



**Funded by
UK Government**



UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND DUNDEE

PEOPLE AND SKILLS

Employment Related Skills – Intermediate and Higher-Level Digital and Green Skills

CHALLENGE FUND ROUND YEAR 4 – 2025/26

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Invitation to bid opens | 12:00 on 23 May 2025 |
| Invitation to bid closes | 12:00 on 13 June 2025 |
| Minimum application level | £50,000 |
| Maximum application level | £100,000 Grants of over £100,000 may be awarded in exceptional circumstances. If your projects costs are over £100,000, please contact DCC's funding team for an initial conversation – externalfunding@dundee.gov.uk |
| Budget Available | Circa £150,000-£200,000 |
| Match funding | Not a requirement but applications with match-funding may be considered more favourably. |
| Timing | Projects must complete before 31 March 2026. |
| Application process | Apply via the online portal from 23 May: https://www.dundee.gov.uk/service-area/city-development/planning-and-economic-development/the-uk-shared-prosperity-fund-ukspf Applications submitted late or via any other method will not be accepted. Please ensure you read the full guidance before submitting your application. |

Once you have submitted your application via the online portal, send the completed Application Supplementary information to externalfunding@dundee.gov.uk

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Dundee's UK Shared Prosperity Fund is launching a challenge fund with a focus on intermediate and higher-level digital skills at 12:00 on 23 May 2025.

The Fund has grants available of between £50,000 and £100,000, with programme delivery to be completed by March 2026. Eligible applicants include any legally constituted organisations with experience of delivering higher level digital and/or green skills. Programme participants must reside within Dundee City Council boundaries.

By submitting a bid to this programme, you agree to the information contained in your application being shared with the assessment panels.

INTERVENTION OVERVIEW – LINKS TO KEY SECTIONS

The UKSPF allows local areas to deliver programmes that support the development of employment-related skills. The UKSPF Prospectus indicates that funding can be used to support local areas to fund gaps in local skills provision to support people to progress in work, and supplement local adult skills provision, by providing new courses, additional volumes, different routes to skills etc. This should be provision that is supplementary to provision available through national employment and skills programmes. The focus of this fund is higher level **digital skills** and **green skills**.

This guidance includes information for applicants to either of the funds – green skills and digital skills. Clicking on the links below will take you directly to the sections specific to each fund and to the generic guidance for both elements of the funds.

QUESTIONS/GUIDANCE - [APPLICATION](#)

DIGITAL SKILLS – [DIGITAL SKILLS](#)

GREEN SKILLS – [GREEN SKILLS](#)

APPLICATION GUIDANCE

Please answer all questions directly in the online application form. When completing the application please assume that the Assessment Panel who will be scoring bids has no prior knowledge of your organisation or proposal therefore outline as clearly as possible the need for the project, an overview of why your organisation is best placed to deliver the project, the proposed outcomes/outputs and how your project will deliver the aims and objectives of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and local, regional and/or national strategies.

Initial Questions

This section will act as a gateway to ensure your project meets the required criteria and is therefore eligible to apply for funds from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Dundee. There are two Yes/No questions in this section. Applicants must be able to answer Yes to both, or their project will not be eligible for UKSPF Dundee funding.

Applicant Information

Applicants should complete this section with as much information as possible. When identifying a main contact person please consider who would be the most appropriate person to receive correspondence regarding the UK Shared Prosperity Fund within your organisation.

Project Summary

In this section, include the project title and start and end dates. Confirm which geographical location(s) your project will operate in by stating which ward(s) that will be. Multiple selections are allowed here.

There is also a short section (approx. 200 words) to provide a high-level summary of your project. This information may be used to promote your project and to report back to the UK Government on the projects that are being funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in Dundee. Please also tell us what your project costs will be, along with how much you are requesting from UKSPF Dundee.

Project Information

This section is divided into several different questions and is where you have an opportunity to explain the rationale behind your project, what it will deliver and what it will achieve because of the funding. This is the section that will be scored by the Investment Panel so specific guidance for each question is provided below. **Please try and answer concisely, ensuring that the relevant points are covered, while keeping within the suggested word count.**

What will your project deliver? What will you do with the funds? (600 words)

Please state exactly what you aim to deliver with your project. Be specific, what activities will you deliver? Will you recruit staff to deliver the activities described? The more information you provide, the more accurately we will be able to assess your application. Explain your activities, deliverables and timeline. It should be concise and clear and refer specifically to the scope of your project and what the funding will be spent on. You will have the opportunity to explain the need and rationale of your project in follow-up questions.

