

UK Shared Prosperity Fund Call for Projects

E35: Scope of Call

The scope of this call focuses on the People and Skills investment priority E:35 of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund:

Activities such as enrichment and volunteering to improve opportunities and promote wellbeing.

We are looking for locally based providers to deliver a programme of enrichment activity and secure volunteering opportunities for individuals experiencing barriers into employment and/or skills provision. We are also looking for successful projects to report on the impact and experience of volunteers because of the project with the aim of reducing structural barriers into employment and into skills provision.

Project objectives for this call are to:

- Deliver innovative activities that support access to employment through alternative routes such as enrichment and volunteering opportunities that promote personal wellbeing and contribute towards social, environmental, and community benefits
- Deliver interpersonal and employability skills support and training such as confidence, motivation and behavioural issues
- Support people furthest from the labour market to overcome barriers to work by providing cohesive, locally tailored support, including access to basic skills

Projects are required to demonstrate:

- Community focussed and demonstrate how they will involve the target group, local voluntary and community organisations, and enterprises in design and delivery

The period of delivery will be from September 2024 until 31st March 2025. All outputs and outcomes have to be delivered by 31st March 2025.

UKSPF in Herefordshire Background

This project is funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. In line with current Government requirements UKSPF funding must be fully expended, and projects delivered by 31 March 2025. The Council does not have the facility to support projects that go beyond this deadline.

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda. The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills.

Applicants should refer to UKSPF guidance [UK Shared Prosperity Fund: overview \(1\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-overview-1) Investment priority = People and skills.

This investment priority has two primary elements, employment support for economically inactive people (benefit and non-benefit claimants) and funding skills provision to provide people with the

skills needed to progress in life and work, including supporting local areas to fund local skills needs.

Our planned UKSPF investment aligns to our established strategic frameworks including the [Big Economic Plan](#) and [Herefordshire Cultural Strategy 2019-2029](#) and partners may apply for funding to support projects and programmes that align to the objectives of the fund. Lead local authorities were asked to set out their approach in an investment plan submitted to government on 31 July 2022. Our planned [UKSPF investment plan](#) supports our established strategic frameworks including Herefordshire Big Economic Plan.

The Council has engaged with a number of key stakeholders in developing our plans, ensuring our selected focus for investment is evidence based and demonstrates local needs, challenges and opportunities. Herefordshire Economy and Place Board govern the delivery of the UKSPF plan, with representatives from local businesses, charities, community groups and public sector partners supporting to shape programme delivery.

Herefordshire is one of the most sparsely populated areas of the UK, with an ageing population and connectivity challenges characteristic of rural areas. The overall population of Herefordshire has increased by 2% over the past 10 years compared to 6.6% in England, and between 5.2% and 6.4% in neighbouring areas. This increase has been primarily amongst the over 65 population, with the working age population declining by 4.1% (ONS Census, 2021).

A social mobility 'cold spot' Herefordshire has below average economic inactivity rates. However, headline statistics mask hidden inequalities across the county. Analysis of IMD data (2019) indicates that 16 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) in Herefordshire are amongst the 25% most deprived in England in terms of adult skills and of these, five are within the 10% most deprived. Furthermore, amongst the economically inactive, the county has a higher proportion of people who are suffering from long term ill-health (APS, 2021).

A high proportion of employment is in low skilled and low wage sectors which limits the opportunities for career progression and makes residents more vulnerable to rising costs and in-work poverty. Intervention is therefore required to increase skills and qualification levels where this supports social mobility and removes barriers to employment, education and training, particularly amongst disadvantaged communities and those furthest from the labour market.

Partnership working

Organisations are actively encouraged to work in partnership, rather than working in isolation and not engaging other local organisations or stakeholders.

Capacity, capabilities, and deliverability

Priority for support will be given to high quality projects led by and / or delivered by local organisations which can be delivered on time, to budget and which will achieve strong and sustainable outcomes for Herefordshire. Where appropriate, organisations and partnerships must therefore be able to demonstrate a solid track record of delivery and achievement of outputs and outcomes, with robust governance and project management systems in place. Delivery partnerships must demonstrate the following in their submissions:

- Robust approach to information, advice and guidance for every participant to ensure there is a strong rationale for the support provided.

- Strong understanding of existing support already available – within Herefordshire - to ensure appropriate and responsive signposting to alternative skills provision and to maximise upskilling, employment opportunities and career progression.
- Excellent knowledge of learning and skills programmes delivered locally by higher and further education institutions, training providers, employers, Public Health, social prescribing delivery organisations, and the VCSE sector.

Outputs and outcomes

Outputs:

- A minimum number of 13 volunteering opportunities supported by 31 March 2025
- A minimum number of 13 people taking part in work experience programmes by 31 March 2025

Outcomes:

- A minimum number of 25 people familiarised with employers' expectations, including, standards of behaviour in the workplace by 31 March 2025
- A minimum number of 25 people experiencing reduced structural barriers into employment and into skills provision by 31 March 2025

Applicants applying for the full amount would be expected to meet these targets as a minimum. Where an applicant is applying for a share of the funding, we expect outputs and outcomes to be delivered in proportion to the share applied for.

