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## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project (WoW) will (under new COVID-safe ways), continue to engage with unemployed and inactive residents and work in conjunction with DWP/JCP, National Careers Service (NCS) and community and voluntary sector partners, targeting those with no/low basic skills, BME groups, women, lone parents, people with disabilities and health conditions and targeting areas of high unemployment.

There is currently a greater need than ever amongst the COVID pandemic to offer as much support as possible to people who are and will become unemployed and to help guide some of to retrain and enter alternative sectors.

The project will work in partnership with employers and sector representatives, DWP and the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), to ensure that customised pre-employment training pathways are developed linked to job opportunities and the GBSLEP defined growth sectors.

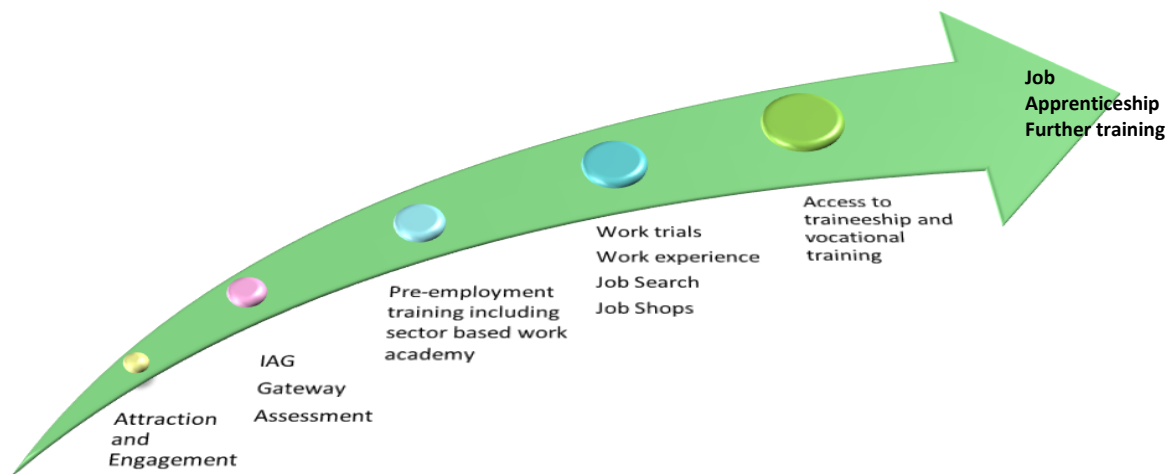
Aligning the project with the delivery of funded training provision through the WMCA will enable us to bring forward individuals onto a structured training pathway with additional one to one support, basic skills provision and sector specific skills experience and knowledge. This will enable participants to gain the maximum benefit from training and work experience opportunities with a view to moving closer to the world of work and sustainable employment.

### Specific activities

The World of Work Continuation project (WoW), will continue to promote and inspire people to take part in training and undertake relevant and quality work experience. This will enable individuals to access person-centred and industry led upskilling programmes in local community-based venues delivered via the Further Education (FE) providers under new COVID-safe ways, including online provision.

The following key elements and stages will feature as part of our delivery model:

- Attraction and outreach activities
- Initial information, advice provision appropriate to the needs of the client group
- Engagement, including registration
- Gateway assessment to access appropriate employability training and pathways
- Sector based employer-led industry awareness events, focused on growth sectors
- Pre-employment training delivered by FE colleges, private sector training providers and WMCA directly commissioned training
- DWP's sector-based work academy programmes (SWAP)
- Work trials, work experience, job search and job shops, volunteering
- Access to traineeships
- Access to apprenticeships
- Job matching support



WoW has been informed by our knowledge, experience and evidence of what works to deliver inclusive employment growth and widen participation. The following design features will be used as a basis for moving participants into training, apprenticeships, work experience and jobs:

- A clear line of sight for learners to learning and work-related opportunities, so that they understand and can aspire to job roles available to them.
- Appropriate outreach, promotion and engagement in communities and for priority groups such as, lone parents, BME, women and those aged 50 and over.
- Partnership co-ordination with access to existing funding that can be aligned and be complementary to bringing forward industry relevant training including, IT and digital skills, construction related qualifications and health & social care; connecting with but not limited to WMCA's Gateway Programmes for key growth sectors including, Construction, Engineering Automotive, Digital and Health & Social Care. We will also work with Birmingham Adult Education Service (BAES), FE providers such as Birmingham Metropolitan College, South and City College Birmingham and Solihull College, AEB providers and private training providers.
- A holistic approach to meet the needs of the individual, including for those with lack of basic skills, childcare and cultural issues, lack of confidence, knowledge of labour market and opportunities, and interview & CV writing skills.
- Employer involvement at pre-employment stage through employers including, HS2 Ltd and their supply chain contractors BBV-JV and LMJV, construction sector companies such as Lendlease, Willmott Dixon, SISK, Galliford Try, McLaren, Seddon, Vinci and other employers engaged as part of the project delivery. Using employers input we will influence the content of provision delivered via the WMCA.
- Using our employer contacts, we can shape the delivery of the provision to ensure candidates are prepared with the right level of skills required to hit the ground running in their chosen sector and specialism.

- We will establish a bank of taster sessions as part of the training, as well as provision of work experience and job opportunities at the end of the training programme.
- Peer support and good news stories from participants with a positive outcome will be used to inspire and motivate new participants, to engage in training pathways and identify career pathways that may not have previously been considered.
- Industry role models identified through employers to promote sectors and career pathways, inspire and motivate participants through engagement and training phase.

Duration of participation will be determined, assessed and monitored using an individual's current circumstances and knowledge and skill levels as the baseline. Those that are further along their journey towards the world of work may act as advocates in their own communities to promote entry opportunities and activities related to accessing jobs and training into growth sectors.

The project will be managed through Birmingham City Council (BCC)'s Skills & Employability Service and delivered in partnership with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC), Clarion Futures and Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust.

## **PROJECT GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT**

BCC will be the lead partner directing and co-ordinating all aspects of delivery. BCC will also be the accountable body and manage the overall delivery of the project. A Project Steering Group will be established including representation from BCC (accountable body) and delivery partner Solihull MBC which will meet on an agreed basis to oversee delivery, quality and consistency of provision. Where it is felt appropriate and beneficial, aligned partners, such as National Careers Service (NCS), Jobcentre Plus, FE training providers and sector representatives will also be invited to attend.

BCC has extensive experience of managing European projects and resources. In addition to the successful current running of ERDF, ESF ITM TA and YEI projects, BCC has vast experience of being a Co-Financing organisation and managing a complex network of delivery partners. BCC has experience of assisting project partners and coordinating them to ensure that they are able to learn from the delivery, capacity building, compliance, eligibility, feasibility work that BCC will undertake.

All partners will be trained on project systems and monitoring frameworks to ensure all relevant staff are aware of expectations and audit requirements. Written guidance will be produced to back up this training.

A dedicated project manager and team within BCC's Employment Team (see Appendix C for Project Organogram) will be responsible for day to day management and effective delivery of the project, across all delivery partners, overseeing compliance, delivery of outcomes, financial monitoring, internal audit, data returns/claims and quality assurance. Upon notification of project funding a full risk assessment will be produced and appropriate mitigations put in place and monitored.

Solihull MBC have extensive experience of managing and delivering European projects and resources including on the current YEI project and are current delivery partner/contractor on the Solihull & Youth Promise Plus project, therefore, have a good understanding and in depth knowledge of EU funded projects.

The project delivery requirements will be built around the ESF eligibility rules and regulations with robust IT and monitoring systems put in place to monitor eligibility of beneficiaries and

activity delivered as part of the project. Programme guidance will be available and shared with delivery partners to communicate compliance and eligibility.

An internal audit schedule will be implemented to review compliance and raise potential issues early on in delivery.

Input into systems and processes will be sought internally through European Team, finance, audit and legal services from the outset ensure compliance to regulations and procedures.

The project team will also ensure it is maintaining compliance with eligibility rules during project delivery by using management control mechanisms, including:

- Regular management meetings for project
- Risk register
- Regular review meetings with delivery partners to ensure compliance with SLA, including paperwork checks
- Claim submission, defrayal, verification of evidence and reimbursement of delivery costs
- Quarterly progress report for steering group
- End of project evaluation
- Support from BCC expert advisors and GBSLEP Technical Assistance team – for specific compliance procedures (procurement, state aid, financial defrayal evidence, document retention etc)