

Apprentice Skills Development Fund

Every year, we share some of our Apprenticeship Levy funds by providing apprenticeship opportunities to local organisations who share our belief in investing in people. We do this through our 'Apprentice Skills Development Fund'.

Over the past few years, there have been rapid changes in the way we work and the skills we need in the workplace. Many organisations have struggled to meet this pace of development, so we're helping charities in our trading region to upskill their staff and build their resilience to future change.

Maybe you're looking to develop your organisation's fundraising skills? Or you want to improve your business administration? Or you have an employee who has the potential to become a future industry leader? Our Apprentice Skills Development Fund can help you on your journey.

What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a paid job where the employee learns and gains valuable experience.

Off-the-job training

In England, it is a statutory requirement for an apprentice to spend 20% of their paid time 'off-the-job'. This involves essential training to help the apprentice gain the skills needed to complete their apprenticeship. Off-the-job training can include:

- teaching theory (e.g. classroom lessons, lectures and online learning);
- practical training (e.g. shadowing, mentoring, industry visits);
- learning support and time to write assignments; The training can take place in or out of the work environment. Some employers will offer in-house training, others may work with colleges, universities and training providers to deliver the training for them.
- The training must equate to 20% of the overall contracted hours for the duration of the apprenticeship. It can be delivered flexibly, for example, as part of each day, once a week, or as a block release.

Benefits of an apprenticeship

Apprenticeships are an exciting paid option for anyone wanting to gain experience, upskill or change career because they offer the chance to earn a wage whilst they work and study. Anyone, of any age, can be an apprentice. Benefits include:

- Experience and skills development;
- a nationally recognised qualification;
- no tuition fees;
- employee benefits and a wage;
- exposure to industry professionals.

If the apprentice is 16-24 and a care leaver, they will receive a £1,000 bursary payment to support them in their first year of the apprenticeship.

How does the Apprentice Skills Development Fund work?

You can apply for a grant to spend on an apprenticeship course of your choice. Take a look at the 700+ apprenticeship options that are available from the Institute for Apprenticeships here:

www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards

The grant will cover the full cost of the apprenticeship training and assessment. The money can be used either for new recruits or to support the development of existing colleagues. If you've got an apprentice aged 16-18 years or under 25 years with an Educational Health Care Plan, you may also benefit from an additional £1,000 incentive.

Please note, the grant cannot be used to pay salaries or any other associated costs of employment.

What can transfer funds be used for?

- Once you accept the transferred funds they can only be used to pay for apprenticeship training and assessment, up to the full cost of the apprenticeship.
- Funds can only be used for a new apprenticeship start. They can be a new or existing employee but they cannot have already started an apprenticeship.

What we require from you

We believe in the importance of investing in our people, and it's important that you share this vision too. To be eligible to apply for the fund, you must meet all of the following criteria:

- Your organisation must be a charity;
- Your registered office must be in our trading area of Suffolk, Norfolk and Essex;
- The employee must be paid at least the national living wage;
- The employee must have a permanent contract of employment and work a minimum of 30 hours per week;
- The employee's job must continue after the apprenticeship training ends.

You will also remain solely responsible for paying your employee throughout the lifetime of the grant. We'll also be publicising the impact of the fund, so we'd appreciate your participation in any external promotional campaigns.

We understand that staff development can involve a significant investment of time, however, it's important that your employee is given the opportunity to make the most of their training. It will be your responsibility as their employer to ensure that they're given sufficient support, mentorship and time to complete it.

Getting the best out of your apprentice

Here's some top tips for supporting your apprentice:

- Make regular time to discuss progress and any support that they may need, including time off the job to complete their studies.
- Offer your apprentice a mentor who is able to offer guidance. A previous apprentice or a colleague with experience of the role they're performing would be ideal!
- Make sure you include your apprentice in all meetings and events, as you would any other member of the team.
- Work with your apprentice to develop a Personal Development Plan which outlines their goals and how they hope to achieve them during their apprenticeship. You can find a free template here: www.reed.co.uk/career-advice/personal-development-plan-template

How do I apply?

- 1 Identify your chosen apprentice and the skill they'd like to develop. What are your organisational goals? What kind of skills do you need to achieve them?
- 2 Find a suitable apprenticeship qualification that meets these needs on the Institute for Apprenticeships:
www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards
- 3 Decide which training provider you will be working with.
- 4 Create a digital apprenticeship account here:
www.accounts.manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk/service/index

You can find information on how to do this here:
www.newanglia.co.uk/apprenticeship-levy-transfer

- 5 Complete the application using one form per apprentice.

Once we receive your application, we'll assess it against the criteria shown above. We'll be in touch within six weeks of receipt of your application to confirm whether you've been successful in your request.

Any questions?

If you'd like more information about our Apprentice Skills Development Fund, please contact our Learning and Development team on: learn@eastofengland.coop