



Further EU funding available to improve employment in Wales

Welsh Government have announced an additional £11.5 million in European Funding to help disadvantaged people, who might traditionally struggle to find work, become more employable.

The funding will offer supported employment placements, training opportunities and skills and confidence building activities for people who may be excluded from the job market. This includes BAME people, young people, people with various health or learning-related issues or people who are long-term unemployed.

Funding will be available to charities and not-for-profit groups in Wales via the Active Inclusion Fund, managed by WCVA.

Since 2014, grants from the Active Inclusion Fund have enabled projects that help those furthest from the labour market find sustainable employment. Projects run by voluntary organisations have helped over 60,000 people improve their skills and 10,000 people into employment.

Through the Active Inclusion Fund, Monmouthshire Housing Association were able to help Tony, who was struggling to find work while dealing with the strains of being a single parent to a family of three young children. Tony was able to find meaningful employment with a construction company after taking part in the Monmouthshire Employment Pathway. The project identified Tony's interest in carpentry and nurtured it into a full-blown career.

The new round of Active Inclusion funding will enable organisations to deliver projects until 2022. With the uncertainty facing society in Wales, it's great that organisations like Monmouthshire Housing Association will be supported to continue helping those who need it the most.

Organisations that can provide activities or supported employment placements to give people the skills they need to return to sustainable employment are being encouraged to get in touch with WCVA and apply.

WCVA will be holding a series of information sessions during September to help and support organisations who may be interested in applying. The sessions are aimed to provide groups with more information and guidance on the application process including what can be funded.

Brexit Minister Jeremy Miles AM said:

‘We’ve already seen how successful the Active Inclusion Fund has been in working with people to remove barriers to employment. This is so important, not only to the economy, but in lifting the confidence of communities across the country.’

‘With a focus on helping people who face additional challenges in the jobs market, the fund will continue to help make Wales a fairer, more prosperous and more inclusive society.’

‘This is a great example of how Wales still benefits substantially from EU funds and I’m delighted this investment will be supporting the futures of so many people.’

WCVA Chief Executive Ruth Marks added:

‘We are extremely pleased to be given the opportunity to continue building on the success of the Active Inclusion Fund and EU funding in Wales, which remain as important now as they have ever been. Especially as the country goes through a period of uncertainty, it will be reassuring for everyone that the opportunity remains to reach out and improve the lives of those furthest from the labour market in Wales.’

Tessa White, Head of IB Grant & Verification at WCVA, said:

‘We’ve had great success with the current Active Inclusion programme to date and want to emphasise that whatever happens with Brexit, these projects can be delivered until June 2022, so we would encourage anyone who’s interested to apply.’

NOTES TO EDITORS

The events are scheduled to take place on the following dates:

- 4 September - Llandudno
- 9 September - Newport

- 10 September - Swansea
 - 12 September - Merthyr Tydfil
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- The Active Inclusion Fund is managed by Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) supported by funding from European Structural and Investment Funds. It aims to reduce economic inactivity in Wales and improve the employability of disadvantaged people furthest from the labour market.
 - Organisations that have previously completed an Eligibility Questionnaire and are on the Approved Beneficiaries List are already eligible to apply, but new organisations are also welcome. The grant application form has also been updated to make the process easier.
 - For more information on the fund and how to apply, applicants are encouraged to take a look at the Active Inclusion Fund webpages at www.wcva.org.uk/activeinclusion or contact a member of the team on activeinclusion@wcva.org.uk or ring the team on **0300 111 0124**.
 - Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) is the national membership body for voluntary organisations in Wales. We exist to enable voluntary organisations in Wales to make a bigger difference together.
 - WCVA is proud to be part of a partnership with County Voluntary Councils (CVCs) providing support to voluntary organisations across Wales.

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