

D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership



Media Release

23 October 2016

More than £7m to tackle skills and jobs needs in D2N2 LEP area

More than £7million is now available through the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership to help people find jobs, employers to plug skills gaps in their workforces and for the area to retain the highly-skilled graduates required for a modern, high skilled, high growth economy.

The new funding – which organisations can now bid to apply for – is being provided through D2N2's European Social Fund (ESF) allocation, itself part of the larger € 250million in European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) which is being used to support a wide variety of business and economic growth activities over six years (to 2020).

D2N2 is the private-sector led partnership of business, local authorities, skills and training providers, community and voluntary organisations, and others which works to promote economic growth and create jobs across Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

The D2N2 LEP regularly releases funding amounts or 'calls' from its € 250million ESIF allocation, to support business and develop skills in its area, and this latest funding will support three initiatives, which project organisers can bid to. The three initiatives now open for project bids are:

Higher Skills Development – £4.7million from the European Social Fund (ESF) portion of D2N2's ESIF allocation, for projects helping the D2N2 LEP area retain more graduate talent and create more business-based programmes to retain and develop them.

Project bids must be for at least £100,000 in ESF and bidders must provide match (half of the project total) funding for their projects.

The programme will;

- Provide a support mechanism for SMEs (small medium size employers) and Micro businesses to create career pathways of higher and degree apprenticeships for their workforce.
- Provide incentives for SMEs and Micro businesses to support an undergraduate or post graduate student to gain actual work experience and to offer a job with a career pathway on completion of study.
- Support disadvantaged students on higher level programmes to access employability skills, work experience and advice to increase their local job prospects within 6-months of leaving education.
- Promote and develop better links between SMEs and Micro businesses and education institutions.
- A flexible approach to meet the needs of differing businesses

Targets – 742 employees to have benefited from the programme and 376 SMEs to have grown their business thanks to the impact of taking on higher skilled employees.

Deadline for applications is Sunday 15 January 2017.

Enterprise, Innovation and Pathways – £1.4 million from D2N2's ESF allocation for a strategy to raise awareness of career opportunities and access to careers support, particularly for more disadvantaged groups where help is not already covered by other ESF-supported programmes; such as Building Better Opportunities, INSPIRE Local, CAREERS Local, EMPLOY Local and SKILLS Local. Project bids must be for at least £200,000 in ESF and bidders must provide match (half) funding for their projects.

The programme will focus on providing extra innovative support for long-term unemployed people, including those who have completed the Work Programme and where a person is still unemployed after many efforts to help them.

The programme will provide:

- Support to fill existing and future gaps in provision and activities within existing infrastructures and organisations, where there is a demonstrable evidence of need, linked to and aligned with local strategies.
- Complementary activities and resources to support the D2N2 opt-in programmes such as EMPLOY Local and SKILLS Local.
- Solutions to meet the requirements of the D2N2 key priority sectors, employment growth sectors, and emerging sectors based on evidence of need
- Additional and innovative approaches to pre-employment training, to ensure individuals have the core work-related skills that employers require, including preparation for apprenticeships.

Targets – 1,933 people provided with additional support.

Deadline for applications is Sunday 15 January 2017.

Develop Sector Growth (focused support for SMEs in D2N2 LEP area growth sectors) – £1.1million from D2N2's ESF allocation for projects enhancing employers' role in creating skills and training programmes in the D2N2 LEP area, which meet the needs of 'skills gaps' in companies' workforces and help create new employment opportunities. This is a basic principle of D2N2's Skills for Growth Strategy, aiming to particularly support the area's key sectors and the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Project bids should be for a minimum of £100,000 ESF and bidders will need to provide 50% matched funding.

The programme will provide:

- Employer and sector led initiatives which will harness and enable a cultural change to the skill system across the D2N2 area.
- Enable employers of the D2N2 key priority sectors to own and develop a demand-led skills system.
- Solutions to meet the requirements of the D2N2 key priority sectors, employment growth sectors, and emerging sectors based on evidence of need.
- Promoting role models either through employers or individuals, reflecting the need to help, promote or inspire young people into various sectors, especially key sectors.

