



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Jobs Guarantee Phase One

Grant Application - Instructions and Assessment Criteria

January 2026

Introduction

These instructions, together with the Jobs Guarantee Grant Guidance document and all other information and documents to which they refer, are designed to ensure that each completed Grant Application is treated fairly. It is important, therefore, that you provide all the information asked for in the format and order specified.

Please read the information and instructions carefully as non-compliance with the instructions may result in the disqualification of your Grant Application from this exercise. Grant Applicants need to ensure that they have read all the documentation contained within this pack thoroughly.

Please note that these instructions, and all other information or documents to which they refer are issued as part of Phase One of the Jobs Guarantee only. As outlined in the Grant Guidance, DWP reserves the right to amend, clarify, add to or withdraw all or any part of the Grant Application Instructions and Assessment Criteria, the Guidance, the Grant Funding Agreement, and any documents attached or annexed there to, at any time during the Grant Application process, including varying any timetable or deadlines set out in these Grant Application Instructions and Assessment Criteria document.

Application Process

The application window will open on 29 January 2026 and will be open for one month until 23:59pm (Midnight) on 28 February 2026. We will aim to award successful bids at the start of April, and the first funded employment starts are expected to commence in April 2026.

Application window will open on Find a Grant	29 January 2026 11:00am
Information Session on Application Process	5 February 2026 10:00am
Drop-in Session for Application Process	12 February 2026 10:00am
Drop-in Session for Application Process	19 February 2026 10:00am
Drop-in Session for Application Process	26 February 2026 10:00am
Deadline for Clarification Questions from interested parties	20 February 2026 12:00pm
Published responses to Clarification Questions	Weekly during bidding window
Deadline for Grant Application Submissions	23:59pm 28 February 2026
Proposed funding award notification	April 2026
Expected commencement date of Jobs Guarantee Grant Funding Agreement	April 2026

Applications must be submitted through Find a Grant and clearly state which of the six phase one areas the proposal relates to. Proposals must demonstrate understanding – or plans to develop understanding - of the local labour market and geographic context, supported by relevant insight, and set out clear plans for engaging employers and partners. Applicants can bid to be the lead Delivery Organisation in as many of the six

areas as they want; a separate application must be submitted for each area. However, a single organisation will only be awarded to deliver the Jobs Guarantee as the lead Delivery Organisation in a maximum of two out of the six areas.

Applicants are required to evidence their capacity to source and deliver Funded Employment opportunities that provide acceptable (as defined in the Grant Funding Agreement (GFA)), and meaningful (as defined in the Grant Guidance) employment.

They must demonstrate capacity to deliver at the required scale in the relevant geographic area, and as such, provide a Delivery Plan including a schedule from April 2026 – April 2027 for how many Participants they expect to be able to take on Referral, place in Funded Employment on a monthly basis and support in their time on the Scheme. This Delivery Plan must be developed in line with requirements that Funded Employment starts must commence between May – October 2026, noting final Funded Employment must conclude by 30 April 2027. It must also take into account the minimum number of expected referrals set out in the Grant Guidance. Demand will differ across each area and so applicants will also be expected to set out how Delivery Plans will manage any local variation.

To demonstrate their capacity to provide support, applicants must evidence in their Delivery Plan their ability to provide appropriate wraparound support to help Participants – many with multiple barriers and complex needs - succeed. This funding is intended to cover the costs associated with providing tailored support and training to each Participant to support them to start in the job, get on in the job and progress into sustained employment.

Applicants must provide a Financial Model that outlines anticipated costs they will incur in delivering the Scheme over the Funding Period, based on their Delivery Plan.

Therefore, Applications must include a robust Delivery Plan and accompanying Financial Model (including evidence the anticipated level of funding required), and confirmation that the organisation meets all legal and compliance requirements of the Scheme.

Scoring

Applications will be assessed using the following criteria across four key sections:

Delivery Plan (Max. 12 points)

This criterion assesses the overall strength and feasibility of your delivery approach, including: the expected number of Participants you can take on Referral, and the number of Funded Employment starts you can deliver, your Employer engagement model, how you will source Acceptable Employment (as defined by the GFA), how you will match participants to suitable roles and approach to providing tailored wraparound support. This should also include your approach to safeguarding and wellbeing.

