



# European Union

## European Social Fund

### ESF Project Bulletin March 2018

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This is the seventh edition of the European Social Fund Project Bulletin. The bulletin, issued by the ESF Managing Authority in the Department for Work and Pensions, is aimed at partners delivering ESF projects to keep you up-to-date with the latest news and developments in the programme, and help you deliver your project in line with requirements. In this issue you can find out about Technical Assistance (TA) project funding extensions, Action Notes and new ESF project launches.

#### [GOV.UK Update](#)

Updates since the last bulletin, including a new call for applications and Action Notes.

#### [TA projects could be eligible for further funding](#)

Get further information about the scope to extend current TA projects

#### [Plymouth University leads project to drive up employee skills](#)

£5.8 million project launched to drive up employee skills in Devon and Somerset

#### [Cornwall Project Helps 400 into Work](#)

Work Routes has helped 400 unemployed people into work

#### [Launch of The West London Alliance Work and Health Programme](#)

£26 million of funding to provide bespoke support to over 13,000 people

#### [Contacts and useful resources](#)

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## GOV.UK and ESF Action Note Update

There have been no changes to ESF guidance products since the last bulletin. Guidance is currently under review and a further update will be given in future bulletins.

A joint funding '[Call to run a local or national Technical Assistance project in England](#)' was published on 2 March 2018. This TA call is looking for projects which will deliver support for the development of projects, capacity building and publicity activities. The closing date for applications is 20 April 2018

There have been five [Action Notes](#) published on GOV.UK since the last bulletin. Action Notes inform grant recipients of an action they need to complete / be aware of – and can include upcoming Guidance changes. All projects have responsibility for reading these.

- Participant Data Schema update
- Stipends and Bursaries in the ESF 2014-2020 Programme
- National Technical Assistance Call – scope to extend existing ESF TA Projects
- Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) – (published in February)
- Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) (published in March – providing an update to the February Action Note)

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## TA projects could be eligible for further funding

[Action Note 013/18](#), circulated recently and published on GOV.UK, explains how existing TA projects may be able to extend their funding.

As referenced above, on 2 March 2018 a new open call was published for Technical Assistance – this is a joint call published by the ESF and ERDF Managing Authorities.

The intention of the call is to allow new TA projects to come forward with proposals through the standard 2-stage application process across both funds, however there is also an opportunity for existing TA projects to seek extensions to their current projects.

Projects wishing to apply for an extension should initially consider if they meet the criteria to apply as per the Action Note, before contacting their Contract Manager to discuss a potential Project Change Request.

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## Plymouth University leads project to drive up employee skills

A consortium of education providers, led by the University of Plymouth, is launching a multi-million pound initiative to drive up employee skill levels across the South West of England.

Supported by ESF, the scheme involves 10 institutions working across Devon, Somerset, Plymouth and Torbay.

Its aim will be to improve participation for people of all ages who are currently the least likely to engage in higher level skills, boosting employee qualifications and addressing skill shortages among individuals and small/medium sized businesses across the region.

Further information is available on their [website](#).

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## **Cornwall Project Helps 400 into Work**

Work Routes, supported by ESF, has helped 400 previously unemployed people to start work.

Since its launch in November 2016 the project has been helping some of the nearly 10,000 unemployed people in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly to find and start jobs. Many of them have overcome significant barriers to employment, including long-term unemployment, parental responsibilities and issues with their health, and their stories provide inspiration for other jobseekers.

Read about participants' experiences on the [Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Growth Programme website](#).

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## **Launch of The West London Alliance Work and Health Programme**

On 26<sup>th</sup> February the West London Alliance (WLA) Work and Health Programme (WHP) was launched. Part of the devolution deal for London, the Programme is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions and ESF, creating a £26m funding pot.

Over the next five years the provider Shaw Trust, a charity with a history of working with disabled people, will provide bespoke support to over 13,000 people with health conditions, disabilities, or disadvantages in the labour market, to help them find and keep work.

The groups to be helped are from a wide range of backgrounds, are at a disadvantage in the labour market, and are often customers of both Jobcentre Plus and other local public services. Shaw Trust will provide specialist support and innovative approaches. These include health and wellbeing teams and time credits to reward participants for voluntary work, along with drawing on local services to deliver what is needed.

This funding is part of a total of £135m of DWP and ESF funding that has been devolved to four strategic partnerships in London with a view to helping 55,000 people over a seven-year period. This approach will allow London boroughs to build on the work already taking place and coordinate a wider range of services to support people with disabilities, health conditions and other target groups to enter and sustain work.

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## **Contacts and useful resources**

Visit the European Structural and Investment Programme website pages at [www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding](http://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding).

ERDF and ESF technical assistance project [contacts](#)

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