



Careers and Employability Hub

The focus of this programme is to provide a mechanism for linking employers with schools and young people to provide meaningful/inspirational experiences of the world of work, foster and encourage entrepreneurship and ensure young people can make informed education and career choices in the D2N2 area.

In D2N2 our workforce is not as well qualified as the workforce in the UK overall, with just 32% qualified to NVQ4 level or above in D2N2 compared to 37.9% in the UK.

This further conceals significant variations in workforce skills between areas within D2N2. Productive firms demand more highly skilled workers who earn higher wages. Our current skills profile limits opportunities for workers and firms in our area.

Skills and Knowledge for the Future

Closing the gap between the skills of D2N2 people and the needs of D2N2 employers is essential if we are to achieve our vision of a productive, prosperous and inclusive economy.

We need to maximise the potential of young people entering the labour market and making this happen (across occupations and sectors) will be important both to social mobility and long-term productivity.

We need to drive up productivity in all sectors, so that jobs at all levels support progression and become better-paid. While many jobs will disappear as result of automation, improved productivity will strengthen business competitiveness, stimulate growth and enable the economy to sustain high levels of employment. The key for success in D2N2 will be to enable our young people to progress and move up into the more productive, better-paid jobs in the transformed local economy.

Connecting people to future opportunities.

Educational attainment at 16, identified by the CBI as a key driver of regional productivity, is an area of marked under-performance in some parts of D2N2.

Poor attainment reduces the flow of higher skilled people into the market, and with marked under performance in many parts of D2N2, we have too many young people not realising their potential.

Applicant organisations to manage the Careers and Employability Hub will need to be part of a supportive infrastructure that enables our schools to raise attainment levels, be part of educational developments such as T-Levels and support projects designed to broaden the horizons of young people struggling with social mobility such as the Derby Opportunity Area.

Employers are experiencing real recruitment challenges across the D2N2 LEP Area at all skills levels. Employers also highlight issues with the 'work-readiness', employability skills and lack of awareness of job and careers opportunities of young people.

Poor or lack of careers advice limits careers aspirations, particularly for those who live in areas of deprivation and often don't have the role models to aspire to.

Too few young people have meaningful experiences with employers – research from Education and Employers Taskforce shows that young people who have 4 or more, timely encounters with employers are 86% less likely to be NEET and will earn up to 22% more during their career.

Our immediate priority, therefore, in working with young people is to raise the aspirations of the future workforce by enhancing their careers advice and employability skills. The Careers and Employability Hub will play a pivotal role in supporting young people to acquire the skills and knowledge required by employers across all areas of D2N2.

The Careers and Employability Hub will support the delivery of Key Action 4 in our refreshed Strategic Economic Plan 2019 – 2030 CAREERS INSPIRATION FOR OUR FUTURE WORKFORCE. It will inspire young people to make well informed careers choices about their education, training and future careers to secure well rewarded jobs in the future economy by working with partners to deliver a programme of 'careers inspiration' that will support all mainstream secondary schools and FE providers in D2N2 to achieve all 8 'Gatsby Benchmarks'.

The proposed project will add value to, and not duplicate, the work of the current Careers and Enterprise Company, National Careers Service and other local youth engagement programmes to give educational establishments an added value model of careers and employability provision.

This call is for activities under the ESF Investment Priorities 2.2. The target groups for this call are Small and Medium sized enterprises (SMEs)

There are nearly 72,000 SMEs in the D2N2 area. Unlike large companies the majority of the D2N2 employer base lack the capacity, knowledge and incentives to engage with education and training institutions. They need practical and coherent routes to engage with these bodies and the future workforce to provide labour market intelligence and the meaningful interactions with employers needed to create job ready young people.

This project will put employers at the heart of inspiring and informing young people and individuals seeking work or wanting to progress about future opportunities available. Employers will need to work with schools and organisations that work with

young people outside school to provide the inspiration and information about job opportunities, new technologies, business developments and local skills shortages to young people, their teachers, parents and other professionals that work with young people (including training and careers guidance professionals).

Project applicants will need to demonstrate that employers are at the heart of their approach and that employers will lead the strategic governance and local operational priorities of the project. Specifically, it is expected that the project will work with the D2N2 Growth Hub and other employer facing services to establish an employer led board to provide strategic guidance to the project.

Activities

The programme will co-ordinate the following:

- Work with the D2N2 LEP and other local stakeholders to support delivery of priorities contained in the D2N2 Strategic Economic Plan and CEIAG strategy
- Work with senior managers in educational establishments and employers to support co-delivery of essential work skills (i.e. communication, creativity, innovation and enterprise, critical thinking, team work, problem solving, resilience and character) of young people in both schools and colleges focusing on D2N2 priority sectors
- Foster enterprise and entrepreneurship skills amongst young people
- Developing meaningful/inspirational interactions with employers for young people (i.e. tasters, work experience, mentors, meet the employer sessions)
- Support employers to work with schools, colleges, youth professionals and other education and skills providers to support the design and delivery of the careers and employability curriculum.
- Build capacity in SMEs to provide project/placement/internship opportunities and enhance the contribution of advanced skills to SME growth
- Support the delivery of high-quality Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance for young people, supported through employer involvement and the development of quality LMI materials
- Inspiring activities delivered by employers, including tasters, work experience, mentoring, meet the employer sessions, for young people, their parents, youth professionals, teachers and training and career guidance professionals, focusing on priority sectors and highlighting new technologies.
- Support for employers to develop and offer work experience, apprenticeship and job opportunities, particularly recognising the forthcoming need for T-level students to do 3 months' work experience.

Contracting and funding allocation

The programme will be procured through the ESF Managing Authority (DWP) open call process.

The ESF funding allocation to support the Careers and Employability Hub is £1,522,181. Applicants will need to have eligible match funding at 50% which must be from a source other than the European Union.

To ensure synergy D2N2 would wish potential applicants to deliver the Careers and Employability Hub to work closely with applicants to the complementary call for the D2N2 Access to Skills Hub to ensure that services to SMEs are complementary and avoid duplication in delivery.

Proposals should: deliver activities eligible for ESF; cover the whole D2N2 area; and be in line with the D2N2 LEP Core Delivery Principles. The Managing Authority may award more than one contract should applications of sufficient quality and scale be received that in combination provide for LEP wide coverage without duplication of activities or geography. There is a requirement for all contracts to clearly evidence how they will interact with each other to ensure they complement existing and future planned provision.

This document provides the strategic intent for this programme. Full details of the bidding, contracting and confirmed criteria will be provided within the published specifications.

The below provides an indicative breakdown of the funding allocation and targets.

Investment Priority	2.2
	Careers and Employment Hub
ESF	£1,522,181
Match Funding	£1,522,181
Outputs	Volumes TBC
	SMEs successfully completing projects (which increase employer engagement; and/or the number of people progressing into or within skills provision)
	Number of supported micro, SMEs (including cooperative enterprises, enterprises of the social economy)