An up-to-date list of Outputs and Outcomes and the indicator definition and unit of measurement that corresponds to each Output and Outcome can be found here:

[UK Shared Prosperity Fund: outputs and outcomes definitions \(2\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-outputs-and-outcomes-definitions-2)

Government may update, amend or add to this additional guidance and all service providers must ensure that they are using the most up to date versions of all documents which will be available on the UKSPF government website. *Subject to additional or amended guidance from the Government during the contract term, the Council will vary the contract accordingly to those changes.*

Key Requirements

- Applicants should have a robust awareness of the range of other government funded related programmes in Herefordshire and ensure proposed activity does not duplicate this.
- Applicants should have a robust awareness of the range of existing statutory and non-statutory education and training provision. Applicants should demonstrate how proposed activity will align with these to deliver the maximum benefits for participants.
- Applicants must have robust systems and processes for capturing and reporting against a range of beneficiary data, this includes Data Protection Act (Information Commissioner's Office registration and Security Accreditations and/or certifications such as the Cyber Essentials Certificate.
- Applicants should refer to the UKSPF guidance on outputs/outcomes which provides definitions and units of measurements.
- Applicants will ensure that all participants are deemed eligible to participate on this programme and receive UKSPF funding.

The successful provider(s) will target the following groups:

- Unemployed adults aged 19 plus furthest away from the labour market

- People living in remote rural areas of Herefordshire
- People living in areas of socio-economic deprivation such as Hereford City, Leominster, Ross-on-Wye and Bromyard. For more information please refer to Understanding Herefordshire website [Inequalities - Understanding Herefordshire](#)
- People from under-represented groups including but not limited to, LGBTQ+, black and minority ethnic backgrounds, disabled people

Delivery period: September 2024 to 31 March 2025.

Delivery geography

Project delivery should benefit all of the County of Herefordshire local authority area. UKSPF provision should be easily accessible to participants/ residents

Match funding

The level of UKSPF requested should be the minimum for the project to proceed and must not be used to replace existing funding sources. It must enable activity to take place that would not otherwise happen or to increase the scope, scale, duration or intensity of activity. While match funding is not a requirement of UKSPF, applicants are encouraged to identify other complementary funding that can be aligned to maximise the impact of the UKSPF resource. Applicants will be asked to explain what other sources of funding – public, private, VCS - they have secured and/or explored to support delivery of the project. Where match funding has been identified, applicants will need to satisfy Herefordshire Council that they have, or are able to put in place, eligible match funding for the full amount.

Constraints

- a) The service activities must be completed and outputs and outcomes must be achieved by 31 March 2025.
- b) This project is time and budget restricted. Funding must be fully defrayed within the 2024/2025 financial year to be eligible, with no roll over of underspend into the subsequent year permitted.
- c) The Council will not supply a location or premises for the delivery of the face-to-face in person sessions and this will be the responsibility of the provider. The provider must ensure that the premises used are based **within Herefordshire county boundaries** and are safe and suitable for the delivery of the service. In addition premises must:
 - comply with health and safety legislation, including fire regulations
 - have disability access
 - be appropriately furnished and equipped with necessary equipment
 - be easily accessible by public transport
- d) Applicants must satisfy the following criteria: fit into one of the following partner categories (with a United Kingdom Provider Reference Number):
 - Higher and Further Education Institutions
 - ESFA registered Independent Training Providers (ITPs)
 - Community Interest Companies
 - Registered Charities
 - Employability Support Organisation

- Voluntary Organisations, which are constituted
- Private sector businesses, where a partnership with an ESFA registered training provider can be demonstrated.

e) The following organisations are ineligible:

- Individuals
- Organisations without an institution

Performance measures and project success

Provider(s) should ultimately deliver quality training to targeted groups and have developed innovative approaches to reducing adult learning barriers by targeting adults with no or low level qualifications and skills.

Provider (s) will successfully deliver all of the contractual outputs and outcomes and will collect case studies and success stories as part of the monitoring process to demonstrate the benefits to individuals and will also be used to shape future training delivery.

Forms and documentation confirming all data collection required, as well as feedback forms, will be agreed at the project implementation meeting.

Providers will be required to share supporting information and evidence in relation to KPI performance with Herefordshire Council officers on a monthly basis. In case of underperformance, the review will be on a weekly basis.

The following KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) of this call must be achieved by March 2025:

Outputs

- The minimum number of volunteering opportunities supported 13
- The minimum number of people taking part in work experience programmes 13

Outcomes:

- The minimum number of people experiencing reduced structural barriers into employment and into skills provision 25
- The minimum number of people familiarised with employers' expectations, including, standards of behaviour in the workplace 25

Any additional KPIs will be agreed before the start of the contract or where appropriate set during the first year of the contract.

How much you can apply for?

You can apply for revenue funding only, to fund 100% of the eligible costs of delivering provision (noting the match funding section)

Funding is for the 2024/2025 financial year.

You can apply for a:

- Minimum grant of £20,000 and Maximum £72,000

If applying for more than one project intervention you will need to **complete a separate application for each one.**