

The Local Employability Partnership (LEP), Employability Funding Midlothian is a Scottish Government fund. Midlothian Council are inviting applications from community groups, charities, social enterprises, public sector bodies and private employability providers who can provide employability support for the following in Midlothian.

All applications will be assessed to ensure that they do not contradict relevant legislation and can demonstrate that have suitable delivery, monitoring, and evaluation processes in place.

Areas of need and partnership working will be prioritised.

Community groups or charities must be constituted and have a bank account, alternative governance documentation will be accepted for public or private sector. You must have prior experience of providing employability support to these age groups.

CRITERIA AND GUIDANCE

Eligibility: (Please see information appendix A Q2, **you can only submit one application per eligibility/client category group**).

- All-Age Employability Support (16- to 67-year-olds (pensionable age) who are experiencing barriers to employment)
- Tackling Child poverty (Priority Families with children in relative poverty)

Please note the eligibility reflects the [guidance from Scottish Government](#) and is unique to this funding stream. **In addition, programmes must be deliverable within timeframe May 2025 to March 26.**

You will be required to provide quarterly update reports for submission to Scottish Government and to also attend monthly LEP and Partners meetings for the duration of funding.

Fair Work First Commitments:

In carrying out the Project the Grantee will be expected to give regard to and promote the Fair Work Framework. The Grantee is asked to commit to the following Fair Work First Criteria in a way that is relevant and proportionate for the organisation and promote this with employers with whom you engage in the course of delivering the project:

Fair Work First is the Scottish Government's policy for driving high quality and Fair Work across the labour market in Scotland by applying fair work principles to grants, other funding and contracts. In delivering NOLB, Local Authorities will be expected to give regard to the Fair Work Framework [The Fair Work Framework - The Fair Work Convention](#). Local Authorities are asked to commit to adopting the following Fair Work Principles in a way that is relevant and proportionate for their organisation:

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- Appropriate channels for effective voice, such as trade union recognition.
- Investment in workforce development.
- No inappropriate use of zero hours contracts.
- Action to tackle the gender pay gap and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace.
- Payment of the real Living Wage.
- Offering flexible and family friendly working practices for all workers from day one of their employment; and
- Opposing the use of fire and rehire practice.

The grant will cover the period of 11 months from May 2025 to March 26. Therefore, projects need to be implemented quickly, and you will need to be able to detail how you will achieve this in your funding application.

The closing date for applications is 23:59 on the 20th of March 2025. Late applications will not be considered.



Decision making

Grant applications will be assessed at the Grant scoring panel meeting against the extent to which the project or programme of work will:

1. Meet the objectives and milestones of the funding stream.
2. Reflects the needs highlighted in the plan. [NOLB Plan](#)
3. Address unmet need.
4. Reduce inequalities, help people most in need to progress on their employability journey.
(There is an expectation we will need to ensure we have support for those who would have previously accessed Fair Start Scotland).
5. Tackle Child Poverty.
6. Provide work related academies/qualifications and/or source work placements for those with complex needs
7. Make a difference to the people you are working with.
8. Complement or add to existing services and resources.
9. Provide evidence of partnership working
10. Be delivered by organisations with the skills and experience to deliver effectively.
11. Include clear costing and timescales that demonstrate value for money.
12. Provide robust knowledge of the tracking and monitoring systems you will put in place to ensure effective reporting and tracking.

All questions will be scored individually on the information given in the relevant allocated box. Priorities will be given to geographical areas of need and partnership working.

Applicants will be informed of their application outcome by 11th April 2025.

Successful applicants will have to sign a grant funding agreement and a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Midlothian Council. Throughout the funding period you will be required to attend regular scrutiny, performance, and monitoring meetings with Grant Link officers. You will also be required to evaluate your project to determine whether the proposed outcomes have been met.

Financial Arrangements

If awarded grant funding, Midlothian Council in accordance with the award will make payment in 6 instalments on a bi-monthly basis. Please be aware that the second and subsequent payments are subject to satisfactory performance in regard to participant numbers, outputs and outcomes and you will be allocated a Council link officer who will meet with you regularly to discuss successes, issues, and challenges.

Further Support

If you need any additional support or further information, please contact:

- Heather Fleming (Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability Officer)
Heather.Fleming@midlothian.gov.uk
- Karen McGowan (Communities, Lifelong Learning and Employability Officer)



Karen.McGowan@midlothian.gov.uk

Guidance for Completing your Application Form

Please provide all the critical details in the bid itself, we will not accept supporting documentation. Do not assume the scoring panel has prior knowledge of your organisation or project, even if you have been funded previously. Subheadings and bullet points are helpful for breaking up long sections of text.

Question 1

As clearly as possible, using the criteria and information below please describe the Scottish Government objective and milestones that your project will address.

Main Objectives of NOLB:

All applications should demonstrate how they meet the priorities of No One Left Behind as set out by Scottish Government. The main objectives of the fund as detailed in the local authority grant award letter from Scottish Government to Midlothian Council are to:

- To maximise the role that employability plays in delivering national and local aims of tackling poverty, promoting inclusion and social justice, and creating a fair and prosperous Scotland.
- To reduce inequality in the labour market by supporting those further from the labour market to increase their income from employment, by providing relevant employability support through training for employment.
- To improve labour market outcomes by reducing local Economic Inactivity, supporting those who want to work to enter employment.
- To reduce levels of child poverty by supporting parents from the priority family groups to increase their income from employment, by providing relevant employability support related to training for employment.
- To provide training to those in low-income employment, especially parents, to help ensure participants are able to progress to better paid work, or work which better suits their circumstances.
- To reduce levels of long-term unemployment by providing employability support to those who are at risk of being long-term unemployed and are claiming reserved benefits; and
- To help reduce the Disability Employment Gap by supporting disabled people to enter and remain in the workforce.
- To expand provision that supports the green jobs and net zero commitments.

Milestones which will be measured throughout the programme include:

- The number of individuals engaging with employability support and training, broken down into age groups, parental status and by protected characteristics.



- The number of individuals taking part in employment opportunities supported by employability funding.
- The number of individuals achieving positive outcomes such as: an increase in working hours or rate of pay; entering employment or education; starting work experience, volunteering or training.
- The number of parents achieving in-work progression.

Question 2

Be as specific as possible. Based on your best estimate, please tell us how many people or organisations will participate in the funded activity or receive services from it. Numbers should be realistic rather than over-optimistic.

Question 3

As clearly as possible, tell us here WHAT you want to do with the grant. Please describe the activities or services you will deliver and how you will deliver them: for example: face to face or online, by using new or existing members of staff, volunteers, sessional workers or other.

Question 4

This is where you link what you will actually deliver with the benefits that you want to make and give us an idea of how you will show that through monitoring and evaluation as requested by Scottish Government linking to their objectives and milestones.

Outputs are the specific goods, services or activities that will be delivered. Please be as specific as possible about the activity and the estimated numbers of people who will take part.

For example:

- 5 training workshops will be delivered to approximately 20 people each
- 10 new volunteer opportunities will be created for people in our community garden and 5 will secure a gardening qualification
- 100 people will be offered individual advice and support

Outcomes are the changes that you will make as a result of the activities. Ideally, they should be presented using words such as 'more', 'better', 'improved,' 'increased,' etc. You should link your outcomes to the outputs that you are delivering as directly as possible.

For example:

- Training participants will have greater skills and self-confidence, leading to better outcomes in the labour market
- Volunteers will experience better mental health and reduced isolation

Please take into consideration that the expected outcomes in the Midlothian No One Left Behind Midlothian Operating plan states:

- 35% enter employment, Self-employment, Modern apprenticeships or progress in employment.



- 7% progress onto HE/FE
- 35% will achieve an accredited or work-related qualification.

All volumes of individuals supported would be up to a maximum of £2000 a head per person.

