF Pillars:

- Pillar 1 - Communities and Place
- Pillar 2 - Supporting Local Business
- Pillar 3 - People and Skills

This Call seeks applications under Pillar 3 People and Skills.

The UKSPF People and Skills Pillar is designed to boost core skills and support adults to progress in work, by targeting adults with no or low-level qualifications and skills in maths, and upskilling the working population, supporting disadvantaged people to access the skills they need to progress in life and into work, supporting local areas to fund local skills needs and supplement local adult skills provision and reducing levels of economic inactivity and moving those furthest from the labour market closer to employment.

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority, following stakeholder consultation, allocated £16.8m of UKSPF funding to this priority.

This document launches West Yorkshire Combined Authority's Invitation to Bid for

applications under the People and Skills Pillar.

The **£10m** is available to support three Call areas, which aim to deliver against a number of UKSPF government-prescribed interventions, detailed below.

- **E33:** Employment support for economically inactive people: Intensive and wrap-around one-to-one support to move people closer towards mainstream provision and employment, supplemented by additional and/or specialist life and basic skills (digital, English, and ESOL) support where there are local provision gaps.
- **E34:** Courses including basic, life & career skills; Including digital, English, ESOL, and life skills and career skills provision, where not being met through DWP provision, for people who are unable to access training through the adult education budget or wrap around support detailed above. Supplemented by financial support for learners to enrol onto courses and complete qualifications.
- **E35:** Enrichment & volunteering activities to improve opportunities and promote wellbeing.
- **E36:** Intervention to increase levels of digital inclusion, with a focus on essential digital skills, communicating the benefits of getting (safely) online, and in-community support to provide users with the confidence and trust to stay online.
- **E37:** Tailored support to help people in employment, who are not supported by mainstream provision to address barriers to accessing education and training courses
- **E39:** Green skills courses targeted around ensuring we have the skilled workforce to achieve the government's net zero and wider environmental ambitions.
- **E41:** Funding to support local digital skills.

The three Call areas are as follows with indicative values;

- **Call Area 1** – Work and Health Programme Est. £4,000,000 (All Revenue).
- **Call Area 2** – Community Grants Programme Est. £4,000,000 (All Revenue).
- **Call Area 3** – Youth Unemployment Programme Est. £2,000,000 (All Revenue).

Applicants are invited to submit applications against one or more of these three Calls, each of which is designed to meet government's interventions. If submitting multi-programme applications, applicants should ensure that proposals are presented holistically.

Notional allocations, as detailed above, have been devised for each Call area, although the actual award may vary depending on the quality of applications received. Applicants are advised that the funding available is more limited by comparison with previous support provided through the European Social Fund programme, so the demand for funds may be high; therefore, good quality bids which meet the local priorities for investment are sought. West Yorkshire Combined Authority reserves the right to award more or less than **£10m** depending on available funding.

5. Strategic Context

In May 2023, the Combined Authority agreed to formally adopt the West Yorkshire Plan as the overarching strategic framework for the region. The West Yorkshire Plan sets out a shared vision, narrative, and ambitions for the region. The purpose of the West Yorkshire Plan is to:

- Explain who West Yorkshire is and what we want to achieve
- Set the trajectory for the longer-term up to 2040
- Ensure that government and wider local and national stakeholders are clear on the priorities and ambitions of the region
- Ensure that all regional partners speak with one strong voice

The WY Plan includes five missions, that are aspirational and represent long term ambitions for West Yorkshire. State of the Region reporting will continue to provide the monitoring framework underpinning the West Yorkshire Plan targets and wider policies and strategies of the Combined Authority.

The WY Plan strengthens our existing policy framework which includes a suite of policies and strategies aligned to areas of delivery.

Our vision for West Yorkshire is

A brighter West Yorkshire - a place that works for all. An engine room of ideas and creativity, where anyone can make a home.

Five missions have been set to achieve this:

Mission One: A **prosperous** West Yorkshire – an inclusive economy with well paid jobs

Mission Two: A **happy** West Yorkshire – great places and healthy communities

Mission Three: A **well-connected** West Yorkshire - a strong transport system

Mission Four: A **sustainable** West Yorkshire – making lives greener

Mission Five: A **safe** West Yorkshire – a region where everyone can flourish.

All our policies and strategies work toward meeting at least one of these missions.

For full details of the policies, strategies and missions within the West Yorkshire Plan, please click [here](#).

The Combined Authority publishes an annual State of the Region report, which reviews of the performance of West Yorkshire against key socio-economic and environmental indicators, the reports are available [here](#).

The report provides a stock take of where West Yorkshire currently stands, using a basket of headline indicators developed as part of the West Yorkshire Plan. It highlights areas of strength and positive trends in the local economy but also flags key issues and challenges that are priorities for future action.

The report aims to provide a balanced and objective view of economic performance in the region and gives some insight into the difference being made through the combined action of

all partners in West Yorkshire.

West Yorkshire Combined Authority will prioritise bids that have the greatest potential to deliver significant economic, environmental and social benefits through well targeted investment, and help to deliver a net zero carbon, inclusive economy through which everyone in the region can have a great quality of life.

Specific to this Invitation to Bid, please see the Combined Authority's key strategies:

[Employment and Skills Framework](#)

[Adult Education Budget Strategy](#)

[Mayor of West Yorkshire launches Green Jobs Taskforce](#)

[Digital Skills Plan](#)

6. The place - West Yorkshire

The work of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority covers the West Yorkshire authority areas of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield.



The West Yorkshire Combined Authority was established in 2014 to bring together local councils and businesses to champion the region's interests nationally and internationally. This involved securing investment from Government and other sources to drive the economy forward, by carrying out economic regeneration and development functions, as well as acting as the local transport authority for West Yorkshire.

In March 2020, the West Yorkshire councils and the Combined Authority agreed a "minded to" devolution deal with Government. The deal detailed £1.8bn of Government investment (including £1.14bn over 30 years), to be subject to local influence and decision-making, enabling spend on local priorities, together with a range of new devolved functions. The election of the first West Yorkshire Mayor, Tracy Brabin, followed in May 2021.

7. West Yorkshire UKSPF Local Investment Plan

The government invited the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to draft a Local Investment Plan (LIP) that set out how West Yorkshire's UKSPF allocation would be used, and what it would achieve. It is against this plan that government will assess West Yorkshire's success in utilising UKSPF. Applications submitted under this Call will need to align strategically; and to deliver activity, outputs and outcomes that support the Local Investment Plan.

- The programme of interventions for UKSPF under Pillar 3: People and Skills is strongly aligned with supporting Levelling Up mission statements 1, 6, 7 and 8:
- Mission 1. By 2030 - to increase pay, employment and productivity in every part of the UK, with each containing "a globally competitive city" and a smaller gap between top performing and other areas.
- Mission 6 By 2030 A "significant" rise in the numbers completing high-quality skills training across the UK. In England, the target is for 200,000 more doing this, including 80,000 in the lowest skilled areas.
- Mission 7. By 2030 A narrowing in healthy life expectancy between the UK areas where it is highest and lowest, with the overall average healthy life expectancy rising by five years by 2035.
- Mission 8. By 2030 An improvement in perceived wellbeing in all parts of the UK, with a narrowed gap between areas with the highest and lowest levels.

8. Cross-cutting principles

There are three themes that cut across all UKSPF activity in West Yorkshire and should be reflected in applications. These are detailed below.

Tackling Inequalities and Supporting Diversity

All UKSPF investments must be made in consideration of the Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty, **which is a key enabler of the Combined Authorities equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) Plan and associated interventions**. It is mandatory for all applicants to assess and record the relevance to and types of impact of their project between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

West Yorkshire Combined Authority is committed to be a leader recognised nationally for a focus and commitment to EDI, by adopting an exemplary approach to EDI. This involves through evidence, shaping our services around the needs of diverse people including **seldom heard** groups as a means of directly tackling social and economic disadvantage. It is also reflected in our commitment to undertake Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) whenever the Combined Authority plans to introduce, change, **increase, withdraw** a new strategy, policy, project, service or intervention as well as before the Combined Authority approves any investments.

Proposals must demonstrate measures that set out how they will proactively engage with and deliver positive outcomes for West Yorkshire residents. This should include consideration of the **nine protected** characteristics and how groups who are currently **under recognised**

and/or seldom heard will be supported, how projects and activities will be accessible to all and how outcomes will add value and enhance opportunities for the groups identified.

You will be required to complete a minimum of a Stage 1 Equality Impact Assessment, **which includes collating relevant evidence to assess the relevancy to each of the nine protected characteristics and its alignment with the three arms of the Public Sector Equality Duty to demonstrate due regard.**

Successful applicants will be expected to **develop** a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment within the first two months of signing a funding agreement. As well as the associated equality impact action plan which will demonstrate how interventions will be achieved and reduce any negative relevance, through mitigation will also be required.

Inclusive Growth

All our investments need to respond to and benefit the people of West Yorkshire and have the impacts on people and communities, at their heart. Consequently, Inclusive Growth is at the heart of the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy and within the UKSPF Local Investment Plan given its importance to the economy.

Our proposed measures of success will be critical in demonstrating what impact our investments have had. And the fulfilment of these goals is central to the achievement of our related Inclusive Growth ambitions, such that;

- All individuals and communities in West Yorkshire are enabled to contribute to - and benefit from - our economic prosperity because: they are inspired, confident and engaged;
- All West Yorkshire employers provide fair work because: they value diversity (at all levels), promote employee wellbeing, and invest in their workforce; and
- West Yorkshire is a region which delivers an inclusive economic recovery because: every person - and every community - matters equally, economic and social disparities are not just reduced but eliminated, and diversity - including of our people and communities - is a key strength of the region.

Proposals should demonstrate measures that detail the needs of different communities have been considered in the design of your proposal and you will need to outline how you will proactively engage with diverse peoples including disadvantaged groups.

