



Technical Construction Skills for the Unemployed

This call seeks delivery to develop a comprehensive package of support for unemployed and economically inactive residents to gain technical skills to support the construction sector in the D2N2 LEP area. The activity should aim to develop skills to meet future needs in relation to new technology modular housing construction or production methods.

Local Economic Context

A key driver for the refreshed D2N2 Strategic Economic Plan 2019-2030 (Vision 2030 <http://www.d2n2lep.org/SEP>) is to promote investment in our physical infrastructure to meet future demand, support business & housing growth ambitions and enhance our natural environment.

There has been good progress in unlocking investment in strategic sites and infrastructure over the past 3 years, through Local Growth funding of some £250m – notably Infinity Park in Derby and MediCity in Nottingham, both in the Nottingham & Derby Enterprise Zone. We will build on this momentum, accelerating development on our Enterprise Zones and reinvesting the income in growth opportunities.

Through the D2N2 Infrastructure Plan we will identify the key infrastructure and locational requirements to strengthen our core innovation sector specialisms – e.g. Advanced Manufacturing in Derby, Life Sciences in Nottingham, and Logistics around East Midlands Airport and the Gateway Freight Terminal. We will support the implementation of the East Midlands Manufacturing Zone in North Derbyshire.

We need to work with Homes England to accelerate the completion of new housing to support D2N2's growth ambitions and to deliver against Government targets, ensuring that this is supported by green infrastructure and multi-modal solutions, to encourage sustainable travel and mitigate the effects of additional travel in our faster-growing areas. This is the responsibility of the local housing authorities, working with the development community and in partnership with Homes England. The D2N2 Infrastructure Plan will identify infrastructure constraints in bringing forward key housing sites.

We will work in partnership with local authorities, Homes England, developers and the construction industry to help local housing authorities deliver their ambitious targets for growth – enabling the building of 128,000 homes by 2030. We will also support the promotion of Modern Methods of Construction across D2N2 as a means of accelerating housing delivery

Housing will be a key relationship with our 'opportunity' construction sector. To build the homes of the future, we need to have the right skills and expertise in place. The requirements of our future homes are likely to impact on the use of energy efficient technologies such as heat pumps for off grid homes, off site manufacturing techniques and installation of vehicle charging points, grey water recycling and consideration of district heating opportunities on new developments.

We need to deliver existing plans for improvements in D2N2's major road and rail networks, including measures to alleviate congestion to meet existing demand and to support ambitions for growth.

We need to fully exploit the transformational potential of HS2. The East Midlands Hub Growth Zone contains the HS2 Hub Station at Toton in Nottinghamshire, which will be the most connected station on the high-speed network outside London. To capitalise on this opportunity, we will work with partners to create the 'Toton Innovation Campus', linked to the university sector, capable of delivering up to 10,000 high-quality jobs, new community facilities and a range of new housing opportunities.

The Infrastructure Maintenance Depot at Staveley and the ability to serve Chesterfield with high speed trains will have a transformational impact on the Derbyshire economy. The Northern Derbyshire Growth Zone is centred around the station in Chesterfield, and the planned Infrastructure Maintenance Depot at Staveley, enhancing Chesterfield's role as a gateway to the Peak District and accelerating the regeneration of the Staveley corridor and key surrounding sites.

The D2N2 LEP area therefore is forecast to have significant infrastructure investment over the next 20-year period and beyond including HS2 developments, which will have an impact on future workforce demand.

Despite making one of the biggest contributions to England's economic output, overall D2N2 suffers from an inefficient economy. Compared to our competitors we produce too little output for the number of hours we work – the so-called 'productivity deficit'. Despite having the 5th largest workforce outside London, we have only the 9th largest economy. Too many of our businesses aren't productive enough.

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.

Looking ahead to 2030, we can expect our working-age population to grow only very slightly. In D2N2, the working age population will rise by just 1% between 2014 and 2039 - so there won't be a lot of new labour coming into the economy. We can also expect the jobs of tomorrow to look a lot different – as digitalisation and automation gather pace – requiring a different skills' set. If we're to become a more efficient and internationally-competitive economy and, at the same time maintain a high level of employment (and minimise unemployment), we need to find ways to produce much more output with the labour we have, as well as attracting the best talent from elsewhere.

This further conceals significant variations in workforce skills between areas with 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.

Local priorities

The local challenge which this call needs to address is to ensure a pipeline of skilled workers for the construction industry, exploit our advantages in our knowledge base, support the industry to adapt to digitisation and exploit the opportunities arising from Modern Methods of Construction and low carbon technologies. The level of construction skills required to support the above developments will therefore be significant.

The construction industry is changing with many more jobs requiring technical qualifications, with new techniques emerging in infrastructure building methods and technologies e.g. modular home construction.

Construction skills activity should be focused on technical skills and retraining opportunities, in particular those groups that are underrepresented in the labour market, i.e. young people, women and older people. The activity should aim to develop skills to help meet future sectoral needs in relation to new technologies e.g. low carbon technology, modular housing construction, or production methods.

Examples of activities that may be supported include:

- encourage inactive people to participate in the construction labour market and to improve their employability;
- support for collaborative projects and other activities within the construction sector to improve the employability of long-term unemployed people, so that they can compete effectively in the labour market. For example, additional and innovative approaches to pre-employment training, to ensure individuals have the core work-related skills that employers require, including preparation for apprenticeships;
- support for those who need pre-traineeship and pre-Work Programme assistance, to prepare them for the next step.
- developing skills, including basic skills, to meet the changing face of construction with new technology, construction and production methods.
- provide individuals from groups which face labour market disadvantage with additional support so that they can compete effectively in the construction labour market working with wider employer engagement and involving supply chains;
- promoting apprenticeships as next steps (especially at higher levels to support the construction sector) including working with wider employer engagement and supply chains;
- ensuring participants can access construction sites e.g. health and safety, PPE training and equipment, and CSCS cards;

- provide support for women at a disadvantage in the construction labour market, and particularly those who are currently inactive, to contribute to our efforts to reduce the gender employment gap.
- Ensure strong partnership working with the D2N2 Growth Hub and the national apprenticeship agenda.

The outcomes of the project will enable participants to move into employment, further training, apprenticeships or traineeships.

The provision is to develop a comprehensive package of support for unemployed and economically inactive residents, to gain technical skills to support the construction sector. Activities supported through the project should build on and help focus existing relevant mechanisms such as Jobcentre Plus services, along with additional support already provided by local authorities and the voluntary sector.

The Technical Construction Skills for the Unemployed programme will support the delivery of Key Action 5 of our refreshed Strategic Economic Plan INCLUSION AND PROGRESSION IN THE LABOUR MARKET.

The programme will deliver joined-up targeted support to get people who are seeking employment in the construction sector but who may have barriers to getting a job into sustainable employment. It will support individuals' career progression through raising their skills levels, to meet the changing requirements of businesses within the sector.

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 Technical Construction Skills for the Unemployed programme 2,000,000. Applicants will need to have eligible match funding at 50% which must be from a source other than the European Union.

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

Investment Priority	1.1
	Technical Construction Skills for the Unemployed
ESF	£2,00,000
Match Funding	£2,000,000
Outputs	Volumes TBC
Priority Groups	Unemployed
	Inactive
	50+
	Ethnic Minorities
	Disabilities
	Basic skills
	Single adult household with dependent children