Targets – 1,091 people to be supported through this programme, 423 unemployed people to be supported through employer-led activities.

Deadline for applications is Sunday 15 January 2017.

In each case, once the deadline has closed the project bids received will be assessed by the D2N2 LEP and the Department for Work and Pensions. The strongest bids, most relevant to the three initiatives' aims, will be invited to make a more in-depth application and successful bidders will then be announced.

It is assumed that projects which receive funding must be completed by April 2020 and they will be assessed as they progress, to ensure they are meeting their targets.

D2N2 LEP will be hosting two Technical Assistance workshops in Derby and Nottingham to support organisations interested in applying to the ESF open calls. The workshops, which are funded by the D2N2 Technical Assistance programme, are free to attend and will include a networking lunch. They will be held on the following dates:

Nottingham - Monday 28 November 2016 – 10am to 3.00pm including lunch – <https://esf-open-calls-workshop-nottingham.eventbrite.co.uk/>

Venue - Park Inn Hotel, Mansfield Road, Nottingham, NG5 2BT

Derby - Wednesday 30 November 2016 – 10am to 3.00pm including lunch – <https://esf-open-calls-workshop-derby.eventbrite.co.uk/>

Venue - Derby Silk Mill, 19 Full Street, Derby, DE1 3AF

Organisations wishing to submit applications to any of the three funding calls above can find more information at the following link.

https://www.gov.uk/european-structural-investment-funds?keywords=&funding_source%5B%5D=european-social-fund

Peter Richardson, Chair of the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership, said: “Skills development lies at the heart of the D2N2 LEP’s Growth Strategy.

“Helping people gain skills which get them into work and then develop knowledge which progresses their careers is good for individuals, and the resulting pool of potential employees with the skills needed to plug gaps in their workforce is good for businesses.

“These three new initiatives, backed by £7.3million from D2N2’s European funding allocation, show the LEP’s commitment to skills development in its area and in getting business more involved with that.”

In 2013, Government asked each of England’s 39 Local Enterprise Partnerships to draw up a six year strategy for how they would spend a European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) allocation. D2N2’s innovative strategy saw it awarded one of the largest allocations of any LEP, receiving € 250million for projects in its area up to 2020. The three main EU funds within the ESIF are the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

For more information on how D2N2 is using its ESIF monies to support business growth and economic development see its web pages at www.d2n2lep.org/EUFunding

ENDS

For further information about this media release contact D2N2 Communications Manager Sean Kirby on 0115 9578749 or email: sean.kirby@d2n2lep.org

Notes to Editors

D2N2 is the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) for Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Local Enterprise Partnerships are private sector-led, locally-owned partnerships between business, local authorities, skills and training providers, and community and voluntary organisations. There are 39 LEPs in England.

They play a central role in deciding local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive economic growth and create local jobs.

D2N2, established in 2010, is one of the largest LEPs in England, covering an area with a population of more than two million people and with an economic output of over £42.9billion GVA (Gross Value Added) (source ONS report, February 2016). Its Chief Executive is David Ralph and its Chairman Peter Richardson.

D2N2’s target is to support the creation of 55,000 new jobs in D2N2 by 2023. The majority of these jobs will be in the private sector.

Its vision is of a more prosperous, better connected, and increasingly resilient and competitive economy. Its purpose is to support and encourage economic growth in the D2N2 region.

See website www.d2n2lep.org or www.d2n2growthhub.co.uk

The D2N2 Technical Assistance programme is receiving up to £430,156 of funding from the European Social Fund as part of the 2014-2020 European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme in England. The Department for Work and Pensions (and in London the intermediate body Greater London Authority) is the Managing Authority for the England European Social Fund programme. Established by the European Union, the European Social Fund helps local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support skills development, employment and job creation, social inclusion and local community regenerations. For more information, visit <https://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding>