



Renfrewshire Employability Grants Programme

Delivery Period April 2026 – March 2027

Key Information, Guidance, and Sources of Useful Data

The aim of this grants programme is to support people to move toward, into, and within work. To do this, we need to help local people to develop the skills and confidence employers are looking for. To reach those people, we all need to work together at a local level to provide the best possible services to those who need them most.

RUTH COOPER, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL AND CHAIR OF RENFREWSHIRE LOCAL EMPLOYABILITY PARTNERSHIP

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1. Introduction and context

The Renfrewshire Employability Grants Programme aims to support unemployed, economically inactive and low paid people to move towards, into, and within work. It recognises that to help local people to develop the skills and confidence employers are looking for, we all need to work together at a local level to provide the best possible services to those who need them most.

There have been, and will continue to be, changes in how employability support is funded in Scotland. Both the Scottish and UK Governments are choosing to distribute funding at a more local level and through a Local Employability Partnership (LEP). This partnership decides on the local priorities and areas for action and ensures that local employability providers continue to have the opportunity to access funding for services through a co-commissioned process. The key Scottish Government policy framework for this approach is called **No One Left Behind (NOLB)**, and this will guide the future direction and delivery of employability services in the years to come.

In Renfrewshire, the strategic partnership is the **Renfrewshire LEP** consisting of partner agencies from the Renfrewshire Community Planning Structure. The LEP is chaired by Renfrewshire Council and has met as an active partnership for around 14 years. Its purpose is to support the implementation of local and national employability policy through collective leadership, joint planning, and co-commissioning. Working closely with local delivery partners, the partnership seeks to make the best use of resources available to deliver effective needs-led employability services that help Renfrewshire residents make a successful transition towards employment.

The Deadline for applications is midnight on Sunday 1st Feb 2026. (Further details on the full timetable of the grants application process are contained in section 5 including TEAMS invites to information sessions).

The Renfrewshire Employability Grants Programme

In 2021, RLEP agreed to establish an Employability Grants Programme for Renfrewshire to support a co-commissioned approach to employability for future years and this was approved through the Renfrewshire Council Leadership Board in September 2021. This is the 5th annual grants programme for the period April 2026 to March 2027. It will continue to fund provision that:

- Augments the employability provision delivered by DWP, Skills Development Scotland, Renfrewshire Council's Invest Employability Services, and other partners.
- Adds value to the funding and other resources already available locally and creates opportunities for innovation and collaboration.
- Supports the aims and objectives outlined in the Renfrewshire Economic Strategy, the Renfrewshire Economic Recovery Plan, and No One Left Behind.

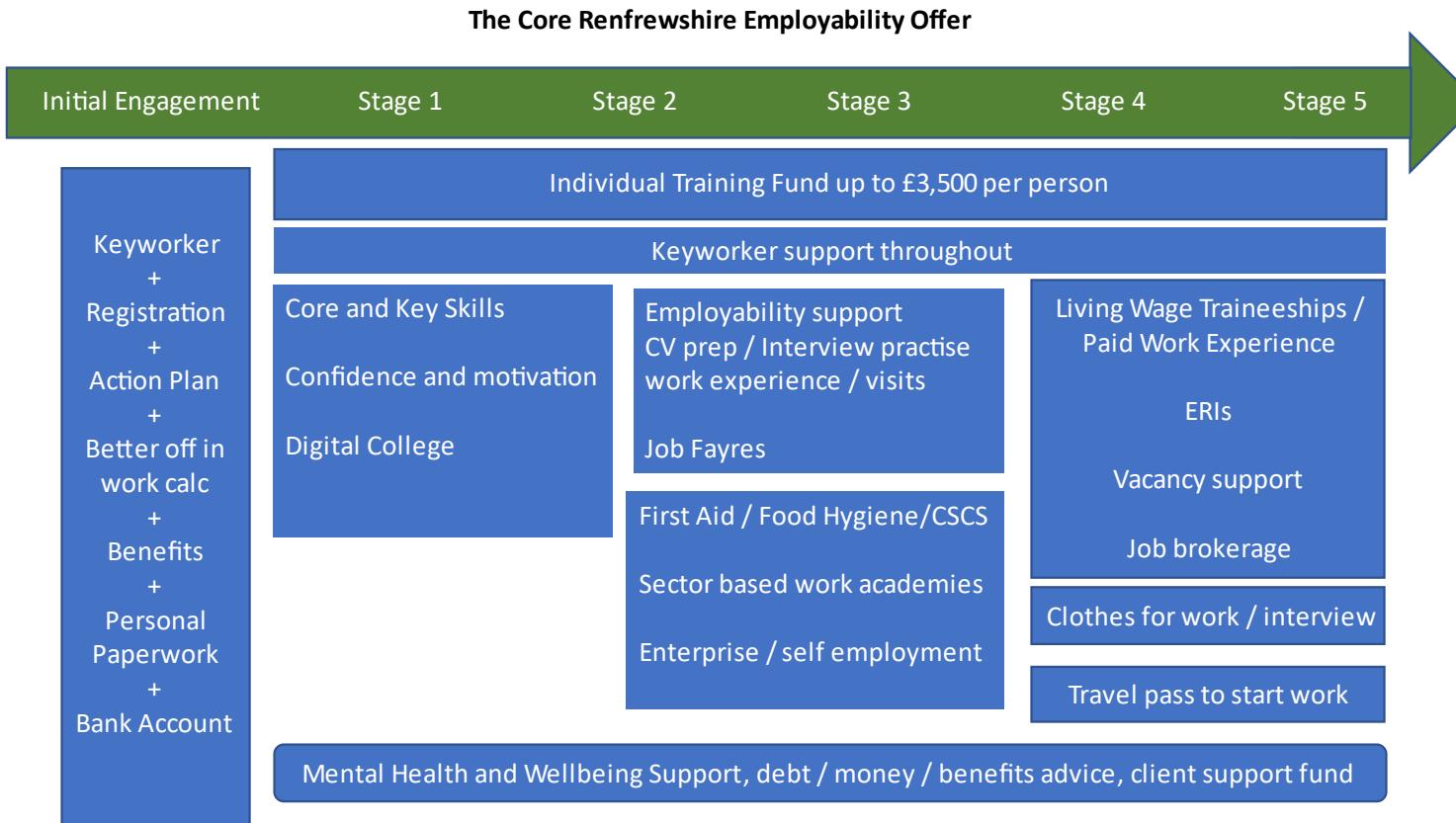
At this point in time, we anticipate a budget of around £900k however, as funding is not yet confirmed, this figure may change.