[The most recent Census data \(2021\) for West Yorkshire is available here](#) [Census 2021](#)

Climate and Environment

The Mayor and Combined Authority have declared a climate emergency, recognising that increasing emissions, a depleted natural environment and more extreme weather events, to name but a few, are all having a detrimental impact on the businesses and residents of West Yorkshire.

The Combined Authority will support schemes which do not contribute to the problem but are part of the solution. Addressing the climate emergency, whether that is through reducing CO₂ emissions, ensuring preparedness for the effects of a changing climate or ensuring resource efficiency, at the core of our West Yorkshire Investment Strategy and is aligned with the West Yorkshire Local Investment Plan. As such, every scheme coming forward for investment will be required to demonstrate how it will address the climate emergency, with a particular, but

not exclusive, focus on demonstrating how schemes contribute to or complement the West Yorkshire target to be net-zero carbon by 2038.

9. Calls for Projects

The following section sets out the three Calls for projects.

Applicants can submit an application under one or more of the three programmes. Applicants can submit a separate application against each Call; or a multi-application, which covers a proposal which takes in to account the objectives of all three Calls. Applicants must clearly specify the activities to be delivered and illustrate how they directly contribute to the objectives and asks of each Call area.

There is a risk that applications which seek to deliver over all areas may submit a bid which is not as focussed or coherent, resulting in a broad and watered-down range of activities.

Applicants must therefore ensure that multi-strand applications are designed holistically and do not comprise separate activities artificially combined into one proposal. Multi-programme applications must be reflected in the logic model – please refer to the checklist of documents which need to be submitted with your application.

Applications will be scored based on how effective the combination of activities works together holistically. **You must select the appropriate outputs and outcomes and state the amount of funding required for each of the Calls you are proposing to deliver under. You will also have to monitor and report outputs/outcomes by Call area and by intervention.**

The information below sets out each of the three Calls. This includes the *notional* amount of funding available; the geographical area for project delivery; the policy context and the objectives. The tables list the indicative activities against which you can apply for UKSPF funding and which we are looking to fund.

Call Area 1

Call Area 1 – Work and Health Programme

Activity Description:	Interventions to support individuals or households with multiple health related challenges to address inequalities and remove barriers to employment.		
Geographical Coverage:	West Yorkshire		
Notional Allocation:	£4,000,000		
Minimum Award:	£250,000	Maximum Award:	£4,000,000
Intervention Rate:	Applicants are required to leverage in a minimum of 10% match funding. (For example £1,000,000 plus minimum £111,111).		

Strategic and Policy Context

Strategic and Policy Alignment: Description of how proposals should meet strategic objectives, local need and the programme priorities. Expectations for coordination with other funding programmes.

National Context

The UKSPF has been launched by the UK Government as part of its wider commitment to level up all parts of the UK and on the key metrics identified in the Levelling Up White Paper West Yorkshire is one of the areas in the UK that is most in need of levelling-up. In its Levelling Up White Paper Government outlined that at national level the UKSPF will have a particular focus on the following objectives:

- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging.
- Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest.
- Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost.
- Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency
- To increase levels of functional numeracy in the adult population.

This Invitation to Bid is part of the People and Skills Pillar which has the following objectives:

- Reducing levels of economic inactivity through investment in bespoke intensive life and employment support tailored to local need. Investment should facilitate join up of mainstream provision and local services within an area for participants, through the use of one-to-one key worker support, improving employment outcomes for specific cohorts who face labour market barriers.
- Supporting people furthest from the labour market to overcome barriers to work by providing cohesive, locally tailored support, including access to basic skills.
- Supporting local areas to fund gaps in local skills provision to support people to progress in work and supplement local adult skills provision e.g. by providing additional volumes; delivering provision through wider range of routes or enabling more intensive/innovative provision, both qualification based and non-qualification based. This should be

supplementary to provision available through national employment and skills programmes.

National Offer

People with long-term health conditions and disabilities have lower rates of labour market participation than those without. Nationally, the number of people economically inactive because of long-term sickness has risen to over 2.5 million people, an increase of over 400,000 since the start of the pandemic (ONS). In their spring 2023 budget, Government announced a number of employment support programmes with a health focus, including Work Well, scale up of musculoskeletal Hubs, digitising the NHS Health Check and targeted support for unemployed young people on Universal Credit (by scaling up Youth Hubs – subject to a different call). Applications to this Call should align with national existing and new provision, and not duplicate any mainstream offer.

Regional Context (West Yorkshire)

Regional Strategy and Current Delivery in relation to employment support

West Yorkshire's [Employment & Skills Framework](#) outlines a vision for the region, in which *skills, training and education...create a diverse, inclusive and highly skilled workforce with good jobs, leading to sustained improvements in the quality of life for all*. A key aspect of this involves removing the barriers that may inhibit an individual from 'taking up, progressing and succeeding' in learning, work or employment. Similarly, the [Future Ready Skills Commission](#) highlights the need to *empower areas to design services around the individual to address complex and interrelated health [and] employment and skills issues*.

It is a strategic priority for West Yorkshire that a holistic approach is taken to supporting the unemployed and those furthest from the labour market. It is recognised complex factors that prohibit an individual from accessing education, employment or training or progressing in work cannot be taken in isolation, and that partnership working is key to ensuring equitable access.

Through the devolved [Adult Education Budget](#), the Combined Authority provides adults with the skills needed for entering and sustaining work, an apprenticeship/traineeship, or other further learning. The funding supports first step engagement through Community Learning, working directly with individuals to break down the barriers to entering learning with clear progression to learning programmes (predominantly qualifications) and also providing an element of learning support funding for those with learning difficulties. Funded programmes include learning up to Level 2 and some Level 3 qualifications as well as a fully funded provision for basic English, maths and essential digital skills qualifications.

One of the objectives of the West Yorkshire Adult Education Budget Community Learning fund is health and wellbeing. However, there are limitations as Community Learning mostly engages those individuals who are ready to engage in learning rather than targeting households that have entrenched and generational unemployment issues specifically relating to health.

There is a range of employment support available across the region that supports people towards and into employment, most notably the regionally coordinated Employment West Yorkshire programme. Working in close partnership with local authorities, the Employment Hubs provide universal access to employment support to people of all ages, developing skills, confidence and employability through a personalised approach.



The aim of this Call is to fund provision at a West Yorkshire level, aligning to existing employment support programmes, taking a holistic, multi-agency approach, to support workless households and individuals facing multiple health related barriers to access pre-employment interventions as a first stage of re-entry into the labour market.

Regional Challenges

Following the Covid-19 pandemic, the rate of economic inactivity caused by long-term sickness increased. In West Yorkshire there are around 350,000 individuals who are inactive in the labour market. Of these, nearly 25% are out of work due to long term sickness. National data indicates that roughly 22% of people who are economically inactive have expressed a desire to work.

While good health is vital on an individual level to an enjoyable and meaningful life, it is also critical for individual, regional and national prosperity. A recent (April 2023) report from [IPPR Commission on Health and Prosperity](#) found that poor health can reduce earnings, undermine an individuals' ability to enjoy, progress and stay in work.

Health-related barriers to employment may relate to long-term disabilities, mental health conditions, existing MSK conditions worsened by inadequate homeworking equipment, and long covid.

West Yorkshire's overall employment rate (the proportion of working age people in employment) is below the national average, with a gap of 3 percentage points (76% versus 79%). This gap is due to higher economic inactivity among working age people in West Yorkshire. Whilst the proportion of people who are unemployed is similar to the national average, the proportion who are inactive in West Yorkshire is 24%, 3 points higher than nationally. Disadvantaged groups in West Yorkshire have below average employment rates (e.g. gaps based on age, gender, disability and ethnicity) and this is mostly due to relatively high economic inactivity. For example, the employment rate among disabled people is only 54%, much lower than the overall average employment rate for West Yorkshire.

The disability employment rate is also lower for people with a mental health condition or with five or more health conditions. In addition, disabled people are more likely than non-disabled people to be:

- Working in lower-skilled occupations
- Self-employed
- Working part-time (and subsequently less hours)
- Working in the public sector.

The inactivity rate among disabled people is 42% compared with the overall average of 24%.

Within West Yorkshire there are 107,000 workless households, 14% of all households in the region. The levels of workless households varies across the region:

Region	Number of workless households (Census data January 2021- December 2021)
Bradford	21,000
Calderdale	10,200
Kirklees	17,700
Leeds	45,700



Wakefield	12,300
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Often, complex and systematic issues prevent individuals from accessing and sustaining employment opportunities. The employment landscape can seem complex and difficult to navigate for economically inactive and 'discouraged' individuals, resulting in them being less likely to seek support through all-access employment services. Being economically inactive over the long-term can lead to low confidence, again reducing willingness to engage with provision that they feel cannot meet their needs.

Key Objectives

- Increase health and well-being of West Yorkshire residents.
- Reduce numbers of workless households in West Yorkshire.
- Create pathways for employment opportunities for individuals.
- Evidence of multi-agency partnership working to develop employment interventions.
- Reduce health inequalities for individuals and improve access to work.

Description of what indicative activities which the West Yorkshire Combined Authority is looking to fund: Description of the activity and what is expected to be achieved

Open to bids from all sectors, the Call seeks one or more delivery providers to deliver a regional work and health programme that creates interventions to support workless households to remove health barriers that make it difficult to access employment.

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority is looking to fund interventions that;

- Support and target workless households (eligible individuals are those aged 16 years plus) facing health barriers to access pre-employment interventions as a first stage of entry or re-entry into the labour market.
- Demonstrate an increase in the confidence of individuals to access training, volunteering, or increasing employability skills.
- Evidence support provided at concentrated geographical areas of inactive and unemployed households.
- Deliver a voluntary led service (rather than mandatory and sanction-led through the benefits system) that effectively targets individuals and households with health barriers providing bespoke packages of support to move individuals closer towards work.
- Generate opportunities for co-design, development, and evaluation with beneficiaries, evidence and case studies that highlight co-production with individual beneficiaries.
- Deliver impact measures that demonstrate improved household income and quality of life for West Yorkshire residents.

