



Connect To Work

Application Form

Background

One of the Government's five missions is to kickstart economic growth with good jobs and improved productivity. The Get Britain Working White Paper quotes – “Building a thriving and inclusive labour market and increasing the number of people in work is central to achieving the government’s number one mission to grow the economy.” The ambition is for a more inclusive economy which enables people to get into work and get on at work, ensuring employment opportunity for all.

In the UK, there are 1.9million people who would like to work but are not participating in the labour market – often due to health issues or disability. The funding for Connect to Work will support disabled people, those with health conditions and people with complex barriers to employment, to seek to find suitable work, by offering them voluntary support based on the high-fidelity model of Supported Employment.

Connect to Work will take a collaborative, locally led approach to tackling ‘Hidden Unemployment’. It will help connect local work, health and skills support. The funding provides a coherent, systematic and joined up approach to maximise the benefits available for individuals and local communities.

Overarching Programme Requirements

Connect to Work will primarily help disabled people, people with health conditions and those with more complex barriers to work who are outside the labour market in ‘Hidden Unemployment’ who wish to be in employment, to find a suitable job and sustain work. The programme will also help those in work but are at risk of falling out of the labour market (and who will struggle to get back into work if they were to lose their job) to retain employment.

Connect to Work is a voluntary programme to help tackle economic inactivity by providing a specific form of support targeted at the right people at the right time, based on their individual circumstances. Connect to Work will deliver the evidence-based Supported Employment model ‘place, train and maintain’. The Connect to Work service must use both models of Supported Employment; IPS (Individual Placement Support) and SEQF (Supported Employment Quality Framework).

Better Connect are applying to deliver the IPS element of support across York and North Yorkshire. IPS integrates employment support alongside primary and secondary health service, and other support services. Connect to Work matches participants to open labour market jobs and opportunities quickly and provides support to the employer, as well as the participants, to ensure that work is sustained.

Delivery partners will be expected to provide a complete end-to-end service, following all stages of the supported employment model including awareness raising and marketing, vocational profiling, job match, employer engagement, and on and off the job support. Support will be delivered through Employment Specialist roles.

All participants must be triaged. The most appropriate support model for the participant should not be predetermined, and delivery partners must work with other service providers and provision to determine the most appropriate support for Participants.

Connect to Work will be made available across the entire region either through an established base or outreach.

All delivery partners must commit to engaging with the IPS Fidelity Assessment scales and will be expected to collect evidence to support that their IPS support shows high fidelity.

If you are interested in being included in the Connect to Work partnership, please complete the application form associated with this guidance document (via JotForms). Supplementary information including the

Partner Declaration Form and Budget information must be submitted using the templates provided. We are unable to progress ANY applications that do not meet all application requirements.

Connect to Work is very different from the other employability programmes that are currently being led by Better Connect and as such our approach to partnership selection has been further developed to account for this. We anticipate that this Connect to Work partnership will be reasonably small in comparison to other Better Connect led employability programmes.

Project Timescales & Key Milestones

The indicative timescales provided by the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority are:

Milestone	Date
Formal launch of prospectus and open call for applications	Wednesday 15 th October 2025
Deadline for Applications	Friday 14 th November 2025, 12 noon
Appraisal and decision making	Friday 14 th November – Monday 24 th November 2025
Notification of Award	Tuesday 25 th November 2025
Formal Contract Award	Thursday 4 th December 2025
Programme start date	15 th December 2025

Due to the short amount of time between now and submitting our Connect to Work partnership application, we have created a short application form allowing the maximum amount of time for completion.

Better Connect Timeline

Milestone	Date
Application form/EOI goes live	Wednesday 22 nd October 2025
Deadline for potential partner EOI's	Friday 7 th November, 12 noon
Partnership bid submission to YNYCA	Friday 14 th November 2025, 12 noon
Notification and awarding	December 2025

Funding Available

The Connect to Work opportunity has been split into 2 lots. Lot 1 for North Yorkshire and lot 2 for York. Better Connect will be applying for both lots and will build a partnership to reflect this. Connect to Work funding will be available for 5 years with annual amounts set by the Combined Authority. Underspend CANNOT be rolled over – it is imperative that this is considered when applying to be included in this partnership.

Year	Lot 1 – North Yorkshire	Lot 2 - York
2025/2026	£ 159,600	£ 22,400
2026/2027	£ 700,000	£ 98,000
2027/2028	£ 1,517,600	£ 215,600
2028/2029	£ 1,391,600	£ 196,000
2029/2030	£ 375,200	£ 53,200

There is also a dedicated participant expenses pot that equates to £50 per participant to be used to address potential financial barriers to engagement. This pot of funding is in addition to the funding indicated in the table above.