Funds that will contribute to this round are as follows:

Period	Grant Sources
2026/27	Renfrewshire Council Employability Funding Scottish Government No One Left Behind (NOLB); Child Poverty (Parental Employment Support) and Specialist Employability Support

The Renfrewshire Core Employability Offer

The Grants Programme is designed to complement and augment a core Renfrewshire Employability Offer delivered by Renfrewshire Council's 'Invest' team. This service is summarised in the diagram below.



2. Our Grant Outcomes and Principles

The Renfrewshire Employment Grant Programme will contribute to **4 key outcomes**:

- Reduce unemployment and economic inactivity levels.
- Reduce the gap in unemployment/employment rates for targeted geographies and groups.

- Ensure that our residents have the appropriate skills and are suitably prepared and informed to match those required by local businesses and others within reach.
- Contribute to reducing child poverty through increasing income from employment for (low income) parents

6 NOLB principles that will underpin the delivery expectations for all provision supported via the Renfrewshire Employability Grants Programme.

1. Provide flexible and person-centred support.
2. Be more straightforward for people to navigate.
3. Be better integrated and aligned with other services, particularly with health, justice, and housing provision.
4. Provide pathways into sustainable and fair work.
5. Be driven by evidence, including data and the experience of users.
6. Support more people – particularly those facing multiple barriers – to move into the right job, at the right time.



In addition, all providers supported through the grants programme will need to evidence how their service/provision reflects the Scottish **Employability Service Standards** <https://www.employabilityinscotland.com/news-events/news/employability-service-standards-published/>

These standards were established to ensure a level of consistency across Scotland - without negatively impacting on local flexibility to deliver for people accessing services, or in a way that reflects local labour markets. The Standards set out a number of expectations, but partners can implement many of these in a variety of ways. Organisations should go further if there is the capacity and desire to do so.

Each Standard should not be viewed in isolation. There are areas of overlap, but delivered together, these are designed to achieve the common purpose of delivering better outcomes for users.

All delivery partners will also be required to provide copies of the Renfrewshire Employability Services Customer Charter to all participants. This sets out what service users can expect when accessing employment services, what employment services will do to achieve this and how users can ensure the commitments are being met. A copy of the charter will be issued with our Grants paperwork to successful applicants.

All providers are also required to comply with the following **additional principles** that the RLEP feel are critical in providing the best support to people to enable progress towards sustainable outcomes.

- ✓ Services should be configured around the needs of the clients, rather than delivery partners.
- ✓ Face to face provision should be the main delivery model, unless the target group or individuals request or require otherwise.
- ✓ Services should be delivered locally (within Renfrewshire) unless there is strong rationale for not doing so.
- ✓ 'Travel to work' opportunities should be considered with participants to help overcome barriers (both physical and perceived), and to support access to opportunities out-with their local area, across Renfrewshire and the wider Glasgow City Region.

- ✓ Grant recipients should be able to demonstrate how they will become an active partner in an integrated Renfrewshire employability offer, making use of the Renfrewshire Local Employability Partnership resources such as training and development activity and events, and Renfrewshire Practitioners and Delivery Partners forums.
- ✓ Grant recipients should ensure that lived experience has informed the design of services and that the needs of those with protected characteristics have been considered.
- ✓ Services provided with grant support should provide additionality to existing provision available in Renfrewshire with connectivity, where permissible, to established provision and building progression routes into Further/Higher Education, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships and other appropriate provision, as well as supporting access to employment.
- ✓ Provision must not put at risk participants current eligibility for benefits, or lead to a reduction in their overall income.

3. What Type of Provision are we looking for?

This grant programme will support **provision across all 5 stages of Renfrewshire's employability pipeline** for unemployed and economically inactive Renfrewshire residents, particularly those furthest from the labour market and/or for whom the current employability service provision does not fully meet their needs. It will also support provision for low-income parents to help them progress within work and increase their income.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
Engagement	Support to overcome barriers	Vocational activity	Employer engagement and job matching	In work support and aftercare

Having undertaken significant engagement with a wide range of stakeholders and analysed local data including the performance of the first 4 rounds of grant funded programmes, the LEP has identified 8 priority themes that it would like to focus its co-commissioning on through this grants programme.

This also takes cognisance of our core employability services in the area supported through other budgets/statutory provision (as outlined on page 4). Around **2000 Renfrewshire residents are receiving support through the LEP's core offer each year**. Invest Keyworkers play a crucial role in providing support throughout participants employability journeys, including helping them to navigate the provision available. **The LEP Grants funded provision must be complementary to this.**

Of the 2000 people supported each year, the charts below provide a basic demographic overview of the total number of people supported between April – October 2025 with an indication of those who are active caseload in October 2024 (599 clients).

Some additional data relating to our target groups to be supported through commissioned provision is provided in the table following this information, within the commissioning plan.



Stage	Female									Female Total	Male									Male Total	Other			Prefer not to say			Total
	15-17	18-19	20-24	25-40	41-50	51-54	55-64	Over 65	15-17	18-19	20-24	25-40	41-50	51-54	55-64	Over 65	18-19	20-24	15-17	20-24	25-40	25-40					
	Inactive	7	9	17	43	11	3	9	0	99	23	17	40	55	28	6	23	2	194	0	0	1	0	0	0	294	
Stage 1	13	0	11	13	4	0	2	0	43	21	15	10	14	11	1	8	0	80	0	0	0	1	0	1	125		
Stage 2	15	6	5	12	3	1	1	0	43	17	7	8	18	7	4	4	1	66	0	1	1	0	0	0	111		
Stage 3	15	9	7	17	6	1	5	0	60	20	15	26	21	11	2	9	0	104	0	0	1	0	0	0	165		
Stage 3 - Volunteering	0	0	3	1	2	0	0	0	6	0	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	10		
Stage 4	3	4	6	19	16	4	3	2	57	4	6	2	12	7	2	7	1	41	0	0	0	0	0	0	98		
Stage 4 - Pending Job Start	7	1	3	4	3	0	0	1	19	5	6	1	5	2	0	3	0	22	0	0	1	0	0	0	42		
Stage 4 - Placed in paid work experience opportunity	0	2	3	14	1	0	0	0	20	5	4	5	5	3	1	4	1	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	48		
Stage 4 - In Full Time Education / Training	19	4	4	6	1	1	0	0	35	26	20	3	3	0	0	0	0	52	0	1	1	0	0	0	89		
Stage 5 - In Employment	13	8	10	35	18	5	8	0	97	14	18	18	36	16	2	15	2	121	1	0	0	0	1	0	220		
Total	92	43	69	164	65	15	28	3	479	135	108	114	172	85	18	73	7	712	1	2	5	1	1	1	1202		

Employability Grants Programme Themes and Requirements 2026-27

Commissioning Plan Priority Themes	Rationale/evidence of need /useful data	Pipeline Stages	Fundable Provision	Indicative Indicative budget and No. of Places
1. People for whom a lack of English language skills is impacting on their ability to progress into work	<p>Housing, employability, college and community learning services report an ongoing high demand for English language support and waiting lists.</p> <p>Employability services report a high number of clients are New Scots/from other migrant groups and who often have poor/low English language skills and a lack of understanding of the local employment cultures, laws etc which is a key barrier to employment.</p> <p>This year we have been working with around 400 people from minority ethnic groups. The table below is a snapshot showing those being supported at this moment.</p> <p>15% of employability clients require English language support.</p> <p>CLD and the local college deliver ESOL however our needs assessment for employability clients suggests that there is a need for conversational classes/support, both generic as well as sector specific.</p> <p>A key target group for all provision in this theme will be parents.</p>	1/2	<p>1.1 Innovative and effective ESOL programmes that develop the English-speaking skills of refugees, asylum seekers, or other minority groups to enable them to access and sustain employment.</p> <p>Whether ESOL or otherwise, the key need is to develop participants conversational English in suitable learning environments where participants with a range of abilities can develop confidence and ability and use these to find work.</p> <p>1.2 Cultural integration programme/workshops. Including support with soft skills, workplace formats, labour laws, where to find support for language, work and wellbeing.</p> <p>Objective is to ease participants integration into work in the UK.</p>	<p>£45K circa 50 places.</p> <p>£10K circa 30 places</p>
2. Unemployed or inactive residents requiring vocational skills to progress into employment	<p>The LEP recognises the need to provide vocational skills training in sectors where there are likely to be vacancies over the coming year.</p> <p>The aspiration of the LEP is to support those gaining vocational skills to progress into related and sustainable work opportunities in Renfrewshire, or within other reasonably accessible travel to work areas.</p> <p>We have an all age offer in Renfrewshire and of the 2000 or so people accessing our LEP services each year, around a half require vocational training. Some of this can be met through accessing training on an individual basis however we require a</p>	3/4	<p>2. Vocational Skills Programmes - Delivery of 4-12-week programmes/sector-based work academies, which must be linked to local employers and evidenced work opportunities.</p> <p>Programmes must include industry recognised qualifications/certificates; minimum 2 weeks work experience and guaranteed interviews.</p> <p>Applicants need to specify any agreement with other delivery partners they will be working with to ensure these elements are delivered.</p>	<p>£TBC (subject to demand)</p> <p>Places tbc</p>

	<p>wide range of relevant vocational courses for groups of clients to meet client and employer needs.</p> <p>The LEP has identified the following key sectors as a priority for this year's grant programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1 - Childcare 2.2 - Security 2.3 - Administration (industry specific) 2.4 - ICT 2.5 - Teaching Support/Classroom Assistant (including ASN) 2.6 - Hospitality (Entry & Supervisor levels) 2.7 - Retail & Customer Service 2.8 - Financial Services (Customer Agents) 2.9 - Mechanics 2.10 - Construction 2.11 - Social Care 		<p>Much of what we commission will be all age and open to all target groups however we need to ensure our provision meets the specific needs of our priority groups who may benefit from a more targeted and bespoke programme, in particular:</p> <p>Parents – who need training provision and jobs with school /parent friendly hours and conditions.</p> <p>School leavers up to 19yrs - who require vocational programmes adapted to meet their specific needs and job opportunities including apprenticeships.</p> <p>New Scots/Migrant Groups – who require ESOL support alongside sectoral training.</p> <p>Applicants may opt to deliver vocational programmes for all ages (no specific target group) and/or courses bespoke for parents, young people or New Scots/Migrant Groups.</p>													
<p>3. Unemployed people or low-income parents wishing to pursue self- employment</p>	<p>There is an ongoing demand for self-employment support, particularly from people whose circumstances make self-employment a more realistic and sustainable employment option e.g. parents and carers, and people with disabilities and health conditions etc.</p>	3-5	<p>3. Self-employment training programme that will enable participants to establish their self-employment businesses and give them an opportunity to test trade. In addition to specialist training, mentoring will be key to success.</p>	<p>£46K circa 20 places</p>												
<p>4. Unemployed or economically inactive people with disabilities or long-term conditions</p>	<p>Of the 2000 clients supported each year via LEP services and provision, the figures below is a snapshot of the current caseload recording a disability or long-term condition – which is about half of those supported across the full year.</p> <p>A current profile of the Invest/LEP caseload shows:</p> <table style="margin-left: 20px;"> <tr> <td>❖ Autistic Spectrum Disorder / Condition</td> <td style="text-align: right;">94</td> </tr> <tr> <td>❖ Sight /hearing/speech impairment</td> <td style="text-align: right;">10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>❖ Learning difficulty</td> <td style="text-align: right;">57</td> </tr> <tr> <td>❖ Learning disability</td> <td style="text-align: right;">33</td> </tr> <tr> <td>❖ Other developmental disorder</td> <td style="text-align: right;">12</td> </tr> <tr> <td>❖ Physical disability</td> <td style="text-align: right;">57</td> </tr> </table>	❖ Autistic Spectrum Disorder / Condition	94	❖ Sight /hearing/speech impairment	10	❖ Learning difficulty	57	❖ Learning disability	33	❖ Other developmental disorder	12	❖ Physical disability	57	1-5	<p>4.1 All stage supported employment programme (must be fidelity model) for people (all age) with autism or a complex learning/physical disability who wish to progress into paid employment. This provision is for Stage 1 – 5 deliveries but will also require some additional resources (up to 10 additional spaces have been included) to increase our reach and improve access for those struggling to engage directly into Stage 1 activity currently due to isolation, lack of motivation, complex needs or perceived social barriers.</p>	<p>£150k circa 35 places</p> <p>£16K circa</p>
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	In addition to key worker support, Project Search has operated effectively in Renfrewshire for 10 years and commissioned provision enhances our service offer to those with disabilities/long term conditions.		4.2 Condition Management support for people with disabilities and long-term conditions. This should include support for participants to better understand and manage their conditions. Could be delivered 1:1, group work or both.	20 places
5. Unemployed or low paid parents/kinship carers.	<p>15.2% of children in Renfrewshire are living in poverty (before housing costs), 4613 children.</p> <p>A key focus of our parental employment work is to reach those parents more likely to be impacted by poverty.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single parents • families impacted by disability • Parents under 25 • parents with children under 1 • Parents with 3 or more children • ethnic minority parents <p>Around 300 parents a year engage with our LEP services. We work with both unemployed and employed low-income families.</p> <p>We have a team of key workers supporting parents and provision commissioned will enhance the key worker model.</p>	2/3	<p>5.1 Personal Development and Life Skills Programme – Early engagement personal development programme that support parents overcome barriers and build motivation. This should include confidence building, personal care, money management, cooking on a budget, time management, goal setting etc. Should include relevant qualifications/certification.</p> <p>5.2 Supervisory skills programme - To support parents to progress in the workplace or to gain a new role in management. The programme should include a relevant qualification, work experience and guaranteed interviews.</p>	£20K circa 20 places
6. Health and Wellbeing - Unemployed or economically inactive Renfrewshire residents and low income parents whose mental health/wellbeing is negatively impacting on their ability to engage with employability support; progress	<p>The most recent NOMIS data (Jul 24 - Jun 25) shows that 10,700 Renfrewshire residents are economically inactive due to long-term sickness – this figure has reduced significantly over the last 3 years.</p> <p>Over the past 6 months 508 of those engaging with LEP services report a health issue.</p> <p>All key workers support people who have health issues and for those whose issue is more significant, there is a specialist key worker.</p> <p>Repeated evidence suggests the most common issues relate to mental health (approx. 50% of those with a health condition relates to mental health) and that these issues impact on clients' ability to engage and progress towards and into employment.</p>	n/a	<p>6.1 Delivery of specific short training courses – available to employability staff and clients to increase their understanding and ability to support clients experiencing issues with their mental health, disabilities or wellbeing. This could include SMHFA, trauma informed practice and neurodiversity training.</p> <p>6.2 Delivery of specialist mental health support to employability clients who require a mental health therapeutic intervention as part of their journey towards employment, or to help to sustain work, training or education. Should include 1:1, group work or both.</p>	£10K circa Places – subject to demand

<p>towards or into employment; and/or sustain employment or training.</p>	<p>Waiting times for mental health interventions varies across services from several weeks to months, and some services require a GP referral which can be a barrier for some people.</p>		<p>6.3 Delivery of activity-based wellbeing support - for people looking to develop their general wellbeing, connect in the community and create a support network to enable them to make more positive use of their time, be more motivated to progress through the employability pipeline. Activities could include mindfulness, nature walks, outdoor activities etc.</p> <p>Delivery could be 1:1, group work or both and could include peer support to maximise engagement.</p> <p>Although this programme will be open to all a key focus will be parents and people in the justice system.</p>	<p>65 places</p>
<p>7. Justice System experienced population</p>	<p>Justice Statistics</p> <p>Diversion</p> <p>Renfrewshire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 53% unemployed; young males dominate (16–17) <p>Gender gap:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Men 3x more likely employed; women older (36–40) <p>Structured Deferred Sentences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Renfrewshire: 39% ages 40+, 77% unemployed • Relatively high proportion of females at 37% <p>Community Payback Orders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Renfrewshire, 35% recipients employed compared to 30% nationally • More male skewed • Employed clients more likely to get unpaid work (88% vs 65%) <p>Invest is Renfrewshire Council's employability service and out-with the statutory providers, the main employability service in the area.</p> <p>The team includes 2 specialist key workers who work closely with local justice services and relevant prisons.</p>	<p>2/3</p> <p>3/4</p> <p>1</p>	<p>7.1 Employability Engagement Programme for young males aged 16–20 on Diversion. Given the complex barriers faced by young people, it is envisaged a tailored programme of support spanning at least 3 months is required. This should fit with the conditions of diversion for each individual. Delivery should include group work including workplace behaviours, employer talks and where appropriate possible first steps into a work experience placement.</p> <p>7.2 Work Experience for people with complex offences (which are impacting on access to employers/jobs e.g. sex offences). We are looking for creative approaches to engage local employers and identify potential work experience and job opportunities, supporting participants and employers through the process.</p> <p>7.3 Early Engagement Employability programme specifically targeting women in the justice system not engaging with employability</p>	<p>£25k circa 20 places</p> <p>£23k circa 10 places</p> <p>£10k circa 10 places</p>