Proposals should:

- Support households - where one or more adult is unemployed/inactive (minimum age is 16 years plus) due to health reasons in the labour market - to access pre-employment support.
- Create opportunities to enhance existing specialist services that support individuals to access employment services, including family interventions and overcoming health barriers.
- Offer a multi-agency approach demonstrating collaborative models with organisations that could include DWP, Local Authorities, housing providers, healthcare providers, voluntary and community sector organisations for example.



- Offer a regional service that enhances community-led initiatives.
- Utilise place-based offer, such as volunteering opportunities, adult training, benefits, and existing employment services, to support individuals to move closer towards employment. It is essential that proposals offer additional activity/add value to schemes already operating within West Yorkshire and do not duplicate.

Specific Requirements: Description of specific requirements

Individuals must be 16 years and over to be eligible.

Outputs and Outcomes

For this Call the following outputs and outcomes are sought – please select the ones that best apply to your delivery model:

Outputs:

- Number of economically inactive people engaging with keyworker support services (E33)
- Number of economically inactive people supported to engage with the benefits system (E33)
- Number of socially excluded people accessing support (E33)
- Number of people supported to access basic skills courses (E33)
- Number of people accessing mental and physical health support leading to employment (E33)
- Number of people supported to engage in job searching (E33)
- Number of people receiving support to gain employment (E33)
- Number of people receiving support to sustain employment (E33)
- Number of effective engagements between keyworkers and additional services (E33)
- Number of people supported to engage in life skills (E34)
- Number of people supported onto a course through provision of financial support (E34)
- Number of people supported to participate in education (E35, E37)
- Number of volunteering opportunities supported (E35)
- Number of people taking part in work experience programmes (E35)
- Number of people retraining (E37)
- Number of people in employment engaging with the skills system (E37)
- Number of people receiving support to gain employment (E39)

Outcomes:

- Number of economically inactive individuals in receipt of benefits they are entitled to following support (E33)
- Number of active or sustained participants in community groups as a result of support (E33)
- Number of people with basic skills following support (E33)
- Number of people engaging with mainstream healthcare services (E33)
- Number of people sustaining engagement with keyworker support and additional services (E33)
- Number of people engaged in job-searching following support (E33)
- Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support (E33, E34, E39)
- Number of people sustaining employment for 6 months (E33)
- Number of people in Education /training following support (E34)
- Increased number of people with basic skills (English, maths, digital and ESOL) (E34)



- Number of people experiencing reduced structural barriers into employment and into skills provision (E34, E35)
- Increased number of people familiarised with employers' expectations, including, standards of behaviour in the workplace (E35)
- Number of people gaining qualifications, licences, and skills (E37)
- People gaining a qualification or completing a course following support (E39)

Associated Interventions

This Call area aligns with UKSPF Intervention E33, E34, E35, E37, E39.

Call Area 2

Call Area 2 – Community Grants Programme

Activity Description:	To appoint lead provider (s) to manage and administer community grant funds to focus on Work and Health, Support for those Furthest Away from Employment and Digital Inclusion.		
Geographical Coverage:	West Yorkshire		
Notional Allocation:	£4,000,000 (Revenue)		
Minimum Award:	£2,000,000	Maximum Award:	£4,000,000
Intervention Rate:	100% grant funding		

Strategic and Policy Context

Strategic and Policy Alignment: Description of how proposals should meet strategic objectives, local need and the programme priorities. Expectations for coordination with other funding programmes.

National Context

The UKSPF has been launched by the UK Government as part of its wider commitment to level up all parts of the UK and on the key metrics identified in the Levelling Up White Paper West Yorkshire is one of the areas in the UK that is most in need of levelling-up. In its Levelling Up White Paper Government outlined that at national level the UKSPF will have a particular focus on the following objectives:

- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging.
- Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest.
- Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost.
- Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency
- To increase levels of functional numeracy in the adult population.

This Invitation to Bid is part of the People and Skills Pillar which has the following objectives:

- Reducing levels of economic inactivity through investment in bespoke, intensive, life and employment support, tailored to local need. Investment should facilitate join up of mainstream provision and local services within an area for participants, through the use of one-to-one key worker support, improving employment outcomes for specific cohorts who face labour market barriers.
- Supporting people furthest from the labour market to overcome barriers to work by providing cohesive, locally tailored support, including access to basic skills.
- Supporting local areas to fund gaps in local skills provision to support people to progress in work and supplement local adult skills provision e.g. by providing additional volumes; delivering provision through wider range of routes or enabling more intensive/innovative provision, both qualification based and non-qualification based. This should be

supplementary to provision available through national employment and skills programmes.

National Context

People with long-term health conditions and disabilities have lower rates of labour market participation than those without. Nationally, the number of people economically inactive because of long-term sickness has risen to over 2.5 million people, an increase of over 400,000 since the start of the pandemic (ONS). In their spring 2023 budget, Government announced a number of employment support programmes with a health focus, including Work Well, scale up of musculoskeletal Hubs, digitising the NHS Health Check and targeted support for unemployed young people on Universal Credit (by scaling up Youth Hubs – subject to a different Call – see Call 3 below).

Other groups considered further from the labour market may include prison leavers. Employment is key to reducing re-offending rates – the employment rate of persons released from custody at 6 months sits at approximately 30.4%. The Prison Strategy White Paper, published 2021, outlines national initiatives to help those leaving custody find and retain employment, such as dedicated Employment Adviser/Employment Hub provision within resettlement prisons.

In 2021, the number of UK households with no broadband/mobile internet access was 1.7m, with 2.4m UK adults unable to complete a single basic task to get online. By 2030, it is projected that the number of workers who will be acutely under-skilled with regards to basic digital skills by 2030 will be 5m people. Digital skills shortages are estimated to cost the UK £63bn each year. The [Essential Digital Skills Framework](#) for the UK provides a foundation which is intended to be used by any organisation or individual in the UK involved in supporting the development of essential digital skills.

Regional Context (West Yorkshire)

Regional Strategy and context

It is recognised that the VCSE sector plays an important role in West Yorkshire, working in partnership with the public and private sector, in directly supporting people and their communities particularly around their health and well-being, and improving their confidence, social engagement and economic productivity. The response to the COVID-19 pandemic in West Yorkshire resulted in an unprecedented period of joint working between the local authorities and a wide range of VCSE voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and business partners. The pandemic showed us the power of working alongside communities, of working at a hyper local level and of the need to be more inclusive. The VCSE itself is facing significant challenges (as well as the people it supports) from reduced funding and increases in the cost of living – they have buildings to run, wages to be paid etc. As the sector supports people at all stages of life and reaches those people that statutory services don't always reach it is vital to have a strong and thriving VCSE to improve people's lives.

Building on this, voluntary, community and social enterprise sector organisations are already playing a vital role in tackling local health and wellbeing inequalities and the underlying socio-economic factors which contribute to them. Putting this platform in place across our diverse communities and communities of interest in West Yorkshire underpins a large part of the proposals for the UKSPF under the Communities and Place Pillar.



The VCSE sector is bigger and more varied in structure than might have been imagined in West Yorkshire. There are ~5,200 registered VCSE organisations in the area. The majority are registered charities (63%), CIOs (12%) or CICs (14%). It is anticipated that there are ~6,700 unregistered VCSE groups. There are 2.3 VCSE organisations per 1,000 resident population. In total, it is estimated that there are ~12,000 registered and unregistered organisations and groups in the area.

West Yorkshire's [Employment & Skills Framework](#) outlines a vision for the region, in which *skills, training and education...create a diverse, inclusive and highly skilled workforce with good jobs, leading to sustained improvements in the quality of life for all*. A key aspect of this involves removing the barriers that may inhibit an individual from 'taking up, progressing and succeeding' in learning, work or employment. Similarly, the [Future Ready Skills Commission](#) highlights the need to *empower areas to design services around the individual to address complex and interrelated health [and] employment and skills issues*.

Taking a holistic approach to supporting the unemployed and those furthest from the labour market is a strategic priority for West Yorkshire. It is recognised that the complex factors that prohibit an individual from accessing education, employment or training or progressing in work cannot be taken in isolation, and that partnership working is key to ensuring equitable access. The aim of this Call is to appoint one or more lead providers to manage and administer a community grant fund programme with a focus on Work and Health, Support for those Furthest Away from Employment and Digital Inclusion.

The lead provider (s) will manage community grants that will be awarded to voluntary and community organisations to support them to build capacity and develop innovative ways to support individuals who are currently facing multiple barriers to work to move closer towards and into sustained employment.

Current employment and skills activity

Through the devolved [Adult Education Budget](#), the Combined Authority provides adults with the skills needed for entering and sustaining work, an apprenticeship/traineeship, or other further learning. The funding supports first steps engagement through Community Learning, working directly with individuals to break down the barriers to entering learning with clear progression to learning programmes (predominantly qualifications) and also providing an element of learning support funding for those with learning difficulties. Funded programmes include learning up to Level 2 and some Level 3 qualifications as well as a fully funded provision for basic English, maths and essential digital skills qualifications.

Multiply provides numeracy interventions to engage the most maths-fearful, reluctant individuals who are unlikely to engage with mainstream numeracy provision. The individual focussed offer includes innovative barrier breaker interventions, where maths is taught through stealth utilising family learning, engaging vocational activities and numeracy support linked to cost of living concerns.

There is a range of employment support available across the region that supports people towards and into employment, most notably the Employment West Yorkshire programme.

Working in close partnership with local authorities, the Employment Hubs provide universal access to employment support to people of all ages, developing skills, confidence and employability through a one-to-one approach.

The grants provided need to add, align and complement other activity already delivered in the region.



Regional Challenges

Although, labour market conditions in West Yorkshire are strong with growing employment and a high level of vacancies, the region continues to face structural challenges arising from high levels of economic inactivity, particularly for groups who are disadvantaged in the labour market.

West Yorkshire's overall employment rate (the proportion of working age people in employment) is below the national average, with a gap of 3 percentage points (76% versus 79%). This gap is due to higher economic inactivity among working age people in West Yorkshire. Whilst the proportion of people who are unemployed is similar to the national average, the proportion who are inactive in West Yorkshire is 24%, 3 points higher than nationally.