Organisational Capability (Max. 12 points)

This criterion assesses your ability to deliver the Jobs Guarantee effectively and at pace, including the experience of your organisation at delivering similar programmes, supporting young people with multiple barriers and complex needs, workforce skills, governance and leadership and, operational readiness for delivery from April 2026 with the first job starts in May 2026. This includes consideration of your existing relationships with stakeholders that will support delivery, evidence of local labour market insight and/or details of how you will work with local partners to build knowledge of local labour market needs and opportunities, and how this will inform the sourcing of Funded Employment opportunities.

Governance and Monitoring (Max. 6 points)

This criterion assesses your governance, reporting and monitoring arrangements to ensure accountability, effective delivery, compliance, and prevention of fraud and error across your organisation and any delivery partners and Employers you will work with.

Value for Money (Max. 9 points)

This criterion assesses whether the proposed Delivery Plan and proposed Financial Model represents efficient and justifiable use of public funds. It considers whether your Financial Model is clear and coherent, uses resources effectively and is linked to outcomes for young people. As set out in the Grant Guidance, we have set maximum sums for Employer onboarding costs and Delivery Organisation wrap-around support and administration costs. Applicants will be expected to bid within this envelope and set out how the proposed bid represents value for money.

Each criterion will be scored on a scale of 1 to 6. The scoring scale is applied consistently across all criteria. An additional 100% weighting will be applied to scores for the delivery plan and organisational capability, and an additional 50% weighting will be applied to the score for value for money. The maximum available score for each criterion reflects its importance. The maximum possible score across all criteria is 39 points.

Response number	Points available (of 39 total)	Weighting applied
Section 1		
Section 1.1: Eligibility Statement	0 - Zero	N/A
Section 2		
Section 2.1: Your Details	0 - Zero	N/A
Section 3		
Section 3.1: Funding	0 - Zero	N/A
Section 4		
Section 4.1: Additional Organisation Details	0 - Zero	N/A
Section 5		

Section 5.1: Lead Contact Details	0 - Zero	N/A
Section 6		
Section 6.1: Grant Information	0 - Zero	N/A
Section 7		
Section 7.1: Geographic Area	0 - Zero	N/A
Section 8		
Section 8.1: Delivery Plan	12 - Twelve	100% weighting applied to points awarded i.e. a 6-point score would be worth 12 points total.
Section 9		
Section 9.1: Organisational Capability	12 - Twelve	100% weighting applied to points awarded i.e. a 6-point score would be worth 12 points total.
Section 9.2: Governance and Monitoring	6 - Six	No weighting applied.
Section 10		
Section 10.1: Value for Money	9 - Nine	50% weighting applied to points awarded i.e. a 6-point score would be worth 9 points total.
Section 11		
Section 11.1: Declarations	0 – Zero	N/A

Applicants must meet two minimum quality thresholds to progress in the application process:

1. Delivery Model — score 6 points or higher
2. Organisational capability — score 6 points or higher

In the event a Grant Applicant scores 1 on any individually scored question in sections 8-10, or fails to answer all questions within the form, the Grant Application will be deemed a Rejected Grant Application and disqualified. Grant Applications not deemed to be a rejected application will be considered a Valid Grant Application.

We have applied a maximum word count on your response to all scored questions. These limits are provided in the Grant Application form and any words exceeding the allocated word count will be disregarded entirely and will not be evaluated.