	<p>In the last 6 months we have supported 153 people with convictions, most of whom present with multiple barriers including poor health and a high proportion being care experienced.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For those receiving targeted support 17 were female 76 of those supported are in the 25-40 age group <p>Engaging with the criminal justice experienced population is recognised as particularly challenging. Grant applicants are encouraged to clearly identify how they will do this.</p>		<p>services. This target group face intersecting barriers (trauma, caring, health). Light touch engagement programme to encourage first steps into employability.</p> <p>Working closely with social work colleagues to identify clients who will benefit from employability support across the justice process, including early justice measures, community-based sentences, and the transition from custody back into the community. Element of outreach work, and mentoring-type support aligned to the specific needs of women that will help remove individual barriers and encourage people into core Invest services.</p>																																																																																									
<p>8. School leavers/unemployed or economically inactive young people aged 16-24 years including care experienced young people.</p>	<p>Data Hub Nov 2025</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Totals</th> <th>16 - 19</th> <th>CEYP</th> <th>20- 24</th> <th>CEYP</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Unemployed</td> <td>538</td> <td>150</td> <td>33</td> <td>388</td> <td>73</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unconfirmed</td> <td>3428</td> <td>517</td> <td>62</td> <td>2911</td> <td>138</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Eco Inactive</td> <td>328</td> <td>58</td> <td>10</td> <td>270</td> <td>66</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Unavailable ill Health</td> <td>63</td> <td>23</td> <td>1</td> <td>40</td> <td>9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total in a negative destination</td> <td>4357</td> <td>748</td> <td>106</td> <td>3609</td> <td>286</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total Cohort</td> <td>14137</td> <td>5106</td> <td>355</td> <td>9031</td> <td>537</td> </tr> <tr> <td>% Negative Destination</td> <td>30.8%</td> <td>14.6%</td> <td>29.9%</td> <td>39.9%</td> <td>53.2%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Nomis Overview</p> <p>This report presents monthly unemployment data for 18-24-year-olds in Renfrewshire from April to October 2024. Key metrics include the number of unemployed individuals, Renfrewshire's unemployment rate, Scotland's unemployment rate, and the UK's unemployment rate for this demographic</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Month</th> <th>Unemployed (Number)</th> <th>Renfrewshire (%)</th> <th>Scotland (%)</th> <th>UK (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>April 25</td> <td>585</td> <td>4.2</td> <td>4.3</td> <td>5.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>May 25</td> <td>555</td> <td>4.0</td> <td>4.2</td> <td>5.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>June 25</td> <td>585</td> <td>4.2</td> <td>4.3</td> <td>5.4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>July 25</td> <td>625</td> <td>4.5</td> <td>4.4</td> <td>5.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>August 25</td> <td>660</td> <td>4.7</td> <td>4.5</td> <td>5.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>September 25</td> <td>630</td> <td>4.5</td> <td>4.3</td> <td>5.6</td> </tr> <tr> <td>October 25</td> <td>650</td> <td>4.7</td> <td>4.4</td> <td>5.9</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Off the 2000 people supported by LEP services each year around 560 are young people aged 16-19 years.</p>		Totals	16 - 19	CEYP	20- 24	CEYP	Unemployed	538	150	33	388	73	Unconfirmed	3428	517	62	2911	138	Eco Inactive	328	58	10	270	66	Unavailable ill Health	63	23	1	40	9	Total in a negative destination	4357	748	106	3609	286	Total Cohort	14137	5106	355	9031	537	% Negative Destination	30.8%	14.6%	29.9%	39.9%	53.2%	Month	Unemployed (Number)	Renfrewshire (%)	Scotland (%)	UK (%)	April 25	585	4.2	4.3	5.5	May 25	555	4.0	4.2	5.4	June 25	585	4.2	4.3	5.4	July 25	625	4.5	4.4	5.5	August 25	660	4.7	4.5	5.6	September 25	630	4.5	4.3	5.6	October 25	650	4.7	4.4	5.9	<p>2/3</p> <p>2/3</p> <p>1</p>	<p>8.1 PSD programmes for school leavers/ young people which must provide training; accredited qualifications and include work experience.</p> <p>8.2 PSD programmes for care experienced young people which must be tailored to the more complex needs of this group, recognising the need to provide more intensive longer-term support. As above the programme must include training, accredited qualifications, and work experience. This is likely to be a longer programme than 8.1.</p> <p>8.3 Online PSD programmes for school leavers/ young people who are struggling to engage with employability services face to face. The programmes should build participants ability to engage face to face with employability/FE/HE and progress along the employability pathway.</p>	<p>£180k circa 80 places</p> <p>£45k circa 20 places</p> <p>£36k circa 30 places</p>
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Total Cohort	14137	5106	355	9031	537																																																																																							
% Negative Destination	30.8%	14.6%	29.9%	39.9%	53.2%																																																																																							
Month	Unemployed (Number)	Renfrewshire (%)	Scotland (%)	UK (%)																																																																																								
April 25	585	4.2	4.3	5.5																																																																																								
May 25	555	4.0	4.2	5.4																																																																																								
June 25	585	4.2	4.3	5.4																																																																																								
July 25	625	4.5	4.4	5.5																																																																																								
August 25	660	4.7	4.5	5.6																																																																																								
September 25	630	4.5	4.3	5.6																																																																																								
October 25	650	4.7	4.4	5.9																																																																																								

	<p>65% are male and 34 % female</p> <p>Over the last 6 months we have supported 121 care experienced young people aged 16-24, 58% male and 42 % female .</p> <p>Key workers support young people, and commissioned provision enhances the range of options available to help young people progress towards and into work. This includes transition key workers in schools.</p>			
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Other data sources:

[No One Left Behind \(NOLB\) Data Toolkit | Improvement Service](#)

<https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/skills-planning-alignment/regional-skills-assessments/>

4. Additional Information for Applicants

Interested providers can submit multiple proposals if they believe they have the skills, experience and capacity to deliver these effectively.