Disadvantaged groups in West Yorkshire have below average employment rates and this is mostly due to relatively high economic inactivity.

For example, the employment rate among disabled people is only 54%, 19 percentage points lower than the overall average employment rate for West Yorkshire. The inactivity rate among disabled people is 42% compared with the overall average of 24%. Similar employment rate deficits (combined with high economic inactivity) also affect some ethnic minority groups, people qualified below Level 2 and older people aged 50 to 64.

Despite working-age females being better qualified than men, and the longer-term trend of women towards increased participation in the labour market, there is a continuing employment rate gap between males and females (9% in West Yorkshire compared to 7% nationally in 2021). West Yorkshire also faces a significant gender pay gap. The overall pay gap for all employee jobs locally is 16%, the same as the national average. The size of this gap partly reflects the fact that women are more likely than men to work in part-time roles which attract a lower hourly rate of pay. However, at 10% the gap for full-time jobs is smaller but still substantial, and slightly above the national average.

In addition, women have a high likelihood of being in severely insecure work. This partly reflects the fact that women with dependent children and carers may be constrained by limited options for secure and flexible work. According to the Work Foundation's UK Insecure Work Index, women are 10 percentage points more likely to be in severely insecure work than men (25% compared to 15%).

Intersectionality is also important, for example, there is a greater number of disabled females in employment than males in West Yorkshire (101,000 versus 85,000) reflecting the fact that females of working age are more likely to be disabled. Women from ethnic minorities are most likely to be in severely insecure work.

Following the Covid-19 pandemic, the rate of economic inactivity caused by long-term sickness increased. In West Yorkshire there are around 350,000 individuals who are inactive in the labour market. Of these, nearly 25% are out of work due to long term sickness. National data indicates that roughly 22% of people who economically inactive have expressed a desire to work. Health-related barriers to employment may relate to long-term disabilities, mental health conditions, existing MSK conditions worsened by inadequate homeworking equipment, and Long Covid.

Nationally, the number of people economically inactive because of long-term sickness has risen to over 2.5 million people, an increase of over 400,000 since the start of the pandemic (ONS). In their spring 2023 budget, Government announced a number of employment support programmes with a health focus, including Work Well, scale up of MSK Hubs, digitising the



NHS Health Check and targeted support for unemployed young people on UC (by scaling up Youth Hubs – subject to a different call). Applications to this call should align with national existing and new provision, rather than duplicating.

The close association between digital exclusion and other dimensions of inequality underpins an urgent social and economic need to act. As of 2021, 25% of adult residents of Yorkshire and Humber do not have Essential Digital Skills for Life. 7% of these are digitally excluded, meaning they cannot complete a single ‘foundation’ digital task such as turning on a device, using a mouse/keyboard, interacting with the home screen on a device, connecting to Wi-Fi or browsing the internet. 4% of people in Yorkshire and Humber remain offline, despite the fact that West Yorkshire’s full fibre and gigabit coverage are both above the national average. Delivering the right interventions to support those who are digitally excluded will have wider benefits on people and communities, such as health, regeneration and education, thus requiring a collaborative, community-based approach and a resilient third sector. (see also [Digital Skills Plan](#))

As part of a recent programme commissioned by the Combined Authority, each Local Authority in West Yorkshire area will boost the capacity of community organisations to deliver digital inclusion, equitably and within a flexible model appropriate to the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion needs of each area. This will be achieved by following the nationally awarded 100% Digital model, by recruiting Digital Inclusion Officers in each Local Authority area and enabling community organisations to offer targeted digital inclusion support and interventions, delivered to digitally reluctant residents, based on their existing relationships with community organisations. There is an expectation that any related grant awarded for digital support through this Call will not lead to duplication of this provision and will offer enhancement to this service where possible.

Offering grants to voluntary and community organisations will help community organisations address digital exclusion in their communities for those who do not have basic digital skills, with tasks such as applying for housing, learning how to online bank/shop, using the internet for job searches, etc.

Through the delivery of a community grants scheme, adding value to rather than duplicating existing provision, the lead provider(s) will enable innovative ways to support individuals who face disadvantage and barriers including (but not limited to); those aged 16+ years, over 50s, women with specific health issues including the menopause, prison leavers and ex-offenders, single parents and those with disabilities to secure good work outcomes.

Key Objectives

- To make Community Grants available in the form of small grants to appropriate third sector organisations to mobilise disadvantaged or excluded unemployed and inactive people to facilitate their progress towards employment.
- Work with and attract grass roots organisations to develop innovative projects to reach inactive individuals.

Description of what indicative activities which the West Yorkshire Combined Authority is looking to fund: Description of the activity and what is expected to be achieved

This call seeks proposals to deliver community grant programmes with a focus on Work and Health, Support for those Furthest from Employment and Digital Inclusion.

Community Grant Scheme

The lead grant giving organisation(s) will deliver an accessible community grants scheme for small voluntary and community organisations to develop innovative ways to support individuals into sustained employment and employment activities, with a focus on those with multiple barriers to work. Small third sector organisations that access grants are likely to be well placed to reach excluded individuals facing barriers which hinder their access to mainstream provision. The lead grant giving organisation(s) should offer a range of grant sizes to ensure that they attract a range of community-based organisations. The lead grant giving organisation(s) will be responsible for establishing arrangements for promotion, putting in place a selection process in line with the outlined priorities, monitoring, reporting and evaluation (based on the identified key outputs and outcomes).

Level of Grant Awards - grant award to a small third sector organisation is expected not to exceed £50,000 per annum unless this can be justified.

The lead grant giving organisation(s) will be able to claim an appropriate level of resource to meet the relevant administration costs. The Agency will consider these costs as part of a value for money assessment but they will not normally be expected to be greater than 10% of the contracted Community Grant resource

The lead provider would need to demonstrate the ability to move at pace, developing pathways into community and voluntary sector services who would be eligible to access grant funding.

Community Projects

Grants should focus on any projects relating to one or more of the below:

Beneficiaries

- The grant scheme will enable community organisations to develop innovative programmes to engage individuals who are 16 years + with a particular focus on; those considered to be furthest from the labour market, over-50s, those with low or no qualifications, women with specific health issues including the menopause, prison leavers, those experiencing homelessness or at risk of becoming homeless, single parents, ethnic minorities, those with disabilities and those not currently engaging with mainstream employment support services.
- Support for individuals who are economically inactive or face barriers to progressing in work and/or who have difficulties in accessing all/mainstream provision.

Activity

- Grants can support a wide range of activities, including enabling individuals from communities across West Yorkshire to access support to move closer towards work, raise skill levels, increase productivity, reduce digital exclusion, and improve their quality of life and health. This *could* be facilitated through:
 - initial help with basic skills, including basic digital skills (e.g. introduction to mobile phones, IT, online banking) and English as a second language
 - taster work experience including voluntary work
 - training, advice and counselling
 - job search assistance
 - confidence building
 - first contact engagement activities
 - increasing digital access for digitally excluded groups
- Successful activity should be tailored to the needs of the local area.



Impact

- Funded projects must enable individuals across West Yorkshire to access support which moves them closer to work; raises skill levels; increases productivity; reduces digital exclusion; and/or improves their quality of life and health.
- Referrals could be generated for existing regional programmes, e.g., Employment West Yorkshire.
- The impact of grants are likely to be seen in social impact measure, eg. Improvements in quality of life, addressing inequalities, moving closer towards

Specific Requirements: Description of specific requirements

Lead provider(s) should promote community-based delivery that addresses high levels of need within local areas across West Yorkshire, creating new opportunities that demonstrate the impact of community-based interventions. The approach should account for variance in level of need within different communities.

Payment is based on actuals. This means that only when you have paid out the grant to the successful third sector organisation, and have evidence of delivery are you able to claim from the Combined Authority to enable payment to you. Only applicants that are able to accept these terms and have the financial stability to pay out the grants before payment is received should submit a bid.

Outputs and Outcomes

For this Call the following outputs and outcomes are sought – please select the ones that best apply to your delivery model:

Outputs:

- Number of economically inactive people engaging with keyworker support services (E33)
- Number of economically inactive people supported to engage with the benefits system (E33)
- Number of socially excluded people accessing support (E33)
- Number of people supported to access basic skills courses (E33, E36)
- Number of people accessing mental and physical health support leading to employment (E33)
- Number of people supported to engage in job-searching (E33)
- Number of people receiving support to gain employment (E33, E39)
- Number of people receiving support to sustain employment (E33)
- Number of effective engagements between keyworkers and additional services (E33)
- Number of people supported to engage in life skills (E34, E36, E41)
- Number of people supported onto a course through provision of financial support (E34)
- Number of volunteering opportunities (E35)
- Number of people supported to participate in education (E35, E37)
- Number of people taking part in work experience programmes (E35)
- Number of people retraining (E37)
- Number of people in employment engaging with the skills system (E37)

Outcomes:

- Number of economically inactive individuals engaging with benefits system following support (E33)
- Number of active or sustained participants in community groups as a result of support (E33)
- Number of people with basic skills following support (E33, E34)



- Number of people engaging with mainstream healthcare services (E33)
- Number of people sustaining engagement with keyworker support and additional services (E33)
- Number of people engaged in job-searching following support (E33)
- Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support (E33, E34, E39)
- Number of people sustaining employment for 6 months (E33)
- Number of people in Education /training following support (E34)
- Number of people experiencing reduced structural barriers into employment and into skills provision (E34, E35)
- Number of people familiarised with employers expectations, including, standards of behaviour in the workplace (E35)
- Number of people gaining qualifications, licences and skills (E37)
- People gaining a qualification or completing a course following support (E36, E39, E41)
- People engaged in life skills support following interventions (E41)

Associated Intervention

This Call area aligns with UKSPF Intervention E33, E34, E35, E36, E37, E39 and E41.



Call Area 3

Call Area 3 – Youth Unemployment Programme

Activity Description:	Pilot activity to develop understanding around enhancements to the existing regional youth employment offer.		
Geographical Coverage:	West Yorkshire – covering all five local authorities.		
Notional Allocation:	£2,000,000 (Revenue)		
Minimum Award:	£2,000,000	Maximum Award:	£2,000,000
Leverage required :	Applicants are required to leverage in a minimum of 10% match funding. (ie £2,000,000 plus minimum £222,222).		

Strategic and Policy Context

Strategic and Policy Alignment: Description of how proposals should meet strategic objectives, local need and the programme priorities. Expectations for coordination with other funding programmes.

National Context

The UKSPF has been launched by the UK Government as part of its wider commitment to level up all parts of the UK and on the key metrics identified in the Levelling Up White Paper West Yorkshire is one of the areas in the UK that is most in need of levelling-up. In its Levelling Up White Paper Government outlined that at national level the UKSPF will have a particular focus on the following objectives:

- Boost productivity, pay, jobs and living standards by growing the private sector, especially in those places where they are lagging.
- Spread opportunities and improve public services, especially in those places where they are weakest.
- Restore a sense of community, local pride and belonging, especially in those places where they have been lost.
- Empower local leaders and communities, especially in those places lacking local agency
- To increase levels of functional numeracy in the adult population.

This Invitation to Bid is part of the People and Skills Pillar which has the following objectives:

- Reducing levels of economic inactivity through investment in bespoke intensive life and employment support tailored to local need. Investment should facilitate join up of mainstream provision and local services within an area for participants, through the use of one-to-one key worker support, improving employment outcomes for specific cohorts who face labour market barriers.
- Supporting people furthest from the labour market to overcome barriers to work by providing cohesive, locally tailored support, including access to basic skills.
- Supporting local areas to fund gaps in local skills provision to support people to progress in work and supplement local adult skills provision e.g. by providing additional volumes; delivering provision through wider range of routes or enabling more intensive/innovative provision, both qualification based and non-qualification based. This should be supplementary to provision available through national employment and skills programmes.

National Youth Offer

The Department for Work and Pension's (DWP) Youth Offer seeks to provide extra help to those aged 16-24, who are currently in receipt of Universal Credit. There are 3 key strands to the Youth Offer:

1. Youth Employment Programme

13 weeks of support and provision, delivered through work coaches at a job centre. The aim is to help individuals prepare for work, and can include Sector Based Work Academy (SWAPs), work experience and mentoring circles.

2. Youth Hubs

Youth Hubs are delivered within each Local Authority area in West Yorkshire. DWP policy intent is that, in partnership with key stakeholders, a holistic service is delivered to claimants aged up to 24 years of age. Youth Hub attendees may receive up to 6 months support from a Work Coach, based at an offsite location that is distinct from a job centre. Support from Work Coaches includes CV and interview support, alongside promoting and supporting claimants to access other services that remove barriers into work. Youth Hubs operate on a pure partnership model. Partners are invited to co-locate to offer services (e.g. mental health support, social housing/welfare advice) that address wellbeing needs that may present barriers to employment. As it stands, DWP youth provision located in Youth Hubs can only be accessed by those who claim Universal Credit, therefore excluding NEETs and those who are economically inactive.

3. Youth Employability Coaches

Providing intensive support for claimants with extensive barriers to work, who are assessed as being up to 12 months away from work. Youth Employability Coaches can be based in job centres, outreach location or youth hubs. Suitable locations are determined according to customer need.

Each strand of the Youth Offer is distinct in that the service is designed around level of need of the claimant and an assessment of the individual's distance from the labour market.

Regional Context (West Yorkshire)

Regional Strategy and Current youth unemployment delivery

West Yorkshire's [Employment & Skills Framework](#) outlines the overarching vision for the region, in which *skills, training and education...create a diverse, inclusive and highly skilled workforce with good jobs, leading to sustained improvements in the quality of life for all*. A key aspect of this involves removing the barriers that may inhibit an individual from 'taking up, progressing and succeeding' in learning, work or employment. Similarly, the [Future Ready Skills Commission](#) highlights the need to *empower areas to design services around the individual to address complex and interrelated health [and] employment and skills issues*.

Through the devolved [Adult Education Budget \(AEB\)](#), the Combined Authority provides adults with the skills needed to enter and sustain work, an apprenticeship/traineeship, or other further learning. The funding pays specifically for learning programmes (predominantly qualifications) and provides an element of learner support funding for those with disabilities. Funded programmes include learning up to Level 2 and some Level 3 qualifications as well as a fully funded provision for basic English and maths qualifications.

The [West Yorkshire AEB Strategy](#) sets out priorities for AEB in West Yorkshire, including the use of AEB to support the unemployed to gain/sustain employment, unlocking progression



opportunities for those in work, and ensuring an inclusive approach to supporting disadvantaged residents.

The [West Yorkshire Digital Skills Plan](#) outlines the vision for ‘creating an inclusive society and a thriving economy through the growth of digital skills for all’. This includes building skills capacity to combat digital exclusion, as well as ensuring the ‘workforce of the future’ is adequately equipped and knowledgeable to participate in the future digital economy.

Taking a holistic approach to supporting the unemployed and those furthest from the labour market is a strategic priority for West Yorkshire that. We recognise the complex factors that prohibit an individual from accessing education, employment or training or progressing in work cannot be taken in isolation, and that partnership working is key to ensuring equitable access.

Alongside Youth Hubs, there is a range of additional delivery across the region that seeks to support young people into employment:

- Employment West Yorkshire - coordinated by the Combined Authority, with delivery in each Local Authority area, a universal programme that supports people into and in work by bringing together numerous strands of support. Individuals are supported by Employment Advisers. This programme is known by the following local programme names: Leeds Employment Hub, Skills House (Bradford), Employment Kirklees, Step-Up Wakefield, Calderdale Employment Hub. Employment West Yorkshire includes some targeted provision for young people seeking employment, but this provision is limited.
- Careers resources through the [FutureGoals platform](#) that use local labour market information to provide inspiration and support.
- Specialist support provided at a neighbourhood level through third sector and voluntary organisations.

A partnership between the Combined Authority, Local Authorities and the DWP is currently working together to establish a ‘Blueprint’ for Youth Hub activity in West Yorkshire based on best practice. This will provide a framework of key design principles for Youth Hubs in the region, ensuring best practice and successful elements can be replicated whilst still accounting for local variance to deliver effectively against each area’s need. This framework will be co-designed and tested with existing and prospective service users, to ensure provision meets the specific needs of young people accessing locally delivered, regionally coordinated provision.

Regional Challenges

The number of unemployed people aged 16-24 has increased significantly in West Yorkshire compared with the pre-pandemic period. The claimant count for the 16-24 group currently stands at approximately 14,310 (August 2023) – a decrease from the height of the pandemic, but still a marked increase from the 10,780 in January 2020. This indicates a number of structural issues that are preventing re-entry/access to the labour market.

Within this, specific groups face significant levels of labour market disadvantage:

- Care Leavers are much more likely to become NEET, with recent Department for Education (DfE) figures highlighting 41% of care leavers aged between 19-21 not being in education, employment or training. Care leavers are also likely to experience barriers related to supported accommodation costs that may disincentivise regular work.
- The employment rate for those released from prison in the last 6 months sits at 30.4%. 31.2% of Youth Offenders reoffended within one year of being cautioned, convicted or



released. Employment can play a key role in reducing reoffending rates.

- Disabled young people often face a 'cliff edge' of support after leaving education, resulting in a national employment rate gap of almost 20% for disabled people aged 18-24. Without requisite support, young people with disabilities struggle to access and sustain suitable work.
- Young people from ethnic minority backgrounds are almost twice as likely to face unemployment as their white counterparts. Unemployment for young people is particularly pronounced amongst the Bangladeshi/Pakistani and Black ethnic groups.

Sustained unemployment amongst young people creates a pipeline to economic inactivity. The latest figures show that there are around 3,500 young people in West Yorkshire who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) (or whose status is unknown). The prevalence of NEETs is higher in West Yorkshire than nationally: as a proportion of the total cohort of 16 and 17-year olds the figures are 6.2% and 5.2% respectively. Four out of five local authorities saw an increase in their number of NEETs in 2022/23.

There is wide variation in the NEET rate at local authority level, ranging from 3.3% in Kirklees to 9.2% in Leeds. The number and proportion of young people NEET and not known in West Yorkshire increased for the second successive year in 2022/23 by 420 or 14%, whilst the proportion of the cohort increased by 0.6 percentage points, up to 6.2%

There is a need for further action to support the above cohorts, by enhancing the level of support that can be offered to those facing complex barriers to employment, education or training, and by ensuring accessibility to this support, through enhanced outreach activity that targets specific groups.

Opportunity

There is a range of support within the current youth offer across the region. However the arrangements differ in each locality. The West Yorkshire Combined Authority and partners are keen to understand 'what works' with regards to youth employment provision, particularly with regards to the regional coordination and co-location of locally delivered services, and how activity may be replicated across the region whilst allowing for variance and flexibility according to need at a local/neighbourhood level.

National evaluations with Youth Hub participants have shown physical location of hubs, the environment inside the hubs themselves, and the range of support available within the hubs have substantial impact on engagement levels. For example, the work undertaken by Impetus in the design of the Library of Birmingham Youth Hub clearly identified the need for the 'culture' of the space to be appealing and nurturing, with a welcoming atmosphere that was distinct from that of educational provision.

The range of support available within a Youth Hub may include access to services run by Local Authority colleagues, Voluntary/Charity sector provision, provision related to skills and employment, alongside provision that supports needs related to health and social care, welfare, and housing. Each of these factors represents a critical step in supporting a robust pathway for a young person towards work.

