**UK Futures Programme**

**Frequently Asked Questions – Progression Pathways in the Retail and Hospitality Sectors**

These questions and answers are specific to the ‘Progression Pathways in the Retail and Hospitality Sectors’ competition. These should be read in conjunction with the [Programme level](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/330521/Programme_Level_FAQ.docx) FAQs.

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| **Question** | | **Answer** |
| 1 | Is there a minimum % of matched investment that we are expected to put into the project? | No there is no minimum amount of investment required but you need to be able to show that the employer contributions are appropriate to the type of project. |
| 2 | Does our investment need to be cash or can it be in kind? | It can be in kind, in cash or both but again needs to be appropriate to the type of project. |
| 3 | I am a small employer can I put in a single proposal on my own or do I need to join a consortium? | Both are fine - You can put in a single proposal on your own, or as part of a consortium application, whichever you would prefer. |
| 4 | Will we see the questions from other participants? | We will continue to answer questions via this document and make it available online for all interested parties to see all questions and answers. |
| 5 | Would a 1 nation based project be acceptable? | Yes, the Programme and all the competitions we run will be open across the UK (unless stated otherwise for further competitions). Applications focussed on one country, region, city or other local area would we welcome. |
| 6 | Could two separate bids be made? | If the applications are related we would be expecting the "whole story" to be presented in one application. If the projects are unrelated we would welcome two separate applications. |
| 7 | Can I put in a bid to conduct research on the issues in these sectors? | Bids for research are out of scope for this competition. We are inviting applications for developing solutions, piloting solutions, and scaling up solutions to the issues identified within the competition brief. |
| 8 | How will you be looking to measure the success of the projects? | The 2 main measures of success will be:   * Has the project Improved pay for low paid staff * Has the project delivered positive outcomes for business, for example: increased productivity and bottom-line profits, greater staff retention, improved staff satisfaction and reductions in recruitment and induction costs   These will be monitored through the projects and through the evaluation of the competition. |
| 9 | How will you evaluate the impact that the projects have made? | We will evaluate the impact at the end of the competition through a competition evaluation. However, the impact against the two success measures identified above may take longer than the lifetime of the funded project. As such we may need to approach employers following the completion on the projects to obtain participant details to track pay, bottom line profits, and productivity etc. |
| 10 | Would you recommend or prefer a specific range of partners within project team? | You (or the organisation leading the proposal) are best placed to know who should be involved in your project. Whoever you think will strengthen your proposal, you should include them in your proposal - from our point of view, it is important that the organisation leading the proposal has identified why particular partners are involved and has a strong rationale for what they will add to the project. All projects should be led by employers with a range of employers engaged throughout the project. |
| 11 | How many partners should be in the proposal | There is no fixed number of partners. It is a matter of making sure that the partners involved in the project make a valuable contribution. We are looking for quality over quantity. |
| 12 | Please what is the duration of the project | We envisage that the successful projects will commence in March/April 2015 and will run for around 12 – 18 months. |
| 13 | Can I design a bid around seasonal workers? | Absolutely, providing you have a strong rationale that targeting this group of employees will achieve the success and impact we have defined. |
| 14 | Can the tourism sector submit proposals? | Yes we will consider hospitality proposals from the tourism sector. |