Monitoring and Evaluation is how you will know you have made a difference. You may use different methods depending on your project, but this could include tracking statistical data, characteristics of participants, barriers and training/job outcomes, baseline self-statements and progression statements for example in confidence levels at interviews, evaluation forms, focus groups, one to one feedback sessions, or other. You should consider your baseline knowledge, i.e. what you know at the START of the project so that you can measure the changes. It will be essential to measure where clients or beneficiaries are at the beginning and at various intervals throughout the project, not just at the end. You must also state how you will practically undertake the tracking of the statistics required and what systems you will use in terms of participants and their achievements.

Question 5

In this question, we want to know WHY this project is needed. A strong bid will provide evidence of need, which may come from direct community engagement or research that you have done or data from existing sources. We'd like to know how your project will fill a gap in services and be confident that it will not duplicate work that may already be going on.

Here we also want to know how you believe your project will help meet the objectives and milestones of this fund as detailed above.

Use local data and local people's views to inform your application:

Applications should demonstrate and utilise available local data to identify areas of need and must provide evidence of this. Useful sources of local data are available from the Single Midlothian Plan, Skills Development Scotland, NOMIS and from local consultations. Our local employability partnership including the No One Left Behind Midlothian Operating Plan 2022-2025 have highlighted some key local priority areas. These include:

- Child Poverty
- Parental Income
- Women and STEM
- Fair Work
- 60+ and people who wish to re-enter the labour market after taking retirement or who have been fulfilling caring roles for relatives.
- Upskilling of parents to increase higher level qualifications including work related specific qualifications and qualifications to secure higher paid job or career.
- Women in business; support parents to look at options of self-employment and developing their

own enterprising ideas

- Better Paid Job
- Multi agency training
- Services reaching those from Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority
- Data skills and ICT including basic and higher levels
- Supporting young people who have experience of care.
- Supporting people from protected characteristic groups.
- Support to improve health and wellbeing increasing likelihood of positive destination.
- Coaching support.
- Skills boost intensive courses over 3 weeks, for example.
- Capacity building support for the LEP and successful partner providers including engagement of local people in service co-design and upskilling partners in equalities and new work practices and emerging growth employment areas.
- Supporting young people with training allowances who do not have access to Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

Question 6

We like projects to be connected with what is already happening here in Midlothian. Please also use this section to tell us WHICH other local organisations or agencies you may be working in partnership with and some details of that partnership. For example, tell us if you're collaborating on delivery, signposting, referring people to them or taking referrals from them. You can also tell us if you're using their premises or drawing upon their expertise in some way.

We want to see that you've already done some of the groundwork in terms of building these relationships, so please give us some detail and not list how you've established links.

Question 7

We want to know about the expertise and skills you have within your organisation and how that makes you best placed to deliver this project. Examples might include:

- Knowledge of and established links with the local community.
- The skills, knowledge and experience of volunteers and/or directors.
- Staff members with expertise.
- Your organisation's track record in delivery.
- Training that your team has undertaken.
- Assets and resources you have, including space, equipment, etc.

Question 8

It is not enough under this question to say that your organisation supports equal opportunities and is open to everyone in the community. Consider:

- How you will promote and target those from protected characteristic groups.



- What Policies and Procedures you have in place that promote accessibility. If you do not have an equal opportunities policy, then you may wish to write one. Contact MVA if you need assistance to do so.
- What you do to make your premises accessible e.g. ramps, opening hours, outreach.
- How you market your services to make sure that everyone knows about them e.g. marketing to under-represented groups, Plain English, Other languages, large print.
- How you support vulnerable service users to participate. Do you give them additional support, if so, how?
- Any active work you do with your service users on equalities.
- How you work in partnership with any specialist organisations.
- How you provide training on equality and diversity for staff and volunteers

Question 9

Provide information, if you received NOLB funding to run a similar programme last year. Did you achieve your employability outcomes as per service level agreement. If you did not reach out outcomes, please provide a more detailed reflection of changes you would introduce this year.