The scoring scale is outlined below:

Score	Descriptor	Explanation
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6 – Excellent	Comprehensive, clear, and convincing	Fully addresses all prompts with strong evidence, clear methodology, and realistic plans. Demonstrates innovation, strong partnerships, and high confidence in delivery.
5 – Very Good	Strong and detailed	Addresses most prompts well, with good evidence and clear plans. Minor gaps but overall highly credible and well thought through.
4 – Good	Adequate and credible	Covers key points with reasonable detail. Some areas lack depth or clarity but overall feasible and acceptable.
3 – Fair	Limited detail or unclear	Addresses prompts superficially. Lacks evidence or clarity in approach. Raises concerns about feasibility or readiness.
2 – Poor	Significant gaps	Major omissions or unclear responses. Limited understanding of requirements. High risk of non-delivery.
1 – Very Poor	Inadequate	Fails to address prompts meaningfully. No credible plan or evidence. Response lacks sufficient evidence or detail and does not demonstrate an ability to deliver.

Each Grant Applicant deemed to have submitted a valid Grant Application will receive a weighted Assessment Score based on the Assessment Criteria set out above. The applicant achieving the highest total weighted Score for each area will be recommended for award. In the event of a tie, the process outlined in the Tie Breaker section will apply to determine the successful bidder.

Application Completion

- No additional documentation should be submitted with the Grant Application, unless otherwise specified (see below).
- You are responsible for ensuring that your Grant Application Form has been fully completed and all information included prior to the Grant Application submission deadline. Please allow sufficient time to submit your Grant Application. It is recommended that you allow time for a final check to be undertaken prior to the submission deadline. It will not be possible for you to submit any further information after the application exercise submission deadline and any applications received after the submission will be rejected.
- Information Technology (IT) problems within your own system will not be considered reasonable grounds for late submission. You may modify and resubmit your Grant Application at any time prior to the submission deadline. If you experience any IT issues with Find a Grant or accessibility issues please contact dwp.jobguaranteeteam@DWP.GOV.UK ahead of the deadline. Grant Applications cannot be modified after the submission deadline.
- All Grant Applicants will be liable for all costs incurred in the preparation and submission of their Grant Application. DWP will not be liable for these costs and the Grant Recipients cannot use any Jobs Guarantee Grant Funding to cover costs incurred in the preparation and submission of their Grant Application.

- Each applicant may wish to take its own advice (including legal, financial or tax advice) and should enter into its own discussions with supply chain partners in respect of the preparation and submission of its application and shall do so at its own risk and in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. Any support or guidance set out in this document pack or otherwise provided by DWP or any other body in connection with the application process does not and will not imply any support for an individual pilot application in advance of Conditional Notice to Proceed (itself not a funding commitment), nor will it imply or confer any liability on the DWP for the inputs to or outputs undertaken by each potential applicant. Nothing in the document pack constitutes or can be considered as financial, account, tax, or technical advice.

No Collusion in Applications

Applicants (and their subcontractors, consortium members, advisors, or group companies) must not:

- Fix or adjust any part of their application through agreement with another person.
- Share or communicate application value or related information with anyone except the Authority.
- Agree with another person to prevent them from submitting an application.
- Disclose or allow access to application information to any other person.
- Offer or provide money, inducements, or valuable consideration to influence actions or omissions related to applications.
- **Exception for Co-Participants** - Consortium members working on the same application may share necessary information for preparing that joint application.
- **Consequences of Breach** - The Authority may disqualify the applicant from the grant competition. Additional criminal or civil remedies may apply.
- **Preventive Measures** - The Authority can require applicants to implement procedures or actions to prevent or stop collusive behaviour.

Tie Breaker

In the event of two or more applicants achieving the same overall assessment score, the Applicant with the highest score for section 8 (delivery plan) will be ranked higher. If scores remain tied, subsequent sections will be considered in numerical order until the tie is broken. For sections with multiple questions, only the weighted question will be applied in this process. The first applicant to achieve a higher score at any stage will be awarded.

If an applicant is successful in more than two areas, allocation will normally be based on the two areas with the highest scores. However, DWP may, at its discretion, discuss options with the bidder to agree the two most suitable areas, particularly where there are significant differences in scores across areas.

Clarification Questions

A post-launch webinar will be held on **5 February at 10am** to outline the key requirements and criteria, followed by an opportunity for attendees to ask questions and seek clarification with the application process. This will be followed by weekly drop-in sessions, providing further opportunities to ask questions and seek clarification to support the application process.