Scope of provision

Employment Specialists (delivery partners) will be responsible for identifying people who will meet the eligibility criteria by conducting a factual assessment and the suitability criteria which includes making a judgement of the individual's circumstances. Connect to Work should be delivered to participants who they believe to be the most likely to benefit from the supported employment model of support to help them find and/or retain work.

All participants must enter the programme on a voluntary basis and to be eligible must be in one of the following groups:

- A disabled person, who has a disability or long-term health condition, as defined in the Equality Act 2010 or the Social Model of Disability.
- A specified disadvantaged group as identified in the Connect to Work prospectus.

Delivery partners cannot extend, flex or amend the eligibility or suitability criteria for this project.

Once eligibility has been determined, the suitability criteria must then be met. Participants must meet at least one of these employment situations:

- Economically inactive within priority groups and want to work: a person who is not in work due to their disability, long-term health condition or disadvantages and feel they need comprehensive tailored employment support to help them identify the right roles for their needs and engage in effective job search towards work.
- In work but at risk of losing employment (and if they lose their job would be unlikely to move back into work without support): a person who is working or self-employed for at least 3 months and is struggling to sustain employment due to their disability, long-term health condition or disadvantages. If a person has employed for short periods – it is the responsibility of the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority to determine eligibility/suitability.
- Maintaining Work: a person who has never been in employment or has a track record of struggling to retain jobs/sustain employment due to their disability, long-term health condition or disadvantages.

Participants must benefit from Connect to Work support in at least one of the following ways:

- Comprehensive tailored help: Participant is unlikely to be able to move into/retain paid work without very frequent, comprehensive and tailored support above and beyond standard provision (e.g. IAG, CV and application support) or other national provision including Restart.
- Adaptability: Participant has previously, or is expected to, struggle with learning new skills or adapting to new environments due to their disability, long-term health condition or disadvantages.
- Integration: Participant needs employment support that is integrated with other support for their other needs e.g. health services, probation, social care.
- Job role and workplace: Participants will need employer flexibility to tailor the role and/or workplace to support with their disadvantages or disability or health condition.
- Sustained work: Participant requires/will require significant support to retain work over and above standard reasonable adjustments.

Outputs and Outcomes

The information below provides an overview of the delivery expectations of the Connect to Work partnership as per the information provided by the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority.

Connect to Work delivery will be measured against the following performance measures as set by the DWP.

Output/Outcome	Target	When should this be achieved by?	Notes/definitions
Job Starts	At least 50% of total programme starts to achieve First earnings (Out of Work participants)	Up to 456* calendar days from the participants start date on programme.	First earnings are any allowable earnings recorded by HMRC PAYE data, notified and paid during the qualifying period.
Job Outcomes	At least 40% of total programme starts to achieve a Lower Threshold job outcome (Out of Work participants)	Up to 456* calendar days from the participants start date on programme.	Earnings threshold calculation 9 hours x 13 weeks x NLW. Self-employment equivalent to be measured over 13 cumulative weeks
Job Outcomes	At least 29% of total programme starts to achieve a Higher Threshold job outcome (Out of work participants)	Up to 456* calendar days from the participants start date on programme.	Earnings threshold calculation 18 hours x 26 weeks x NLW. Self-employment equivalent to be measured over 26 cumulative weeks
Job Outcomes	At least 80% of In Work participants to achieve a Higher Threshold job outcome. There is no lower threshold for in work participants	Up to 365 calendar days from the participants start date.	Earnings threshold calculation 18 hours x 26 weeks x NLW Self-employment equivalent to be measured over 26 cumulative weeks.

* this can be extended to 638 calendar days from the start date if an extension is approved.

Reporting Requirements for Grant holders

Financial Claims Process

Better Connect will be responsible for compiling all financial claims evidence that will be submitted to the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority for assessment. Monitoring will be expected monthly and delivery partners will be expected to provide financial information to the Better Connect Finance team for us to process your claims.

All delivery partners will be expected to provide a full and detailed breakdown of all project related costs. The payment model is a cost-plus model, paying allowable costs quarterly in arrears. Delivery partners must retain all evidence of spend which should be readily available for spot checking and audit. Examples of financial evidence likely to be retained includes but is not limited to;

- Defrayal evidence and bank statements
- Payroll information linked to the staff who are delivering programme provision. This includes salary information, employers' national insurance and employer pension contributions
- Invoices and receipts that support programme delivery
- Rationale of costs where the funder dictates that this is required

The Better Connect Finance and Audit team will support you to provide this information to make the claims process as simple as possible. Financial claims validation checks will be conducted by the Combined

Authority to ensure that there is evidence that supports all costs that have been incurred. Better Connect finance team will support you to prepare and collate the supporting financial evidence for each of your claims to ensure that YNYCA validation requirements are met.

Costs are exclusive of VAT. The York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority will recover the VAT incurred. If the VAT cannot be recovered reimbursements must be made to the Combined Authority to cover this cost. All VAT invoices must include a clear breakdown of VAT chargeable.

