



Employer Led Skills

The Coalition Government is moving ahead rapidly this year with its Employer Ownership of Skills Pilot. The UK Commission on Education and Skills has just published a prospectus for the programme which sets out a very tight timetable for the first round of funding. The deadline for employers to register is **13 April 2012** and full applications must be in by **26 April 2012**. Successful projects are expected to start in **August 2012**. Nine employer briefings are scheduled around the country between 6 March 2012 and 4 April 2012 to explain the scheme and answer queries and the full application and guidance notes for applicants will be available by the end of February 2012.

The minimum cash investment from Government towards projects will be £250,000 for collaborative projects with SMEs – firms which employ less than 250 employees. Projects with large employers, either singly or in consortia, will bid for a minimum cash investment of £1 million. The pilot is making £250m available in total - £50m in 2012/13 for this first phase and £200m in 2013/14. Funds will be paid directly to employers.

Employers are invited to develop proposals which:

- Increase the impact of work readiness, workforce development and Apprenticeships activity
- Allow employers to secure the training they need by influencing the quality and content of training
- Encourage collaboration by employers to tackle cross-sector or supply chain skills challenges
- Increase employer leadership, commitment and investment in skills with the involvement of employers who do not have a track record of investing in skills.

Employers are invited to take the lead through new employer designed and delivered training and employment programmes with:

- Clear articulation of the skills needs within an industry and why public funds are required to complement private investment
- Employers defining what quality skills and learning programmes should be in their sector
- More sustainable models of funding training that encourage greater private investment alongside public investment
- Employer-designed payment and monitoring systems that safeguard public funds, demonstrate value for money and are simple for business to operate





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The Government also wants to see collaborative proposals such as:

- Large primes and small businesses in a supply chain developing a mutually beneficial programme of learning
- Leading employers investing in a sector by providing up-front funding to support learning opportunities in smaller businesses
- Employers working together, with the support of their employee representative bodies, to secure greater apprenticeship and sustainable job opportunities
- Groups of employers, who individually may find it difficult to meet their skills or training requirements, coming together and developing a collective proposal
- Local employers developing a strategic skills offer through appropriate geographical infrastructure.

Proposals will be assessed by an Investment Board chaired by Charlie Mayfield (Chair, UK Commission). The Board will be looking for:

- The understanding and support of the CEO and/or leadership team
- How the impact of the programme on business will be measured and reported to the CEO and/or leadership team
- Commitment to transparency over the costs and level of private and public investment

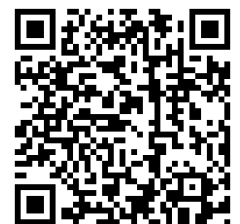


Industry Forum has a long pedigree of designing and delivering skills programmes which deliver improved competitiveness and benefit employees in supply chains using industry specified

standards. We will be actively seeking partners to develop proposals for this important skills pilot. If you would like to discuss the possibilities that this programme offers please contact Industry Forum using the details below.

The main website for this programme is on the UKCES site - <http://www.ukces.org.uk/employeroownership>

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