What is the need for your project and how have you identified it? Please provide evidence of the need (600 words)

In this question we want to understand why your project is needed. A strong application will support this with qualitative and/or quantitative data to demonstrate the need and may be based on evidence provided through direct interaction with local people, companies, partnerships with other organisations in the city that support those looking to move into work/reskills/upskill, or with the relevant employees.

Outline how the project addresses key skills gaps; providing an overview of the skills to be delivered ensuring they meet the need for intermediate/higher level skills and insight into the client groups being supported (600 words max)

Provide evidence of how the proposed project will address identified skills gaps, providing a breakdown of the skills that will be delivered as part of the training and how they support need in local businesses or skills demands.

Outline how your project avoids duplicating existing activity and/or adds value to existing activity e.g. enables more people to access the training programme (600 words max)

We also want to know how your project will fill existing gaps within service provision in the city and what steps you will take to ensure that your project is not duplicating existing activity or funding and indeed adds value to and integrate with the existing offer in the city.

Please explain how you will attract Dundee residents/companies to engage with the programme of training/upskilling/reskilling that you propose. (600 words max)

Applicants should provide an overview of how they reached the client numbers proposed and their marketing/engagement approach to ensuring these targets are met.

What previous experience of delivering support to people looking to access skills, reskill or upskill does your organisation have? And what previous experience of delivering similar projects do you have. Please provide examples of delivery models. Provide evidence of previous experience of delivering a project of similar scale/budget. (600 words max)

Please describe your organisational experience of delivery of similar scale projects and grants, related to the intervention that you are applying too. Be specific, what have you delivered, what were the budgets available to you and how successful were you in achieving your aims and objectives.

Please also describe your experience of submitting financial claims and providing timely monitoring reports in line with funders' timescales and guidance. Please also provide any additional information that will help us to understand your ability to deliver including, but not limited to:

- Links with the local business community/education providers/previous engagement with the relevant user group
- Skills knowledge and expertise of your project delivery team
- Assets and resources that you have available including space, buildings, equipment etc.

Explain how your project fits with local, regional and national strategies (600 words)

Strong applications will explain how the project and activities to be delivered fit within the UK Shared Prosperity Fund objectives as well as relevant local, regional and national plans including, the Dundee City Plan and the Regional Economic Strategy. Name the strategy, indicate which priorities your project addresses and how your project will deliver the outcomes of the strategy.

Plans to consider include:

- [Dundee City Council City Plan 2022-2032](#)
- [Tay Cities Regional Economic Strategy](#)
- [Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

How will your proposal help to address skills gaps in the city and what outputs and outcomes are anticipated as a result of this engagement? (600 words max)

The definition of the outputs and outcomes can be found in the [UKSPF Indicators 25-26 .xlsx](#) document. Answer this question by providing some details around the expected outputs and outcomes that you anticipate your project will achieve. Consider the benefits for the people involved in the project, and the positive impact it will have on the wider local economy.

OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

Outputs:

- OP20: Number of people retraining
- OP22: Number of people supported to participate in education

Outcomes:

- OC20: Number of people in employment, including self-employment, following support (numerical value)
- OC22: Number of people in education/training following support (numerical value)
- OC24: People gaining a qualification or completing a course following support.

Applicants must select which of the outputs and outcomes the project will achieve. You must also provide a baseline figure in order that progress can be measured in achieving the outcomes and outputs.

Applicants can also identify their own outputs in addition to those listed above if there are additional deliverables.

Please use this space to provide any further information you feel is relevant to your application or to continue responses to previous questions where you have reached the word limit (600 words)

Feel free to use this box to provide additional information which may be relevant to your application and was not covered by the previous questions.

Provide information on your organisation/group's fair work practices (300 words)

As Dundee City Council is committed to supporting the Fair Work Agenda, please provide some details about your organisation or groups fair work practices. This could include, being a Living Wage Employer, providing adequate job security for employees or providing an inclusive and diverse environment for people to work in.

HOW TO FILL OUT THE APPLICATION SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Outputs & Targets

You will be required to submit details of your project's outputs and targets in the separate Excel sheet. This form allows you to add in the pre-determined outputs and outcomes your project will achieve. Select the output/outcome, add the target figure and add the baseline. A project baseline is the starting point for your project. For example, if it is a brand new project the baseline target figure will be zero. You can also add your own additional outputs and outcomes in the 'free text box' if relevant.