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| 15 | Will we need to submit monthly progress reports to UKCES when the projects are up and running? | No, the monitoring arrangements will be light touch, and agreed with your relationship manager who will be in regular contact with you throughout the project. . Progress reporting is likely to be quarterly. We are much more focussed on co-creation and supporting your projects through development. |
| 16 | The impact of the project I am considering might not be seen within the 12-18 months that the project will run for. Will I be penalised for this? | Not at all, we expect that some of the measurable impact of these projects may take longer to be seen. As such we envisage conducting evaluations at a later date once the projects have concluded. |
| 17 | I have already begun testing some ideas on improving skills and progression within my business, would I still be eligible to submit a proposal to upscale these pilots? | Absolutely, if your solution is already showing signs of impact to your workforce this will only strengthen your proposal. |
| 18 | I have a couple of innovative ideas that I would like to test but I’m not sure they will work; can I still submit a proposal? | Yes, the UK Futures Programme is all about testing out solutions to see what works, what doesn’t, and why. If the potential for impact is there we will welcome these kinds of proposals. |
| 19 | I ideally would like to do some more research before I develop ideas / solutions is that ok? | As part of this competition we would specifically like to see development proposals rather than research based proposals. You could build ‘research’ into the development of a solution and test this through the development. |
| 20 | Do I have to test and share my learning with wider employer groups? | Yes, all successful applicants will be expected to attend the Innovation Labs and share their learning. |
| **21** | **Can I fill in the PDF application form and submit that by email?** | **No, the application form needs to be filled in and submitted online. You need to register to gain access to the online application form. By all means use the PDF whilst compiling your application but email applications will not be accepted.** |
| 22 | Can a college submit an application? | Yes, a college can be the applicant but to reiterate the application must be employer led, and about employers thinking differently about how they design their jobs and HR practices more generally, so this isn’t just about training. |
| 23 | Will the webinar videos be available online anywhere? | Yes the webinar videos are available on YouTube here:  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_rxauYNgX_U&list=PLBKSiHxV0EKYnMXNtOtyIdJEK2tQ2uBhT> |
| 24 | Can the retail supply chain (e.g logistics and warehousing) submit a proposal? | The competition is only open to businesses in the hospitality and retail sectors, not the supply chains. We take this approach to ensure that we have maximum commonality between the businesses and the issues they are trying to address. So the answer I’m afraid is no. |
| 25 | Is it possible to send participants the relevant links please? | [Competition Brief](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/362802/14.10.10._UKFP_Comp_3_Brief_V5.1.pdf)  [Competition Press Release](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/2-million-boost-to-help-low-paid-retail-and-hospitality-staff)  [YouTube Videos](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_rxauYNgX_U&list=PLBKSiHxV0EKYnMXNtOtyIdJEK2tQ2uBhT)  (Registration for the) [Online Application Form](https://adobeformscentral.com/?f=LzQ%2AZYVP-QlRSsQayHPWFg)  [Complete Application Guidance Document](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ukces-futures-programme-guidance-documents-printer-friendly)  [Example Application form](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/362942/Comp_3__Progression_Pathways_application_form.pdf) |
| 26 | How can we raise any future questions with you? | If you have any further questions please feel free to contact us on the following email address [Enquiries.FuturesProgramme@ukces.org.uk](mailto:Enquiries.FuturesProgramme@ukces.org.uk) |
| 27 | What would be considered public sector contributions? | The public sector contributions we refer to are from UKCES. You can also provide other sources of public funding such as funding from other government departments. |
| 28 | Can projects already be underway or do they have to be new ones? | We prefer new and innovative ideas but there may be scope for existing projects to be scaled up or tried out in a new setting or in a new way. |
| 29 | Is there a limitation in terms of numbers of employers for the business | No there is no limitation on the amount of employers / employees that can be involved in the project |
| 30 | How much testing will I have to do? I know what I want to implement and just want to get on with it? | The Futures Programme is about learning ‘what works’, this is to benefit both the broader Programme but also individual projects. Testing what you are doing along the way, rather than waiting until the end, can give you a better project with a more sustainable future, because you can adapt as you go.  The [Testing and Shared Learning Guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ukces-futures-programme-guidance-document-testing-and-shared-learning) suggests that there are likely to be 3 areas you would want to look at: the end product you are developing (e.g. new job roles – testing how best to change task organisation or shift patterns); the methods you use (e.g. the way changes are communicated to staff to achieve high engagement) and the logic chain you will apply (e.g. how the improved pathways will improve retention). So, whilst you may know what you want to do, we would be looking to ensure you had tested those ideas beforehand in your application, or would want to see how you might test through the project itself. It need not be complex, but ensuring a process of reviewing and testing with an appropriate audience and reviewing or revising what you do as appropriate. |
| 31 | How competitive is the Futures Programme, what are my chances of being awarded funding? | This is difficult to answer. The number of projects that will be successful in gaining funding will be limited to the overall budget of £2 million for this competition. We are looking for a number of projects which will enable us to test and learn from solutions that address the challenges outlined in the Competition brief. The opportunity of being awarded funding depends on how many applications are received and the quality of the applications and ideas. The better the quality of your application and idea, the better chance you will have of being awarded funding. |
| 32 | You say you want to collect individual level information about employees and their progression, as an employer I’m uncomfortable with this. | Individual level information will only be useful to us if the projects are large scale and so, if this is a problem, particularly for smaller scale projects, then projects do not need to collect this individual level information.  However, all projects will be expected to participate fully in the evaluation.  We’d also stress that individual level information will be useful to those employers who are interested on the specific impacts on their business. |