Monitoring Requirements

Monitoring has been designed to capture the progress participants make whilst they are receiving Connect to Work support. Forms have been designed to help us capture the outputs and outcomes stipulated by the funder and helps us to capture the softer outcomes and wider impact of the programme.

Partners will be expected to complete monitoring and check eligibility of participants who wish to engage with Connect to Work provision. All paperwork will be completed and submitted through JotForms, and all successful applicants will be provided with access to JotForms to enable them to meet this requirement.

All information collected is used for monitoring, reporting and evaluation purposes and contributes to evidencing the outputs and outcomes that have been achieved. Please note that there are several questions included in the participant information paperwork that are mandated by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). The DWP is the Managing Authority for this funding, and we are obligated to include these questions to access the funding that is available. Comprehensive guidance for completing monitoring will be provided to all successful organisations.

Both the financial claims a programme monitoring systems are used to help us to effectively manage the programme, provide informed reports to funders and ensure that high quality, transformational provision is delivered that meets specified outcomes.

Fidelity

All delivery partners will be required to fully adhere to the IPS fidelity scales and fully engage and cooperate with the Fidelity Assurance system. This system will include both self-assessment and external assessment and will comprise of scored assessments of services alongside a full report and coproduce action plan with the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority and delivery partners for improvement. Assessments will be conducted in person onsite with delivery partners and through the collections of evidence and interviews.

Fidelity information will be shared with the DWP.

Support and Guidance

Better Connect are here to offer support throughout the bid process and are committed to providing detailed guidance and personalised support to organisations where it is required.

If you have queries about your organisation's eligibility to apply for this funding, expectations and reporting requirements of successful applicants or require support completing the form, please contact Emma Lyons (details below).

Emma Lyons

Head of Business Development

elyons@betterconnect.org.uk

01423 795305 (direct line)

Detailed Application Form Guidance

The table below provides an overview of the application form, including the weighting of each question and any maximum word counts. This is included to help you plan the completion of your application form. More detailed guidance is provided below for each question.

Question weighting by section				
Section 1: Organisational details				
	Collected to support eligibility and suitability to access Connect to Work Funding. For organisations that are listed on Better Connects Approved Delivery Partner list (APL), you will have a reduced number of questions to complete in this section as the information has been collected previously and is held on record already.			Information only, there are no scored questions in this section.
Section 2: Policies and assurances				
	It is perfectly acceptable not to have some of the policies and assurances listed below in place. You will not be discounted based on the answer provided in this section but may highlight areas of development. Where organisations identify gaps in policies and assurances, Better Connect can help you to achieve and develop these should they be a mandatory requirement. Organisations who are on Better Connects APL and have confirmed that their information is up to date will not be required to complete this section.			Information only, there are no scored questions in this section.
Section 3: Bank Details				
	Bank details are being collected so we can make payments to you should you be successful with your application. For organisations who are NOT currently delivering a Better Connect programme, a copy of a recent bank statement will need to be uploaded as part of the application.			Information only, there are no scored questions in this section.
Section 4: Due diligence				
	This section ensures that your organisation is both eligible and suitable to receive Connect to Work funding. Answers provided in this section may provide grounds for exclusion.			Information only, there are no scored questions in this section.
No	Question	Word count	Type	Additional information
Section 5: Organisational Track record				
This section has been developed to establish your organisations track record of delivering IPS or structured employability support in York and North Yorkshire. This section of the application form is scored and will help Better Connect make informed decisions when creating this partnership. There are a mixture of scored and information only questions in this section.				
	5 scored questions	2300	scored	Used to establish if your organisation will be a good fit for Connect to Work.
	5 Information only questions	N/A	Information only	Designed to add context or frame the scored questions
Section 6: Connect to Work Delivery				

This section has been designed so you can tell us your approach to delivering Connect to Work. It is important that your answers show you understand the delivery model and provide us with the confidence that you can meet the programme requirements. There are a mixture of scored and information only questions in this section				
	5 scored questions	3000	scored	Used to establish if your organisation has a good understanding of Connect to Work and what will be required to successfully deliver this programme.
	7 information only questions	N/A	Information only	Designed to add context or frame the scored questions.
Section 7: Organisational Compliance				
This section has been designed to help us understand your reporting capabilities; the answers you provide should be specific to the Connect to Work programme.				
	3 Scored questions	1500	scored	Used to establish if your organisation can meet Connect to Work AND Better Connect reporting requirements
	2 information only questions	N/A	Information only	Designed to add context or frame the scored questions.
Section 8: Declarations and Permissions				
	All information only			Provides Better Connect permission to include your organisation in the partnership Connect to Work application.