Information Session on Application Process	5 February 2026 10:00am	Sign-up link
Drop-in Session for Application Process	12 February 2026 10:00am	Sign-up link
Drop-in Session for Application Process	19 February 2026 10:00am	Sign-up link
Drop-in Session for Application Process	26 February 2026 10:00am	Sign-up link

The question and answer log will be updated after the webinar and each drop-in session, and published weekly on **Find a Grant**. This will also reflect and respond to any additional written questions received during the application window.

Questions during the application window should be submitted via email to dwp.jobguaranteeteam@DWP.GOV.UK.

Note that in all cases, DWP's handling of Grant Applications and clarification questions submitted will be subject always to the UK Government's obligations under the Freedom of information Act (FOIA), Environmental Information Regulations (EIR), and any other applicable legislation which may result in the information submitted being disclosed.

Applicants may submit questions to clarify the published guidance, criteria, or process. However, questions seeking special consideration, lobbying for policy changes, or influencing assessment outcomes outside the formal process will not be accepted. All queries will be reviewed, and any response that provides useful clarification will be added to the public question and answer log. Questions already addressed in the guidance, appendices, or existing responses, or those deemed irrelevant, will not receive a separate reply.

Should there be anything in your clarification question which you feel is sensitive to your area, please identify this when raising the question. In cases such as this, DWP may respond only to the prospective Grant Applicant that has asked the clarification question (i.e. and not include the question or answer in the question-and-answer log). This will apply in cases where the DWP is satisfied that (a) the clarification question is sensitive to that prospective Grant Applicant's area and (b) responding only to that prospective Grant Applicant would not be contrary to a fair competition.

Where DWP is not satisfied the above criteria are met, we will provide the questioner with the opportunity to either withdraw the clarification question or confirm that the question and answer can be included in the question-and answer log.

Applicants must not directly or indirectly canvass any Minister, public sector employee or agent regarding this Grant Application or attempt to procure any information – the above process must be followed. Any attempt to do so may result in an Applicant's disqualification from this Grant Application.

Application Form

This form is for information only and sets out the details required as part of a Jobs Guarantee Grant Application. Applications cannot be submitted via this form and must be completed on Find a Grant.

Section 1 - Eligibility

1.1 Eligibility Statement

As outlined in the Grant Guidance,

DWP welcomes applications from a wide range of organisations with experience delivering employment, skills, youth, or wraparound support services, including but not limited to:

- Specialist employment support organisations,
- Charities, nonprofits, and social enterprises,
- Local authorities,
- Mayoral Strategic Authorities (MSAs).

We welcome applications made in partnership across organisations. Applications that do so should clearly state the lead organisation that will hold the relationship with DWP and outline how they will work in partnership with others to deliver the grant objective.

Organisations can bid for all six areas but will only be awarded the grant as the lead delivery partner in a maximum of two of the Phase One delivery areas for the Jobs Guarantee.

By continuing with this application, you understand you will be responsible for delivery of the Jobs Guarantee following the referral of eligible young people from DWP and that this will include the securing of suitable Funded Employment, matching the Participant to a suitable Funded Employment opportunity, and providing wraparound support and training for the Participant.

By submitting an application you agree to the declarations set out in Section 11.

DWP will conduct standard grant due diligence checks for all successful applicants.

This form should be completed with reference to the Jobs Guarantee Grant Guidance.

All scored responses are scored in accordance with the assessment criteria given in the application guidance. Any weightings applicable to a scored response are also detailed within those instructions.

Section 2 - Your Details

2.1 Organisation Details

All applicants are asked for certain information.

This information will allow DWP to carry out compliance and due-diligence checks, and prevent fraud.

These are the questions required to complete a due-diligence check.

Please note if you are bidding in partnership across organisations, this section should be completed by the named lead organisation.

Organisation legal name	
Organisation type (e.g. limited company)	
Registered address	
Charity Commission number (if applicable)	
Companies House number (if applicable)	

Section 3 – Funding

3.1 Grant Funding Details

All applicants are asked for certain information.