Applicants should feel free to specify any other outputs and outcomes that they think are appropriate and will be delivered by the project, but the application will be assessed based on value for money in terms of the specific outputs and outcomes.

Applicants are encouraged to be as realistic as possible, targets that are deemed unattainable will not be looked on favourably as the targets specified here will form the basis of the monitoring and evaluation of your project. Similarly, projects deemed unambitious will likely not score highly with the investment panel. We encourage applicants to give serious consideration to this section and identify appropriate targets.

Budget & Costs

You will be required to submit details of your project's budget in the budget tab of the Excel document. Applicants must specify the amount that they are requesting from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund as well as how much match funding they have available from other sources (if required and bearing in mind match funding may have a positive impact on value for money). Applicants must also specify what the other sources are, i.e. own funds or other funding pots (name the funder).

Applicants are asked to provide a cost breakdown showing what the funding will be spent-on, i.e. staff, materials, venue hire etc. Please be as accurate as possible when providing this information.

If your organisation is providing in-kind funding to the project, there is a section that will allow you to provide further details of what that will entail. This may be particularly useful for smaller organisations who are unable to provide direct match-funding for the project.

Subsidy Control

As the Lead Authority in administering Dundee's allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Dundee City Council has several obligations under the UK's Subsidy Control Act legislation. To that end, applicants are asked to answer Yes or No to a question on whether they have received any state funding within the last three financial years. This is any funding that has come from any local, regional or national public body including the European Union.

Any applicant answering Yes to this will be required to provide further information on the date, amount and source of the funding. If multiple awards were received, then multiple records should be provided. This information will be assessed by officers at Dundee City Council and if your application is deemed to constitute a potential subsidy, they will contact you to request further information.

Please note that this will not be held against your application and will not be considered positively or negatively in scoring your application. It is a requirement in line with Dundee City Council's obligations under the UK Subsidy Control Act and applicants are asked to provide the information requested as accurately as possible.

If information comes to light later that was not presented at this stage, applicants may be found to be in breach of the funding conditions and appropriate action will be taken at that stage, including exclusion from the challenge fund process, withdrawal of any funding offer or clawback of any funding allocated.

There are a small number of legal routes to award a subsidy, including Minimal Financial Assistance or by undertaking a [subsidy control principles assessment](#). If an organisation has had more than £315,000 of public funding in the last three financial years, then the grant cannot be awarded under Minimal Financial Assistance (if the grant is considered a subsidy) and an alternative route will need to be identified. This may mean it takes longer to prepare the grant offer letter as we identify an appropriate route for delivery. If it is necessary to offer the grant as a subsidy we may contact you for further information.

Eligible applicants

All legally constituted organisations with experience of delivering higher level digital skills.

Eligible costs

Eligible costs could include the delivery of training; venue hire; participant support; marketing.

Checklist

In order to complete your application, you must confirm that you have:

- Read and understood the UKSPF Guidance
- Completed the application supplementary information by selecting relevant outputs/outcomes
- Completed the application supplementary information by providing details on budget and costs
- Completed all the questions in the application form

Data protection

This section contains a link to the [UKSPF Privacy Statement](#) which explains what we do with the personal data you provide.

Declaration

Please read the declaration and tick the box to accept the conditions and acknowledge that you have read and agree to the Council's [UKSPF Privacy Statement](#) as well as confirming that you have the authority within your group or organisation to submit this application.

Once you submit your application, you can print a copy of your answers for your own records. Once you press 'submit' you will receive a message confirming your application has been received. Click on the three dots on the top right hand of the page and you will have the option to print the document or save it as a PDF.

INTERVENTION SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FOR GREEN SKILLS

The aim of the Green Skills intervention is to enable local people/SMEs to access the skills required to develop careers in the low carbon/green sector and for companies to have access to the skills required to grow and adapt their business as we move towards a net zero economy.

The challenge fund is seeking bids that will deliver green skills training to local people keen to access a career in the low carbon economy or to advance their career prospects and supports the needs of local companies to reskill and upskill staff. This could for example be short courses (full or part-time) or the development of micro credentials with a focus on green skills. Pilot programmes will also be considered. Projects that support the specific skills requirements of local SMEs will also be considered and projects engaging with employers to address the need to upskill or reskill to support growth are also sought.