A separate application will be required for each programme/service, aligned to each type of support outlined above.

In addition to the specific priority groups targeted through the work areas above to be supported through this fund, we would expect all delivery partners to make particular efforts to ensure their programmes reach:

- Care experienced young people.
- People living in our 5% most deprived communities (see priority areas below).
- Refugees and asylum seekers.
- People with other barriers to employment – housing; health issues; disability etc.

The LEP is keen that potential grant applicant partners use their expertise, local knowledge and links with other partners and employers to develop creative and innovative proposals that they have confidence will meet gaps in service delivery, engage and recruit attract the relevant target groups, and progress participants into a positive outcome. In support of this, partners will be required to deliver provision from accessible facilities within Renfrewshire.

Priority Areas

Unemployment affects people across all areas of Renfrewshire however there are communities more impacted than others. Whilst the grant programme will support provision open to the priority groups above regardless of where they stay, there is also a need for provision targeting our most deprived communities (SIMD 2020).

Details of the 5% most deprived data zones are provided in section 7. These data zones are mainly in areas in Paisley and there are others in Johnstone, and Linwood.

Benefits Conditionality

We want to safeguard the benefits and entitlements of residents taking part in activity supported through this grant programme. We will expect applicants to show an understanding of the individual needs of course attendees, considering possible benefit impacts and ensuring there is no risk to entitlements by the take up of any employability initiative.

Providers should ensure they have had a recent dialogue with DWP to clarify/remove any potential benefit impacts your proposed programme may have.

Payment of Training Allowances to Eligible Young People

All young people not in receipt of Universal Credit or an Educational Maintenance Allowance, who take part in Grants funded provision must be paid a training allowance of up to £60/week (subject to hours and attendance) **for any programmes/courses of 10hrs or more per week**. Providers providing provision for young people eligible for a training allowance must have the necessary payment systems in place.

All participants regardless of age should also be able to claim reasonable travel expenses and where relevant, be provided with lunch/refreshments.

Applicants should outline how they will administer these requirements and include in the project budget.

Addressing the Key Challenges and Gaps

The employability services and provision being applied for should be:

- Appropriate for the age and stage of the target participant group.
- Proportionate to the numbers of unemployed.
- Delivered locally in facilities that are accessible to all.
- Needed locally and not duplicating existing provision (including the core offer outlined on page 4).
- In line with current and future labour markets, skills requirements, and job vacancies.

Section 7. provides further information and data sources that applicants should consider as part of their evidence gathering process to inform their proposal.

5.

Application Process and Decision Making**Delivery Timescales/Key Milestones**

The 5th round of the Renfrewshire Employability Grant programme will provide funding for delivery of services **from 1st April 2026 to the 31st March 2027.**

Milestone	Date
Grant opens for applications	Wed 17 th December 2025
Information sessions for potential applicants (there is no need to attend both sessions as they will be the same)	<p>Wednesday 7th January 10 - 11am via Teams</p> <p>Join the meeting now</p> <p>Meeting ID: 348 835 712 626 46</p> <p>Passcode: uC75kq6z</p> <p>Wednesday 14th January 10 - 11am via Teams</p> <p>Join the meeting now</p> <p>Meeting ID: 398 346 214 314 6</p> <p>Passcode: 67rT9X4E</p>
Application deadline	Midnight, Sunday 1 st February 2026
Application collation and review	2 nd Feb -13 th Feb
Assessment process	16 th – 27 th February
Final LEP assessment meeting	10 th March
LEP approval of assessment recommendations	17 th March
Notifications of grant approvals will begin from 17 th March; however, this may be subject to confirmation of budgets available. We may not be able to formally issue grant awards to everyone before the 1 st of April.	
Application outcomes notified	From 17 th March
Commissioning meetings with providers	18 th March - 3 rd April
Inception meetings with providers	1 st April onwards (depending on proposed start date)
Award letters issued	From 18 th March
Training for Hanlon and portal	April onwards (depending on proposed start dates)
Delivery Starts	From 1 st April 26 (not before award letters are issued and T&Cs accepted)
Ongoing monitoring meetings/delivery partner meetings/ other promotional activity to maximise engagement and referrals	TBC
Delivery end	End March 2027

Who is Eligible to Apply?

Third, public, private and further/higher education sector organisations are all eligible to apply.

If you are applying as a partnership, the lead partner should apply, and detail partners involved under question 2b. The lead partner would be solely responsible for the overall management and delivery of the project, including budget management and monitoring and reporting requirements.

All funded delivery partners will be expected to deliver their work in line with Scottish Government Fair Work First principles.

[Scottish Government Fair Work Guidance](#)

Completion of a Fair Work Self Evaluation form will be required by all successful applicants providing evidence of payment of the Real Living Wage to all staff or be working to implement this within a limited timescale.

What Makes a Good Application?