Question 10 - Project Costs

Provide as much detail as you can under each cost heading and ensure these are recorded accurately e.g. information on how costs have been determined.

Funding can be requested for the following purposes:

Eligible costs may include only activities designed and delivered to support progression towards, into and to sustain employment, and for parents from the priority family groups to increase income in-work, as:

- Support provided by Employability Key Workers, including direct management and administration; workforce capacity in providing support to those for whom this intervention has been identified as appropriate; and engaging with young people no earlier than six months prior to the school leaving date.
- Providing appropriate training opportunities and/or provision to participants.
- Providing funding for the achievement of accredited training, industry recognised certification and Vocational Qualifications.
- Travelling expenses and related costs for participants to enable them to attend external training sessions and relevant interviews. *
- Travelling expenses and related costs for staff and Key Workers in connection with providing support to participants.
- The administration and co-ordination costs associated with delivering No One Left Behind.
- Specialist support as more fully described below, which is required for participants who need more focused employability support to help them enter the labour market.
- Investment in both national and local Third Sector and Private Sector providers to deliver employability support and training, which can include provision of the equipment and accommodation directly required to deliver No One Left Behind.
- A Training Allowance towards support for participants whilst undertaking employability training,

where there is no alternative financial support available.

* **Expenses** can only be met under No One Left Behind where they relate specifically to **training** for employment. So, for example, if the travelling expenses relate to attending work, these costs are not eligible.

The following areas cannot be funded:

- Any Value Added Tax (VAT) reclaimable by the Grantee.
- Any employment costs arising from the Grantee's legal obligations to its employees, for example parental leave, sick leave, redundancy. There is no formal relationship between Scottish Government and the employee.
- Costs for employability not directly related to No One Left Behind.
- Council or other organisation/agency general overhead charges - capital, management, administration, accommodation, travel and subsistence costs where these do not directly relate to No One Left Behind.
- Costs not related to training for employment. Scottish Ministers do not have powers to provide funding to support participants who are in work or transitioning into work. NOLB funding can only be used to support a participant who is training for work unless the participant falls into one of the two categories covered by the Scotland Act 2016*.
- Ongoing childcare costs.
- Any goods or services not received by the Grantee by the end of the financial year – 31 March 2026.
- Costs not directly supporting the grant purpose.
- Discretionary payments related to supporting non-disabled participants to transition to or remain in employment.
- Discretionary costs relating to those who fall out with the category of being at risk of long-term unemployment, receiving assistance for at least a year and claiming a reserved benefit.
- Staff relocation costs.
- Insurance costs.

*The two categories of participants covered by the Scotland Act are:

- (a) disabled people; and
- (b) those who are in receipt of reserved benefits, are receiving support of at least a year and who are at risk of long-term unemployment.

Question 11 - How do you intend to cover any unexpected costs which might arise?

Think about how you have minimised the likelihood of unexpected costs arising, through accurately costing your budget and building in reasonable uplifts for inflation. If unexpected costs arise, consider if you could fund them from tapping into reserves, sourcing additional grant funding, making cuts elsewhere, or accessing loan funding (if appropriate).

Question 12 - Other funding from Midlothian Council



If you are in receipt of any funding from Midlothian Council or are awaiting the outcome of an application/bid, please provide details here. You will need to provide information on which Council service is funding the project, what is it funding and how much is allocated in the financial year.

Question 13 - Match Funding

Please detail any match funding secured or applied for to deliver your project, including the amount, where the funding is coming from and what year(s) it will cover. It could strengthen your application if you have additional funding to support your project.

Question 14 - What steps will you take to minimise fraud?

Think about what systems you have in place to make sure that fraud cannot occur. These could include things like more than one person being required to authorise bank transactions, only senior staff being able to authorise expenditure, having financial policies and procedures in place, minimising the use of cash transactions, and appropriate oversight of finances by the Board. It also includes the actions you take to keep safe online, such as use of strong passwords, spam filters, training and awareness for staff on 'phishing' emails and other scams.