Examples projects outlined in the UKSPF Prospectus include:

- Increased number of people developing their skills to deliver local environmental priorities.
- Skills provisions with regards to the Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan priority sectors.
- Additional resources to support colleges, training providers and employers to adapt existing training.

Green Skills/Jobs

The Scottish Government declared a climate emergency in 2019 and set the target to reach zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 and a 75% reduction by 2030. In response Skills Development Scotland published the [Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan \(CESAP\)](#). The work identified three different categories of green job:

- New and emerging – completely new roles based on new technologies.
- Enhanced skills and knowledge – significant changes to the work and skills requirements of existing occupations. For example, plumbers/heating engineers will need to have the skills to install/maintain new heat sources and mechanics will need skills to support the growth in electric vehicles.
- Increased demand – the impact of green economy activities can increase employment demand for some existing occupations. For example, as the development of wind turbines grows more welders are needed.

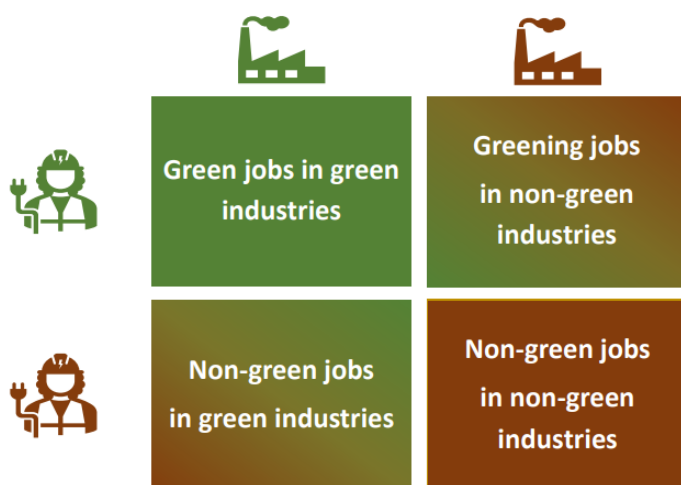
The CESAP study identified that 32.1% of green jobs are in professional occupations, with 19.6% in skilled trades occupations. New and emerging green jobs tend to be dominated by engineering occupations and increased demand jobs have a high presence of skilled trades and operatives. There needs to be a recognition that jobs in both new industries and traditional non-green industries can be classified as green (or greening) as the economy moves toward net zero.

The research estimated that more than one-quarter (25.7%) of all jobs in Scotland were in the Enhanced Skills and Knowledge category, one in ten (9.9%) were Increased Demand, and 4.3% were New and Emerging. This means that for every one job in New and Emerging, there are two jobs in existing occupations that we will need more of, but six jobs that already exist that need new skills to adapt to the implications of the transition to net zero. This highlights the critical role of upskilling in meeting the transition to net zero.

The report identified the following need in key CESAP sectors:

- **Energy and Waste Treatment:** more than 12,000 people will be need to fill emerging jobs as skilled workers retire, with support needed to transition the workforce from high carbon intensive to low carbon intensive forms of energy production and the demand for new skills will grow as new and emerging technologies such as hydrogen production come to fruition.
- **Construction:** the sector plays a key role in heat decarbonisation leading to significant demand for new workers and new skills – anticipating a total requirement of 21,700 people to meet demand by 2025 This includes the upskilling and reskilling of the current workforce to develop the necessary skills for retrofitting and installing net zero heating systems; an ageing working force and reduced access to migrant labour and shortages in key trades including plumbers, electricians and retrofit co-ordinators.
- **Transport:** the sector is expected to be subject to significant demand for changing skills because of the drive to ULEV infrastructure and EV cars increases; requirements for training new and reskilling existing workers on the maintenance and repair of ULEV vehicles; with up to 65,000 people needing to undertake training to support the uptake of electric/hybrid vehicles.
- **Manufacturing (including engineering):** need to reduce the manufacturing sectors reliance on fossil fuels. The challenge of an ageing workforce and the reduction of migrant labour will see replacement demand for 6,900 people up to 2025; shortages of workers trained in key trades required to support decarbonisation in the sector such as welders, fabricators and engineers and significant upskilling and reskilling to allow workers to adapt to new ways of working that supports the decarbonisation of the sector.