- ✓ Observe the **word limit** for each question.
- ✓ Please do not attach anything other than what has been requested in the application as this will not be reviewed.
- ✓ Please consider the scoring criteria below when writing your application.
- ✓ Please write succinctly and in plain English. Use short sentences and avoid acronyms and jargon. There is no need to use formal or flowery language.
- ✓ Being as specific as you can
- ✓ Assuming the reader knows nothing about your organisation, track record and project - even if you have received local funding before to do similar work.
- ✓ Ideally you will provide a clear picture for the reader of what you intend to deliver, how you will do this, and what difference it will make to participants as well as how it contributes to the grant programme strategic outcomes detailed in section 2 above.
- ✓ Fully consider the 6 NOLB principles and our additional local principles also outlined in section 2 when designing your project and when describing/evidencing this in the application.
- ✓ Provision of a strong rationale to show both the need for the services, that there will be a demand from local people to take part in the provision, and that you have a clear idea how to engage them. (**Identifying, recruiting and sustaining engagement of the number of participants stated is the responsibility of the organisation receiving a grant working in partnership with Invest** the DWP, Invest in Renfrewshire (Renfrewshire Council) and Skills Development Scotland staff).

Eligible Spend

Only direct delivery costs will be considered as eligible grant expenditure. A 10% allowance is awarded as a contribution towards management & administration fees. Applicants will also be awarded an additional 5% of direct delivery staff costs to assist with organisation overheads and running costs without the request for supplementary evidence. If you decide to apply separately for actual overhead costs these will be calculated by considering the '**total organisation staff**

hours: direct delivery staff hours allocated to the project' and will require documentary evidence of costs and proof of payment to be submitted with each grant claim.

Applicants should complete the '**Delivery Costs Budget**' tab on Appendix 1 to clearly identify **each staff member** associated with the RLEP delivery, stating the actual costs for Gross Annual Salary, National Insurance contributions, Employer Pension contributions and contracted hours per week. **An hourly rate will automatically be calculated using the details provided. Additional guidance is provided for the completion of appendix 1.**

Decision Making

An Assessment Panel will manage the assessment and scoring procedures following the Council's grant processes. Membership of the Assessment Panel will be drawn from strategic partner organisations represented on the LEP including:

- Department of Work and Pensions (DWP)
- West College Scotland
- Skills Development Scotland
- Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce
- NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde
- Engage Renfrewshire
- Developing the Young Workforce (West)
- Various Renfrewshire Council Departments

For Grant work themes 1,4,5,6,7 and 8, the relevant LEP sub-groups will be asked to assess the applications and will make recommendations to the Assessment Panel. For all other applications, at least two individuals from LEP partners will assess applications and make recommendations to the assessment panel. The LEP panel agree a moderated score for each with recommendations to the LEP.

LEP sub-group/Panel members will be required to declare any conflict of interest which will be registered, and appropriate action taken e.g. a panel member submitting a grant proposal will not be involved in the assessment of their proposal or other proposals in that 'lot'.

The LEP will make final recommendations for grants to Renfrewshire Council with the Economic Development Manager, as Lead Officer for the LEP and the Grant Funding from Scottish Government, signing off the grants and overseeing payment, monitoring and reporting.

Indicative budgets have been outlined to give an idea of scale; however, these may be subject to change when final budgets and external funding is confirmed for 26/27.

All grant approvals will be subject to appropriate funding levels being confirmed from Scottish/UK government and may be delayed.

All grants approved are subject to demand and minimum levels required to maximise value for money.

Scoring Criteria

Section		Relevant application form questions and weighting	
1	Project rationale - evidence of need including – evidence from lived experience engagement	Section 3, questions: 3.1.a-d 3.4a, b	20%
2	Project content and delivery	Section 3, questions: 3.2a - f	15%
3	Knowledge and Expertise (including local knowledge) previous experience, past performance	Section 3, questions: 3.3a - g	15%
4	Participant engagement and accessibility and inclusivity of provision.	Section 3, questions: 3.4a – d	15%
5	Output and outcome target and fit with grant outcomes	Section 3, question: 3.5a-d and Section 4	15%
6	Good and added value	Section5, questions 5a, b, Section 6, Section 7	20%

Each section will be assessed on the basis of:

Score	Assessment Criteria
10	Excellent Quality that surpasses the requirements of the Renfrewshire LEP. Indicates an excellent application with detailed evidence and no weaknesses.
8	Good Quality that meets the requirements of the RLEP with good evidence throughout and few weaknesses.
6	Reasonable Quality that meets the requirements of the RLEP. The response is generally good, but lacks sufficient detail in places, which highlights a number of weaknesses.
4	Poor Quality which poses reservations for the RLEP. Lacks convincing detail of the supporting evidence and/or has substantial weaknesses.
2	Unacceptable Quality which poses serious reservations for the RLEP. Limited or no detail of the proposed approach and/or has substantial weaknesses.
0	No submission/submission not relevant

Notification of Successful Applications

Application outcomes including grant award letters will be issued as per the timeline above. Full details of the payment process and terms and conditions of grant, including monitoring and reporting requirements will be included.

The Provider shall provide employability services in the volumes, outputs of services and financial profiles set out in each award of grant **which could be different from the application submitted and will be fully discussed with applicants in advance of award letters being issued.**

Any other changes to the programme including a change in what was specified in grant applications will require approval in advance.

6. Grant Payment Process

Grant claims for **actual costs incurred** should be submitted every 2 months (this will be dependent on the length of your provision). The full audit trail evidence of incurred costs should be submitted with each claim. Claims will be checked alongside evidence of costs and payments made and activity to date. Applicants will be required to invoice Renfrewshire Council after the claim has been approved. Payments will be processed through Renfrewshire Council's normal accounting system and payment to applicants will be by BACS within 28 days.

The claim form and templates supplied should be used in their current format and under no circumstances should be edited.