Your response to the first question in this section should cover the amount of funding required to deliver the Grant Recipient funded activities, as set out in the Grant Guidance.

How much does your organisation require as a grant?	
Where the funding will be spent: North East England North West England South East England South West England Midlands Scotland Wales Northern Ireland	

Section 4 – Additional Organisation Details

4.1 Organisation Details	
(Please note if you are bidding in partnership across organisations, this section should be completed by the named lead organisation.)	
Email Address	
Description of the organisation (including its aims and objectives) and its legal standing	
Description of the financial position of the organisation including statement of turnover, profit and loss and statement of cash flow	
If you are making this bid in partnership across organisations, please ensure you have their consent to submit this bid and specify which organisations this includes	
Declaration of any conflicts of interest that could compromise the conduct of delivery of the Jobs Guarantee (optional)	

Section 5 – Lead Contact Details

5.1 Lead Contact Details	
Name	
Job Title/Position in organisation	
Email address	
Telephone Number	

Section 6 – Grant Information

6.1 Grant Information	
<p>Total amount of funding required for Grant Recipient funded activities, per Participant. (excluding Employer Activities - subsidised wage related funding and Employer Onboarding costs).</p> <p>This figure must be within the maximum funding allowance as set out in the Grant Guidance.</p>	
<p>Breakdown of how the total Grant Recipient funding will be used including anticipated costs for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• set-up,• wrap-around support,• administration of the scheme	

Section 7 – Geographic Area

7.1 Please outline which geographic area you are submitting this bid for.

(Please note an individual bid must be submitted for each area)

Birmingham & Solihull	
East Midlands	
Greater Manchester	
Hertfordshire & Essex	
Central & East Scotland	
Southwest & Southeast	
Wales	

Section 8 – Delivery Plan (Scoring: Max. 12 points)

8.1 Explain your proposed approach to deliver the Jobs Guarantee, including sourcing employment opportunities and providing wraparound support within the selected area.

Your answer should cover:

- The number of referrals and participants you expect to support, with a monthly schedule of expected Participants and job starts from April 2026 – July 2026. Note, Funded Employment starts must be before the end of October 2026 to conclude by 30 April 2027.
- How you will deliver wraparound support. Include details of support to be provided to all Participants as outlined in Grant Guidance.
- How you will engage with Employers to identify suitable opportunities and a sufficient variety of roles. Consider local labour market conditions and barriers. Outline previous experience of working with employers to support young people with complex needs.
- How you will match young people to suitable Funded Employment opportunities.
- How you will provide safeguarding and protect wellbeing.

Max. word count – 1,250 words

Section 9 – Organisational Capability / Governance and Monitoring (Scoring: Max. 12 points)

9.1 Describe your organisation's capability and readiness to deliver the Jobs Guarantee scheme at the required scale within the specified geographic area.

Your answer should cover:

- Relevant experience delivering similar support. Include experience of working with young people with complex barriers to employment and specific skills and expertise within your organisation relevant to delivering this grant.
- Readiness to delivery from April 2026 and deliver the first jobs by May 2026. Include details of relevant infrastructure, staffing and partnerships to be put in place.
- How you will use existing relationships with Employers, Local Authorities or support services to support delivery.
- Evidence of how you will work with local partners to understand local needs and opportunities. Include details of how this knowledge will inform Funded Employment opportunity sourcing and wraparound support.

Max. word count – 1,250 words

9.2 Outline your governance and monitoring arrangements to ensure accountability, effective delivery, compliance, and prevention of fraud or error across your organisation and with any delivery partners you use.

Your answer should cover:

- Governance structures and decision-making processes to support the effective delivery of the grant.
- How you will meet the monitoring and reporting requirements, including submitting Monthly Reports that will inform Quarterly Grant Reviews.
- How you will support DWP's evaluation of the Scheme and deliver your evaluation plan. Include details how you will monitor the effectiveness of support provided to achieve the grants aims and objectives.
- How you monitor compliance with terms of the Grant Funding Agreement.
- Your financial controls and measures to prevent fraud and error.
- How you will ensure adherence to the Code of Conduct for Government Grants, including processes for handling vulnerable participants and health and safety compliance.