Question 15 - Subsidy Control

Tick box to indicate whether you consider that any of your activities will come under the scope of subsidy control when funded through the NOLB.

'Subsidy control' is the regime that ensures that public money does not distort the market through large subsidies to organisations. There are four key characteristics of a support measure that are likely to indicate that it would be considered a subsidy, all of which would need to be met:

- the support measure must constitute a financial (or in kind) contribution such as a grant, loan or guarantee and must be provided by a 'public authority', including, but not limited to, central, devolved, regional or local government.
- the support measure must confer an economic advantage on one or more economic actors.
- the support measure is specific insofar as it benefits, as a matter of law or fact, certain economic actors over others in relation to the production of certain goods or services; and
- the support measure must have the potential to cause a distortion in or harm to competition, trade, or investment.

There is more information on this here: Subsidy control: guidance - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

Please note: NOLB funding may be subject to subsidy control, further work is being undertaken and the position on subsidy control will be clarified before any funding awards and SLAs are agreed.



DECLARATION

Please ensure you tick all the relevant boxes to indicate that you are eligible to apply; that you have read, understood and accept-the conditions of the grant; and that you have included all the relevant supporting documentation. If you are a statutory organisation, you must also include the name of the Chief Officer who has approved the bid. Please ensure that the application is signed by the person who is authorised to make the application and witnessed by another person.

Grant Funding Surgeries

If you would like advice and support on completing the grant application form, CLLE will be running surgeries.

04/3/2025 Eskdail Court 12.30pm till 1.30pm Eskdail Court, Training room 2	11/03/2025 Online 5pm till 6pm
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If you would like to book an appointment, then please contact Sharon Armstrong who will arrange a suitable time and confirm arrangements.

sharon.armstrong@midlothian.gov.uk T: 01968664106

The closing date for applications is 23:59 on the 20th of March 2025. Late applications will not be considered.

Annex A – Participant Eligibility Criteria:

Midlothian Residents who have the right to live and work in the UK and meet one or more of the eligibility criteria below:

Given the range of barriers individuals may experience, and that these barriers are often intersectional, the eligibility criteria for individuals to receive employability training from No One Left Behind is purposefully broad to ensure local areas have the flexibility they need to respond to local demand. Individuals must reside in Scotland and must be:

- a) People from school leaving age up to 67 years (Pensionable age) who are experiencing barriers to employment (must be experiencing at least one barrier);
- b) Young people over the age of 15 years who are within 6 months of the school leaving date and who are identified as being at risk of not moving on to a positive destination; or
- c) Parents on a low-income whilst in-work*. Although there is a specific focus on the six priority family groups, our service eligibility also recognises different family structures.

*NOLB funding can only be used to provide in-work support if this is categorised as ‘training’, unless the participant is ‘disabled’ or ‘long-term unemployed, receiving support of at least a year and claiming reserved benefits. If aftercare support other than training is required, alternative funding must be used to support this.

Barriers to Employment

The following is a list of the main barriers to employment experienced by participants, although this list is not exhaustive:

- Disabled people, including those experiencing mental health issues and those who have an impairment or long-term health condition
- Primary Carer
- Person with a conviction (including CPO’s)
- Person aged over 50 years
- People from Ethnic Minority backgrounds and minority racial groups
- Gypsy/travelling community
- Person requiring support with language, literacy, or numeracy, including those for whom English is an additional language
- Lone parent
- Low skilled*
- Refugee or other granted leave to remain in the UK
- Homeless person (including temporary or unstable accommodation)
- Person affected by substance misuse
- Living in a household with children in poverty

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- Person living in the 15% most employment deprived SIMD geographies (see ESF Scottish Local Authority Employment Deprived Area Postcodes list)
- Person living in an area defined as a “rural area**” or “very remote rural***”
- Person living in a jobless household
- Long-term unemployed

* Individual’s highest level of qualification is at SCQF Level 4 or below.