There is an opportunity to pilot and test innovative enhancements to the existing youth offer in West Yorkshire – including testing the regionally co-ordinated and locally delivered youth hub model - in order to provide greater access to creative and meaningful support for cohorts that

find themselves disproportionately unable to gain employment, education or training. Enhanced support and outreach activity would mean greater parity of access to employment, employment-related activity, and/or training. Early unemployment can have long-term consequences on a young person's skills and confidence – the average unemployed young person (16-24) spends an extra 2 months per year out of work by their late twenties. Long-term unemployment negatively impacts an individual's lifetime career prospects and career earnings. As such, interventions at the early career stage are vital in addressing experiences of inequality and have a distinct benefit in raising the career earning potential of an individual, leading to greater productivity across the wider economy.

Through testing enhancement to a regionally coordinated and locally delivered youth offer, findings from the Call will be influential in providing evidence for the West Yorkshire Youth Hub Blueprint.

Key Objectives

The aim of this call is to appoint an organisation with a proven track record of involvement with youth provision and partnership working to convene and deliver a regionally co-ordinated, locally delivered partnership that brings together existing targeted youth unemployment activity and identifies best practice in order to inform future youth unemployment activity.

Proposals should identify partnership opportunities to develop and test new methods of delivery and activity that enhance the current 'youth employment' offer across West Yorkshire. Proposals are expected to outline how a successful provider will act as a coordinator of partners at a regional and local level, and should outline a commitment to resourcing a steering group for the project, comprised of representatives from the Combined Authority, Local Authorities, and DWP as a minimum.

Proposals should identify how a partnership of key regional, national and local stakeholders including the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Local Authorities and DWP could be brought together to build on existing activity, ultimately contributing to providing employability opportunities for inactive young people to engage with activity that leads them closer to employment and allows for sustained integration into the labour market.

Within this, proposals should include:

- Working in partnership with existing national, local and regional provision and within existing strategic frameworks, to deliver pilot activity related to the reduction of youth unemployment across the region. Partnership organisations should include the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Local Authorities, Jobcentre Plus and DWP, and local and regional youth organisations.
- Identifying local variations to delivery and partnership working, whilst also recognising the wider trends of the regional labour market, in order to promote and establish best practice through innovative activity that removes barriers to employment.
- Identifying appropriate support for young people who are inactive and unemployed, in order to help these individuals access employment-related/pre-employment opportunities.
- Introducing and testing new methods of engagement with inactive and disengaged young people, to better ensure positive employment outcomes in the short and long-term and identify opportunities for co-design of services that meet the needs of this target group.
- Building employer capacity to onboard and retain talent that has engaged with youth unemployment services, to better ensure long-term labour market engagement for individuals.



Proposals should also clearly indicate how equity will be achieved in delivery, and how groups that face clear disadvantage with regards to labour market access will be supported to access and sustain employment, with specific intervention/support. These groups may include:

- Young people with disabilities
- Young people experiencing long-term sickness, especially those experiencing periods of poor mental health
- Young people from ethnic minority backgrounds
- Young people with experience of the care system
- Young people with experience of the justice system
- Young people living in, or facing risk of, poverty and deprivation.

Description of what indicative activities which the West Yorkshire Combined Authority is looking to fund: Description of the activity and what is expected to be achieved

Proposals should outline:

- Coordination of existing activity across West Yorkshire related to youth employment in youth hub settings for young people aged 18-24.
- Testing new and innovative methods and approaches that can be used to inform future interventions in this space.
- Evidence of understanding of and previous experience/future intent of working with established partnerships with existing key partners (Combined Authority /Local Authorities /Department of Work and Pensions) to ensure delivery meets gaps in provision without duplicating existing programmes.

Proposals should identify opportunities to bring partners together to develop and deliver activity related to a current gap in the regional/local Youth Unemployment offer, including (but not limited to):

- Utilising and testing new regionally co-ordinated approaches and enhancements to local labour market variations and outreach activity, that encourages a more diverse range of young people to engage in provision offered through Youth Hubs, in turn leading to stronger employment/training outcomes for individuals.
- Providing regional coordination support within the youth employment offer, to ensure a broad range of partners and services are available to young people, in order to meet complex needs that may inhibit an individual's ability to gain meaningful employment.
- Enhancing – through partnership working - the current Health and Wellbeing offer within regional Youth employment and Youth Hubs provision, to remove barriers to stable employment/training for those facing complex disadvantage related to mental health/ long-term disability.
- Enhancing – through partnership working – the current offer related to housing/ accommodation support within regional youth employment provision, to remove barriers to stable employment/training for those facing complex disadvantage related to housing circumstance.
- Pilot activity to increase uptake of skills provision amongst 16–19-year-olds through Youth Hubs/other existing channels of the youth offer, prior to their ability to access the Adult Skills entitlement at age 19+.
- Increase, enhance and build further capacity within the 'employer offer' related to Youth Hubs by working with the local employer base to provide opportunities for mentoring, peer networks and working closely with individuals that face complex barriers to accessing employment/training.



- Working closely with employers to provide pre-employment activity young people with special educational needs and disabilities (e.g. those with an Employment Health and Care plan or Access to Work requirements).
- Testing new and innovative approaches to engagement with the 18–24-year-old cohort experiencing unemployment or economic inactivity, with the overall aim of increasing the group’s likelihood of accessing meaningful, sustainable employment.
- Identifying further opportunities for co-design of support with the target cohort of youth employment provision, to ensure interventions best meet the needs of those effected.

Specific Requirements: Description of specific requirements.

Given that this Call focusses on the testing of new/innovative activity, successful applicants will be required fund independent evaluation. Applications should demonstrate an understanding of how the testing of new approaches/activity can further benefit the cohort, and how to meet their needs.

The specific requirements for UKSPF evaluation can be found within the draft Grant Funding Agreement, as set out in Section 15 and 16 below.

All successful applicants will also be expected to work closely with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Local Authority partners on developing and evaluating activity for the Youth Hub Blueprint.

Outputs and Outcomes

For this Call the following outputs and outcomes are sought – please select the ones that best apply to your delivery model:

Outputs:

- Number of economically inactive people engaging with keyworker support services (E33)
- Number of economically inactive people supported to engage with the benefits system (E33)
- Number of socially excluded people accessing support (E33)
- Number of people supported to access basic skills courses (E33, E36)
- Number of people accessing mental and physical health support leading to employment (E33)
- Number of people supported to engage in job-searching (E33)
- Number of people receiving support to gain employment (E33, E39)
- Number of people receiving support to sustain employment (E33)
- Number of effective engagements between keyworkers and additional services (E33)
- Number of people supported to engage in life skills (E34, E36, E41)
- Number of people supported onto a course through provision of financial support (E34)
- Number of people supported to participate in education (E35, E37)
- Number of volunteering opportunities supported (E35)
- Number of people taking part in work experience programmes (E35)
- Number of people retraining (E37)
- Number of people in employment engaging with the skills system (E37)

Outcomes:

- Number of economically inactive individuals in receipt of benefits they are entitled to following support (E33)
- Number of active or sustained participants in community groups as a result of support (E33)
- Number of people with basic skills following support (E33)
- Number of people engaging with mainstream healthcare services (E33)

- Number of people sustaining engagement with keyworker support and additional services (E33)
- Number of people engaged in job searching following support (E33)
- Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support (E33, E34, E39)
- Number of people sustaining employment for 6 months (E33)
- Number of people in Education /training following support (E34)
- Increased number of people with basic skills (English, maths, digital and ESOL) (E34)
- Fewer people facing structural barriers into employment and into skills provision (E34, E35)
- Increased number of people familiarised with employers' expectations, including, standards of behaviour in the workplace (E35)
- Number of people gaining qualifications, licences, and skills (E37)
- Number of people gaining a qualification following support (E36, E39, E41)
- Number of people engaged in life skills support following interventions (E41)

Associated Intervention

This Call area aligns with UKSPF Intervention E33, E34, E35, E36, E37, E39 and E41.

Responding to local priorities and need

All delivery designed to respond to the Calls set out above, **must** not duplicate what is already in place at a Local Authority District level. Local Authority officers will form part of the assessment panel to ensure proposals add value and are complimentary, under ethical walls. Bidders are encouraged to review local strategies and priorities to ensure projects meet local need.

Local Authority District	Key local strategies and local priorities
Bradford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people-skills-prosperity . This contributes to the priorities set out in the District Plan for an inclusive and sustainable economy.
Calderdale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision 2024 • Inclusive Economy Strategy 18 - 24 • Health and Well-Being Strategy 22-27 • Post-16 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy • Anti-Poverty Action Plan
Kirklees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kirklees Economic Strategy - https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/delivering-services/pdf/economic-strategy.pdf • Aspire, Achieve, Include: Kirklees Post-16 Employment and Skills Plan 2022-2025 https://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/documents/s47259/Appendix%20A.pdf • Health and Wellbeing Strategy - https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/health-and-wellbeing-strategy/index.aspx • Inclusive Communities Framework - https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/inclusive-communities-framework/index.aspx
Leeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive Growth Leeds Inclusive Growth Leeds

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future Talent Leeds Inclusive Growth Leeds
Wakefield	<p>Employment-Skills-Strategy--A-learning-City-2021-25.pdf (wakefield-first.com)</p> <p>247709-Business-support-and-inward-investment-strategy.pdf (wakefield-first.com)</p> <p>Wakefield Corporate Plan which is currently being refreshed.</p>

10. Prioritisation - Additional Considerations

Bids will be prioritised where they;

- a can commence delivery from the **1st April 2024** without the need to recruit or procure partners to help deliver the project.
- are developed in partnership with others and can demonstrate clear established links with partners across the region to enable delivery at pace. Applications are encouraged from consortia or other similar types of partnership arrangements. In each such case the application must be completed and submitted by the lead organisation on behalf of the partnership/consortia. The lead applicant must have the financial capacity to meet the required Due Diligence criteria and, if funding is awarded, this organisation will then become the lead Grant Recipient, accountable for delivery of the overall Project.
- lever in additional match funding – maximum intervention rates are as set out in the Call Specifications above. Applicants are encouraged to maximise the leverage of other funding. However, we recognise not all projects or applicants will be able to secure match funding. Applicants should note value for money will be a selection consideration as it has a number of benefits, including enhanced alignment with other provision and efficient delivery which increases value for money. Therefore, the overall funding package for each project, including any match funding, will be taken into account.
- support individuals from across West Yorkshire. In the application you will need to set out the delivery breakdown across the five local authority district areas and demonstrate geographical spread.
- demonstrate how they complement, and, fundamentally, that they do not duplicate, conflict or displace existing activity (national policy or local strategies), highlighting the wrap-around support being proposed, and how communities and beneficiaries to be supported will be identified and engaged based on evidence of need. Bidders should speak to local councils to ensure provision is appropriately targeted at those individuals and communities in greatest need; and where possible work with local community organisations who have established outreach mechanisms to support delivery.
- demonstrate an innovative approach of delivering interventions across the region aligning to current provision, and clearly identifying how evidence of impact will be presented to inform future provision.