7. How will we Monitor and Evaluate the Grants Programme?

Performance Management

The key performance indicators for the programme (below) are outlined in the application form and replicate the current Scottish Government outcomes for current grant funds. They also contribute to the grant programme outcomes:

- **To reduce unemployment**
- **To increase income from employment for low-income families.**
- **To reduce economic inactivity**

All participants must meet **all** the following eligibility conditions:

- **Reside in Renfrewshire**
- **Of Working Age (16* – 67)** With the exception 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.
- **Provide evidence of their right to work status.** If clients do not have the right to work, they are still eligible for employability support and access to non-cash payments such as bus tokens, lunch vouchers etc.

Delivery partners will be expected to outline in more detail how they will measure and track the outcomes and impact for participants.

Performance Indicators
Outputs – The service will deliver
How many people will start
How many individuals will attain an accredited qualification
How many individuals will undertake a work /volunteering placement as part of the programme
Outcomes – Number moving into positive destination within 12 weeks from completion
Participants successfully completed programme of support.
Participants reporting improved mental health and wellbeing on completion of support (theme 6)
Participants progressed onto other LEP support/training (not for vocational programmes or all stage provision)
Participants commenced employment/self-employment/improved employment (parents). This includes modern and graduate apprenticeships.
Participants entering full time FE/HE/Training (expected to last one academic year) and not including further LEP provision.
Participants progressing into a part time/full time FE/HE/Training (less than one academic year and cannot include further LEP training).
Participants supported into a formal volunteering programme on completion of programme.
Sustainability – Number in a positive destination up to 52 weeks later – For LEP to track and monitor

Successful projects may have additional outputs and outcomes which they will also monitor and report on.

Personal information will be gathered and recorded by the grant recipient for the following purposes:

- To provide quantitative performance data on registrations, attendance, progressions and positive outcomes to inform service delivery adjustments and improvements.
- To provide qualitative performance data in the form of case studies.
- To contribute to the national No One Left Behind Shared Measurement Framework <https://www.employabilityinscotland.com/media/pgujxbke/for-publication-shared-measurement-framework-updated-december-2022.pdf>

Providers will be expected to keep (and to share with Renfrewshire Council) some key data on the employability participants journey and outcomes and equalities data using the Hanlon Client Management System. A data sharing agreement will be issued to successful applicants alongside the Grant Award letter. More information on this will be made available to successful applicants alongside the grant paperwork and full training will be provided where required.

At the Inception meeting, first point of contact details will be set out to ensure providers are clear on communication channels. Throughout the delivery period monitoring visits/progress meetings will be scheduled with all providers. These visits/meetings will check that the project has been implemented as described, that financial records associated with the project are in order, that publicity arrangements and equality and sustainability policies have been complied with. Performance will be discussed and any issues identified will require to be addressed through agreed and clear improvement actions.

Where the applicant is unable to demonstrate sufficient progress towards achieving agreed outputs and targets, future funding may be withheld or reduced. Further details will be outlined in the terms and conditions.

Monitoring can also identify successful elements of projects. Monitoring is vital in enabling RLEP to gain greater insight into individual projects, but also to ensure and verify that the funds have been spent as envisaged and acknowledged correctly.

Reporting Requirements

Renfrewshire Council will run reports from the MIS at a project and programme level on a quarterly basis, which alongside qualitative evidence provided by providers including case studies will be reported to the RLEP and to the Scottish Government.

All providers will be required to submit half year and final year end reports.

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

It is likely that an independent evaluation will be commissioned which will include evaluations of each of the projects supported via the programme alongside an evaluation of the process and collective impact. Grant recipients will be required to provide information and staff /management time to engage with the appointed contractor/s. Information on the process will be shared to recipients when available.

In addition, grant recipients will be required to establish their own evaluative processes to drive continuous improvement and monitoring processes will include grant recipients evidencing how they do this and to what effect. This will be discussed both individually at review meetings and collectively at Renfrewshire Employability Delivery Partners Forum meetings and development sessions. You will be required to submit an evaluation with your final claim.

The Scottish Government has developed a Continuous Improvement tool-kit for use by LEPs and individual employability delivery organisations and grant recipients- <https://www.employabilityinscotland.com/resources-for-partners/toolkits/>

7. Key Data and Local Strategic Documents to Support Grant Applicants

Section 3 has highlighted by theme, some data and intelligence to inform your proposal. Further useful data sources can be found below.

Scottish Government No One Left Behind Strategic Plan <https://www.gov.scot/publications/no-one-left-behind-employability-strategic-plan-2024-2027/>

NOMIS - <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157429/report.aspx?town=Renfrewshire>. NOMIS provides key and regularly updated data on unemployment and claimant counts at Renfrewshire and national levels. This includes key data on economic inactivity levels, and breaks down most data by gender, age, and priority geographic areas.

SDS Regional Skills Assessment - <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/skills-planning-alignment/regional-skills-assessments/>. These documents contain a wealth of labour market data, including key data on school leavers via the Annual Participation Measure. This is broken down by age, gender, disabilities, and priority data zones. Employment forecasts to 2025 for Renfrewshire and the wider Glasgow City Region are also included.

SDS Sectoral Insights <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/what-we-do/skills-planning-alignment/sectoral-skills-assessments/> - these provide insights on 17 sectoral insights at the Scottish level

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) – <https://www.gov.scot/news/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020/> The SIMD ranks small areas (data zones) in Renfrewshire in order of deprivation, and can assist in targeting employability interventions on priority areas.

Renfrewshire Economic Strategy: <https://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/economicstrategy>

Renfrewshire Community Plan 2017-2027 - https://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/media/4598/Our-Renfrewshire---Renfrewshires-Community-Plan-2017-2027/pdf/Community_Plan.pdf?m=1506695136457. This provides the overall strategic vision of local partners in Renfrewshire, and where employability sits within other priorities.

Any further questions or if you are having problems opening any of the links please contact:

Kay McIntosh

Partnership Coordinator

Renfrewshire Local Employability Partnership

Email: kay.mcintosh@renfrewshire.gov.uk or call 07955387405