Max. word count – 1000 words

Section 10 – Value for Money (Scoring: Max. 6 points)

10.1 Explain how your proposed model represents an efficient and justifiable use of public funds while achieving the intended outcomes for young people?

Your answer should:

- Provide a Financial Model based on your delivery plan for wraparound support costs and administration costs over the Funding Period. Your response should provide an anticipated cost per Participant within the envelope (see Grant Guidance), a total anticipated cost within the envelope (see the Grant Guidance for calculation) and explain why this represents good value for money.
- How costs align with the objectives of the grant and the intended outcomes for young people.
- Measures to ensure the grant funding is used as intended, is used efficiently and avoids unnecessary expenditure.
- Describe any innovative approaches (digital tools, partnerships, co-funding) that reduce costs while maintaining quality.
- Explain how you will avoid duplication and leverage alignment with existing services and support offers.

Max. word count – 1000 words

Please note there will be an additional question in this section allowing you to provide any supporting documentation, for example, a Financial Model.

Section 11 – Declarations

By submitting this application form you are agreeing to the following:

- All of the information you have provided in this application is true and correct
- As outlined in the Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) (Section 33), you agree to take account of the Code of Conduct for Recipients of Government General Grants, including ensuring that any delivery partners or employers you utilise or involve in delivering the scheme undertake their duties in a manner consistent with the principles set out in the Code of Conduct.

You and any delivery partners or employers you utilise or involve in delivering the scheme, as stipulated in the GFA, will adhere to any obligations under the law, including but not limited to the Information Acts and the Human Rights Act (GFA – Section 14). You will also have due regard to anti-bribery and anti-corruption laws (GFA - Section 10), data protection and public procurement (GFA – Section 15), subsidy control (GFA - Section 16), intellectual property (GFA – Section 17), environmental requirements (GFA – Section 18), insurance (GFA – Section 20) and any other relevant law or regulation as stipulated in the Grant Funding Agreement.

Disclaimer

The applicant pack comprising: [Grant Guidance, Application Form and draft Grant Funding Agreement] are issued as part of Phase One of the Jobs Guarantee Scheme only and are not a reflection of any application requirements for Phase Two of the Jobs Guarantee Scheme. As this is part of a Phase One (or “pilot”) process, DWP may make corrections and amendments to this application pack where it is deemed necessary. DWP shall provide as much notice as possible of any proposed changes to this application pack. DWP does not guarantee the levels of funding available, or that funding will be made available.

Each Applicant may wish to take its own advice (including legal, financial or tax advice) and should enter into its own discussions with supply chain partners in respect of the preparation and submission of its application and shall do so at its own risk and in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. Any support or guidance set out in this document pack or otherwise provided by DWP or any other body in connection with the application process does not and will not imply any support for an individual pilot application in advance of Conditional Notice to Proceed (itself not a funding commitment), nor will it imply or confer any liability on the DWP for the inputs to or outputs undertaken by each potential applicant. Nothing in the document pack constitutes or can be considered as financial, account, tax, or technical advice.

DWP will continue to comply with its legal obligations (including the Subsidy Control Act 2022) as it implements the Jobs Guarantee. Each Applicant should take its own legal advice as to regulatory requirements (including the Subsidy Control Act 2022).

Confidentiality

You agree that any information you share with DWP in connection with this applicant pack or phase one of the Jobs Guarantee scheme may be shared with its agents and advisors and may be used for the purpose of phase one of the Jobs Guarantee scheme, the national roll out of the Jobs Guarantee scheme, and future policy (and shall store and retain such information in accordance with good industry practice). You agree that you have all necessary consent and licenses to share any information you choose to share with DWP in connection with this applicant pack or the Jobs Guarantee scheme.

You agree and acknowledge that DWP is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and the Environmental Information Regulations as amended.

You shall comply with your respective obligations under the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

By accessing and downloading the documents, you agree to comply with the terms set out above.