- clearly outline how they will address equality, diversity and inclusion in their delivery model including any relevant targets to ensure this is achieved.
- clearly outline how they will support the Combined Authority's priority to tackle the climate emergency and include any relevant targets.
- clearly demonstrate how the activity proposed will become integrated, and/or be adopted longer term, and/or be sustainable after this funding ceases.
- projects will be expected to coordinate evaluation activity within the Combined Authority's evaluation frameworks and to share data as required.

11. Applicants

Applicants must be legally constituted at the point of applying for the funding and be able to enter into a legally binding Grant Funding Agreement (GFA). The Applicant will be the organisation that, if the application is successful, enters into a funding agreement with the Combined Authority, as the Lead Authority for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and therefore carries the liability for ensuring that the terms of the UKSPF Funding Agreement are met by them and to all delivery partners where applicable.

Potential applicant organisations include, but are not limited to:

- Local Authorities
- Statutory and non-statutory public funded organisations/bodies
- Higher and Further Education Institutions
- Voluntary/community organisations
- Private sector companies
- Registered charities
- Not for Profit organisations

12. Due Diligence – non-public sector Applicants

Non-public sector Applicants will be subject to financial due diligence checks. Applicants are required to submit accounts, and to clarify financial or other organisational information as required as part of the appraisal process.

Organisations are required to provide the following information at the time of bidding and in line with the closing date:

- Financial accounts for the most recent 3 years;
- Proof of existence - Certificate of Incorporation, Charities Registration, VAT Registration Certificate or alternate form of incorporation documentation;

- Proof of trading - Financial Accounts/Statements for the most recent two years of trading including, as a minimum, Profit and Loss Account and Balance Sheets;
- Most recent Management Board reports or financial report of the Organisation's Finance Director.

13. Deliverables - Outputs and outcomes

Applicants must explain in detail in their application how they have estimated each of the outputs and outcomes for their project, demonstrating clearly how each of the proposed outputs and outcomes directly link to their specific project activities and objectives. Applicants must also explain their approach for forecasting each.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund Outputs and Outcomes Indicator Definitions Guidance and Evidence requirements is available [here](#). For direct reference to the technical note provided by Government please refer to GOV.UK [here](#).

Applicants will need to ensure robust systems are in place, and be able to describe them, to capture and record the targets and to report quantitative and qualitative performance. All operations will be required to collect data and report progress against the deliverables with each claim. There must be a fully evidenced audit trail for all contracted deliverables. The claim form which will be used and which sets out the type of data to be reported on quarterly can be found [here](#).

Further detail on how monitoring will be undertaken (*quarterly*) and how payments will be made to successful bidders, will be made available once funding has been agreed.

14. Selection Process

As the Lead Authority, West Yorkshire Combined Authority officers will assess all bids submitted, with the support of officers within the Local Authority's. Clear ethical walls are in place to prevent any undue influence being exerted that distorts the bidding process in favour of any applicant or in a way that prejudices any applicant taking account of any conflicts of interests. Bids will be assessed against:

- the gateway and core assessment criteria set out below – bids that fail to meet these criteria are ineligible for support and will be rejected.
- the extent to which bids support the delivery of the local priorities as set out in **Section 9** of this Invitation to Bid.
- the extent to which they meet the objectives of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

The appraisal and any prioritisation will be undertaken using only the information supplied as part of the application process. West Yorkshire Combined Authority, as the Lead Authority, cannot accept further detail outside of this process although may, as part of the Gateway checks, seek clarity where a discrepancy appears.

Applicants should fully complete all documents as set out in the **checklist at Annex 1 – Application Submission**. Please use this to ensure all documents are submitted. Applications which do not contain all of the additional completed documents will not be assessed and will be rejected.

The application assessment process has several stages as set out below.

Stage 1 - Gateway assessment

Projects must pass **all** gateway criteria to be considered for selection. Applications that fail to meet any aspect of the Gateway Criteria will be rejected and will not be considered and assessed.

GATEWAY QUESTIONS	
1.	Is the applicant eligible to receive UKSPF?
2.	Does the application deliver against one or more of the three Call areas set out in Section 9 of this Invitation to Bid?
3.	Has the applicant(s) discussed their proposal with the Combined Authority’s Employment and Skills team to ensure strategic fit and that there is no duplication of existing services?
4.	Will all outputs and outcomes be delivered by 31st March 2025 ?
5.	Does the application deliver the outputs and outcomes relevant to the Call Area(s) selected, as set out in the Call description in this document Section 9 ?
6.	For the Health and Wellbeing (Call 1) and Youth Unemployment (Call 3) Calls - has the applicant included leverage funding to the minimum value (10%)?
7.	Have the mandatory Gateway documents been submitted alongside the application? Failure to submit Annexes A to E will result in the application being rejected.

Stage 2 - Core assessment

Applications which pass the Gateway assessment will then be scored against the core assessment criteria set out in **Annex 2: Stage 2 - Core assessment** of this Invitation to Bid document.

Stage 3 - Moderation

After the scoring is completed, West Yorkshire Combined Authority will moderate the scores. Moderation will be influenced by the quantity and quality of applications received. This may result in awarding more or less than the published notional funding allocation.

Moderation will consider if the spread of applications meets the requirements of this Invitation to Bid. For example, if the top scoring application(s) all fall under one Call area, within one organisation, the Combined Authority may consider allocating more funds to that Call area.

In some cases, for private, voluntary sector and charitable applicant organisations, financial due diligence checks will be conducted as part of this stage.

Stage 4 - External consideration

West Yorkshire Combined Authority as Lead Authority will consult the West Yorkshire UKSPF Local Partnership Group (the Governance Group for the Funding in this region) on the strategic fit and deliverability of applications. This will include sharing feedback from the moderation process with the external representatives. The Local Partnership Group is constituted from Local Authority members and external stakeholders – membership is available [here](#).

Stage 5 - The Combined Authority's decision

After the Local Partnership Group has been consulted, the Combined Authority will take a decision on which applications should proceed and which should be rejected. The Combined Authority will undertake financial due diligence checks on successful applications (see application form guidance for details).

All applicants will be notified of the outcome in writing. The Combined Authority will provide high level written feedback to all applicants. For the successful applications this will include any revisions or updates required, including potential grant funding agreement conditions.

Appeals

The Combined Authority's decision on each application is final. There is no appeals process. Applicants submit applications to the Combined Authority with this knowledge. Following assessment, West Yorkshire Combined Authority will enter into a Grant Funding Agreement with successful bidders.

15. Grant Funding Agreement

Funding Agreements will be non-negotiable and legally binding document. The draft Funding Agreement Template can be found [here](#). Applicants are strongly advised to read these terms and conditions to ensure that they can enter into such an agreement prior to responding to the Call.

Due to the short timescale available for UKSPF delivery, the Combined Authority will not enter into protracted grant negotiations with Applicants. Any successful Applicant will be subject to the terms and conditions contained within the agreement. Applicants are strongly advised to seek their own advice to ensure that they would be able to enter and abide by the terms of the Funding Agreement.

Failure to meet any of the conditions of the agreement or the commitments within the application may result in claw back of funding.

Is the UKSPF a grant or repayable loan?

UKSPF funding will be awarded to successful Applicants as a grant, paid quarterly in

arrears. Expenditure must be defrayed prior to the submission of any grant claims to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund – People and Skills West Yorkshire Invitation to Bid. Applicants may be asked to demonstrate how they are able to cash flow the operation.

16. Evaluation

The government will undertake an evaluation of UKSPF to which West Yorkshire Combined Authority will contribute. The Combined Authority is also expected to undertake its own evaluation, into which projects will contribute. This is in addition to monitoring spend, outputs and outcomes.

The Government has published its [evaluation guidance here](#). Applicants will be required to contribute to the evaluation process set out by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. This will provide learning on what worked, and did not work, in delivery. There may also be a requirement to commission a qualitative impact evaluation which will include measuring outputs, contribution analysis, developing case studies, and conducting surveys and interviews with stakeholders and beneficiaries. Further guidance will be provided, and precise requirements are expected to be agreed at the time of contracting.

At the application stage, applicants are required to provide a logic model to demonstrate the rationale and the links to outputs, outcomes and impact. In addition, applicants should explain their monitoring and evaluation structures, evaluation design, data collection and analysis.

17. Successful applicants will normally be expected to:

- Sign the funding agreement within 30 days of issue by the Combined Authority.
- To avoid slippage, be ready to start the delivery no later than 1st April 2024 after signing the funding agreement.
- Attend a Combined Authority-led contract briefing via teams within 30 days of the funding agreement being signed.
- Ensure there is a sound governance structure in place for monitoring performance.
- Provide detailed information on expenditure, outputs and outcomes, including equalities and diversity data, to the Combined Authority on a quarterly basis.
- Adhere to branding and communication requirements and guidelines.

Timescales

Invitation to Bid launched in West Yorkshire	26 th October 2023
Stakeholder 'bidding' briefing	8 th November 2023 – 2.30pm to 4.30pm

Closing date for applications	12.00 noon, Friday 5th January 2024
Combined Authority, as Lead Authority, appraises bids	Mid-January to mid-February 2024
Combined Authority informs applicants – successful and not successful and contracts with applicants.	By end of February 2024
Delivery commences	April 2024
All delivery to be completed and the Fund closes. <i>Applicants will be required to commence delivery/activity within one month of receipt of the Funding Agreement with the Combined Authority as Lead Authority.</i>	31st March 2025

Submitting a Bid

Bids must be submitted using the West Yorkshire UKSPF Application Form and must be accompanied by all the required documentation – please refer to the checklist in **Annex 1 – Application Submission**. Bids submitted in any other format will not be accepted.