Figure 2.1: Four types of jobs that need to be recognised in estimates of the extent of green



Source: [SDS - CESAP](#)

INTERVENTION SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FOR DIGITAL SKILLS

In Dundee there is a recognised shortage in terms of mid-to-high level digital skills that we would like to see addressed:

- a lack of diversity within the digital/tech sector;
- need for more industry ready people to support growth in the tech/digital sector;
- people requiring retraining or upskilling to ensure advanced and professional level digital skills are available to support the development of the tech sector and to also address the need for digital skills in general employment such as web development; e-commerce; data visualisation;
- job related digital skills such as in engineering, manufacturing, finance etc.

The digital/tech sector is growing apace, and Dundee has a significant number of tech focused businesses that have the potential to create new jobs. However, the skilled employees are often not found locally, and it is often hard to attract talent to the city. It is therefore imperative that we 'grow our own.' Digital skills become even more important when recognising the fact that virtually every business is now a digital business – with websites, e-commerce, social media marketing, online customer relationship management/ticketing and digital tools being commonplace across industry and manufacturing. Ensuring local people have intermediate to professional level digital skills will ensure they are more employable and that local businesses can use those skills to grow.

The Digital Economy Skills Action Plan (Skills Development Scotland 2023) indicates a range of challenges/opportunities which should be considered when developing any bid. This includes:

- In 2019/20, almost 9% (26,600) of all college enrolments were in digital technology subjects. Despite an increasing appetite from employers to recruit digital technology college graduates, relatively few graduates progress directly into employment, with over three quarters moving onto further study.⁴⁵ Reasons for graduates not moving directly into employment include employers citing a lack of practical technology work experience, and college students opting for further study as they perceive technology employers to expect a degree qualification.
- Analysis forecasts an increase in most digital occupations to 2031, equating to around 15,600 job openings for tech professionals each year.
- In addition to the further and higher education provision there is a diverse range of providers delivering short digital skills-focused courses, seminars, and bootcamps that are predominantly aimed at reskilling individuals for professional digital economy roles. The collective numbers going through these programmes each year is unknown, but they are recognised by employers as an important addition to their digital economy skills pipeline.
- Micro-credentials like these are increasingly recognised by employers as valuable.
- Over half of digital technology professionals are expected to be employed outside of the traditional tech sector as large banks, local authorities, government, and other public sector agencies who are high consumers of technology skills talent.
- It is recognised that the supply of new entrants from mainstream education pathways will not fill all the skills requirements of industry, and therefore reskilling for critical digital skills shortages should be seen by education, government, and its agencies as a strategic response to meeting the ongoing and rapidly changing skills requirements of employers.

The aim is to enable local people to access the skills required to develop careers in the tech sector and to support tech businesses to grow their workforce locally. Ensuring local companies have access to industry ready employees.

The challenge fund is seeking bids that will deliver digital skills training to local people keen to access a career in tech or to advance their career prospects. This could for example be short courses (full or

part-time) or the development of micro credentials with a focus on digital skills. Pilot programmes will also be considered.

Projects that support the specific skills requirements of local SMEs will also be considered and projects engaging with employers to address the need to upskill or reskill to support growth are also sought.

The types of projects we are looking for will focus on what could be classified as intermediate/higher level skills e.g. those skills now required to use digital tools in the workplace or skills for those looking to work in the tech sector, creating new digital tools, such as software engineering, data, and coding.

Potential clients could include:

- those not in work but looking to move into tech through reskilling or upskilling
- people in work seeking to enhance their skills
- employers seeking to ensure they have the skills needed to grow their business.

This funding is not aimed directly at individual SMEs seeking to upskill their staff, rather at contractors/organisations who can deliver skills to multiple SMEs.

Priority will be given to projects that address intermediate and higher-level digital skills. These are defined in the recent SDS Digital Economy Skills Action Plan as:

- Digital Transition Skills (digital skills that support business transitions such as into e-commerce and online trade, or the ability for the business to understand the value of data)
- Integrated Digital Skills (the integration of professional digital skills into nontechnology job roles)
- Professional Digital Skills (digital skills for roles which were traditionally found only in the tech sector such as cyber security engineering, software development and cloud security).

An understanding of the local tech sector and national skills needs will be important.

Further Information

[UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2025-26: Technical note - GOV.UK](#)

[UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2025-26: additional information - GOV.UK](#)

[UK Shared Prosperity Fund: outputs and outcomes definitions \(2\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

[UK Shared Prosperity Fund: reporting and performance management \(3\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)