Bids must be submitted to West Yorkshire Combined Authority using this email address: ukspfwestyorkshire@westyorks-ca.gov.uk . Applications submitted via any other method will not be accepted.

Word or Excel documents are invited. **Please do not submit PDF documents.** Applicants are recommended to copy (cc) themselves into the submission email as evidence that all documents have been submitted to the Combined Authority. Please note that the maximum file size permitted in a single email is **10MB**.

Bids must be submitted by **12.00 noon, Friday 5th January 2024**. Any bids received after this time will not be accepted and will be deemed ineligible. It is therefore important you leave sufficient time to send and upload the application.

The Combined Authority will acknowledge receipt of your application by email.

If at the assessment stage there is a need to clarify an issue which prevents the assessment of the application being completed, the Combined Authority reserves the right to contact the applicant. This will be exception only.

Support

This call is expected to be over-subscribed and competitive as there is limited funding available. The Combined Authority is not able to advise on the likely success or otherwise of proposals ahead of submission or able to review draft applications. However, any questions on the call, the application process, and technical questions will be answered and shared with all partners if beneficial to all bidders.

An online support 'workshop' for prospective Applicants will be held on **Wednesday, 8th November 2023, 14:30pm – 16:30pm**, where Combined Authority Officers will go through the Calls and application process and will seek to answer questions.

It is your responsibility to submit your application in good time to allow time to meet the closing deadline of 12.00 noon, Friday 5th January 2024.

Except in the unlikely event that there is a general failure of the Combined Authority's IT system in the final hours, we will not extend the deadline for any other reason.

Should you have any queries in respect of this Invitation to Bid please direct all enquiries via the following mailbox ukspfwestyorkshire@westyorks-ca.gov.uk .

Key Reference Documents

When developing your Full Application, it is recommended that you refer to the following documents as a minimum:

[UKSPF West Yorkshire Application Form Guidance](#)

[UKSPF West Yorkshire Output and Outcome Definitions and Evidence Requirements](#)

UKSPF West Yorkshire Selection Process and Criteria – **Section 14 above.**

[UKSPF West Yorkshire Draft Grant Agreement Template](#)

[UKSPF West Yorkshire quarterly Claim Form](#)

Application Submission – Document Checklist Annex 1 – Application Submission below

[West Yorkshire Investment Strategy](#)

All other UKSPF Government guidance is available on the [gov.uk website here](#).

To submit an application you are required to complete the following documents which are available here:

- [Application form](#)
- Application Annexes:
 - [Annex A – Budget and Deliverables Excel Spreadsheet](#) (Gateway criteria)
 - [Annex B – Logic Model](#) (Gateway criteria)
 - [Annex C – Equality Impact Assessment](#) (Gateway criteria)
 - [Annex D – Partner Supporting the Project Form](#) (Gateway criteria)
 - [Annex E – Match Funding Form](#) (Gateway Criteria)

All annexes must be submitted with your application; **Annexes A and E are Gateway assessment criteria** and failure to submit one or both will result in your application being rejected.

Annex 1 – Application Submission

CHECKLIST PRIOR TO SUBMISSION

Documents to submit	Attached
Completed and signed Full Application	
Annex A – Budget and Deliverables Excel Spreadsheet (Gateway criteria)	
Annex B – Logic Model (Gateway criteria)	
Annex C – Equality Impact Assessment (Gateway criteria)	
Annex D – Partner Support Form (Gateway criteria)	
Annex E – Match Funding Form (Gateway Criteria)	
Subsidy Control legal opinion	
For non-public sector applicants (Private, voluntary sector and charitable applicant organisations) the documents as listed at Section 12 are submitted with the application.	

Annex 2 : Stage 2 - Core assessment

Applications which pass the Gateway assessment will be scored against the core assessment criteria. In Summary this is;

Appraisal Criteria in line with the West Yorkshire Investment Strategy

Strategic Alignment	Economic efficiency and benefits	Deliverability	Climate Emergency	Inclusive Growth and Tackling Inequalities and Supporting Diversity
20	25	20	10	25

Explanation for criteria weighting

The total prioritisation score for the project is the sum of the weighted scores of the different **criteria out of 100**. The higher the prioritisation score, the higher priority the project is for investment. In summary, schemes will score more highly if they:

- Demonstrate a higher level of strategic fit to the Call Investment Priorities and demonstrate a strong and timely impact in terms of the outputs and outcomes specified.
- Contribute to the key cross-cutting themes of inclusive growth, tackling the climate emergency and supporting equality and diversity.
- Demonstrate strong deliverability and lower levels of project risk at the initial stage.

0	Poor	Is supported by a weak standard of evidence in several areas giving rise to concern about the ability of the Bidder to deliver the Contract.
1	Weak Response	Is supported by a weak standard of evidence in several areas giving rise to concern about the ability of the Bidder to deliver the Contract.
2	Satisfactory Response	Is supported by a satisfactory standard of evidence in most areas but a few areas lacking detail/evidence giving rise to some concerns about the ability of the Bidder to deliver the Contract.
3	Good Response	Is comprehensive and supported by good standard of evidence. Gives the Fund confidence in the ability of the Bidder to deliver the contract. Meets the Fund's requirements.
4	Very good Response	Is comprehensive and supported by a high standard of evidence. Gives the Fund a high level of confidence in the ability of the Bidder to deliver the contract.
5	Excellent Response	Is very comprehensive and supported by a very high standard of evidence. Gives the Fund a very high level of confidence the ability of the Bidder to deliver the contract. May exceed the Fund's requirements in some respects.

Criteria	Weight	Question (s) in Application form score relates to	Assessment method	Evidence requirement
Strategic fit – how the project addresses the objectives of the Call Specification (Section 9) and contributes to delivery of the outputs and outcomes.	20	Section 4	Project scored in terms of its impact / contribution to the Call priorities - very high impact to very low impact This is a qualitative assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining strategic fit is about the extent to which the interventions address the policy and objectives of the Call areas set out in this Invitation to Bid. The application must indicate which Call Area(s) it will contribute to and how it will contribute to them. • A logic model showing how the project inputs, activities and outputs contribute to the objectives and outcomes of the UKSPF Call is required. • <i>Projects which do not credibly demonstrate that they will address one or more of the Call Areas and associated objectives and outcomes will be rejected.</i> • Rigour of the logic model and its underlying assumptions should be demonstrated with reference to evaluation / success of past projects. It should be as specific as possible and cite facts rather than rely on generalities. • The application must also demonstrate how it will align with and complement existing interventions.
Economic efficiency and benefits - prioritisation of projects that deliver at scale practical outputs and benefits linked to key outcomes set out in the Call.	25	Section 5 and 7	Project scored in terms of whether strong and compelling evidence of scheme benefits is provided or no evidence of scheme benefits. This is a qualitative assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of the type and quantity of short, medium, and long-term outputs and outcomes that the project will deliver based on the project's logic model. • Calculation method / basis for the outputs and outcomes to demonstrate that they are achievable. • Estimated total project cost, funding requested and sources / value of any additional funding. • Budget and Deliverables Excel Spreadsheet. • Assessment of the likely range of unit costs associated with the anticipated outputs. • As part of the submission, the applicant will describe the amount of leverage – schemes which achieve greater leverage, and so amplify the impact of the Combined Authority's UKSPF investment will be prioritised.

Criteria	Weight	Question (s) in Application form score relates to	Assessment method	Evidence requirement
Deliverability / risk – prioritise projects that demonstrate that they are deliverable, are lower risk and have mitigation in place.	20	Section 3, 5, 7, 8, 9	<p>Project scored reflecting degree of risk associated with the project from very low risk to high risk</p> <p>This is a qualitative assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed delivery model; risk register; resources available. Assessment will be undertaken to assess whether a project is realistically deliverable within the proposed timeframe. Track record and past experience may form part of the evidence checks. The assessment includes checking that there is a clear assessment of risks, mitigating steps are planned and set out where identified. This is particularly important in relation to the proposed project management / delivery team and to check it is adequately resourced. Consideration should be given to how deliverability failure could manifest itself and what would the implications be? (in terms of time and cost).
Climate emergency – how well does the proposal contribute to net zero objectives.	10	Section 4 with a focus on Question 4.11.	<p>Project scored reflecting how well the proposal clearly sets out how it contributes to Tackling the Climate Emergency - Assessed reflecting degree of contribution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong net contribution to tackling the climate emergency Moderate net contribution Neutral impact Negative net contribution. <p>This is a qualitative assessment.</p>	

Criteria	Weight	Question (s) in Application form score relates to	Assessment method	Evidence requirement
<p>Inclusive Growth and Tackling Inequalities and Supporting Diversity – demonstrates that a proactive approach to inclusion and addressing the needs of under-represented groups is integral to scheme design.</p>	25	<p>Completed Equality Impact Assessment – together with Questions in Section 4.</p>	<p>Project scored reflecting the impact of the proposal on fostering inclusive growth, tackling inequalities and supporting diversity from very high impact to very low impact</p> <p>This is a qualitative assessment.</p>	<p>Inclusive growth and Tackling Inequalities and Supporting Diversity element cannot be a bolt-on. The applicant must demonstrate a proactive and targeted approach to engaging with and bringing benefit to disadvantaged groups through the project's delivery model as proposed (outreach, targeted approach, tailored support etc).</p> <p>Wherever possible schemes should be shaped around the needs of under-represented groups as a means of directly tackling social and economic disadvantage.</p> <p>The application must demonstrate that the impact of any proposal has been considered in relation to groups of people with Protected Characteristics.</p> <p>Applicants are required to complete a Stage 1 Equality Impact Assessment with their application.</p>
Total	100			