Scoring Process

All the scored questions will be marked out of 6. The grid below shows how each point is allocated. The detailed guidance for each question will inform you of what we are looking for and will help you to meet the scoring criteria for the question.

Score	
6	Answer exceeds expectations – all key points are answered with additional relevant information provided
5	Strongly meets the requirement
4	Meets the requirements
3	Mostly meets the requirements with minor weaknesses in certain areas
2	Major weaknesses but the answer covers some points. Answer mostly fails the requirements
1	Very little information is provided and has failed on most scoring criteria
0	No answer has been provided for this question

Top tips

- Make full use of the word count. Word counts indicate the level of detail we are expecting for each question.
- Do not embed links to additional information – we are unable to follow these or consider the content in scoring the question.
- Use the guidance document – each bullet point indicates what we would like you to cover in each question.
- If you are unsure, have any questions especially around eligibility and suitability please do get in touch. We are here to help.

Application Form – Detailed Guidance

Section 1: Organisational Details

Organisations who are named on Better Connects Approved Delivery Partner list (APL) will have less questions to answer in this section as some of the information is already held on file at Better Connect.

Please note that it is **NOT** a mandatory requirement for organisations to be named on this list to be eligible to apply to be included in this Connect to Work partnership application.

If you are not currently named on our APL but wish to be, please complete the MS Forms questionnaire by following this link <https://forms.office.com/e/wZ7dnRYmz5>, please note this is a live form and can be completed at a time that is convenient for you. It has no weighting/bearing on the Connect to Work partnership applications that are received.

The purpose of asking these questions:

- It helps us to assess the eligibility and suitability of each organisation that applies
- It helps us to learn a little bit about organisations that are new to us
- It helps you meet some of the additional due diligence requirements should your application be successful with your application, allowing you to focus on the implementation and mobilisation of Connect to Work.
- It supports Better Connect with impact and evaluation of the Connect to Work
- Funder requirements

Section 2: Policies and Assurances

It is perfectly acceptable not to have some of the policies and assurances listed in the applications form. Not having these will not prevent you from being eligible to access Connect to Work funding but may highlight areas of development. There are some policies in the list denoted with ** that must be in place before any delivery begins. If you identify gaps in your organisations policies and assurances, please speak to a member of the Better Connect team who can help and support you to get these in place.

Please note that a Safeguarding and Protecting Children policy is only required if you intend to work with 16- and 17-year-olds as part of the provision you offer.

All organisations must name a Data Protection Officer (DPO), this is a mandatory requirement as all projects will collect and store personal information relating to the participants in receipt of your project provision. The DPO has overall responsibility for ensuring that all data is handled and stored in line with Data Protection and GDPR regulations.

Please note Better Connect will provide a Privacy Notice to be shared with all participants, that details how their personal information is collected, stored and used for the purposes of Connect to Work. A DPIA (Data Protection Impact Assessment) has also been completed.

Section 3: Bank Details

These are collected so that we can pay you should your application be successful. You will only be asked to provide your bank details if we do not hold these already, you wish to change the bank account we have on record OR you are an organisation that is NOT currently delivering any Better Connect funded provision.

We must also check that every organisation has a bank account in its own name – we are unable to pay grant funding into personal accounts. We achieve this by asking you to provide a recent bank statement this must;

- Clearly show your organisations name and address
- Match the account number and sort code that you have provided in the application form

- Be recent – this means issued/dated in the last 3 months
- It is acceptable to redact bank account balances and transactions should you wish

Please note, we don't complete credit checks as part of our due diligence but will check Companies House and/or the Charity Commission for your governance information. In some instances, this will include checking your most recent published accounts information.

Section 4: Due Diligence

Please ensure you answer all the questions listed in this section honestly. Often the questions asked are used as grounds for exclusion.

If you declare, something in this section that could potentially exclude you from receiving funding for Connect to Work delivery, please ensure you provide us with detailed mitigation information that we can apply to your application. It may be that we need to discuss details with you in more depth and if this is the case we will contact you to arrange a phone or Teams call. It is important that we collect all necessary information before a decision regarding awarding can be made.

Conflicts of interest could include;

- Being related to or having a strong personal connection with a member of the Better Connect Team
- Being a member of the Better Connect Board of Directors or a member of the Better Connect Team being one of your directors/trustees.

If you declare having performance related issues in the past, please take the opportunity to tell us the following;

- What lessons have you learned and how will you apply these to this project?
- Were there mitigating circumstances that lead to this?
- What systems/processes/resources have you put in place to prevent this happening again?
- If you are successful with your application, what support would you need from Better Connect to keep delivery on track?

Section 5: Organisational Track Record

The guidance provided in this section will help you to fulfil the scoring requirements for each scored question. Please ensure that the answers you provide as a minimum meet the bullet points listed for each.

Are you currently delivering structured employability provision in York and/or North Yorkshire (information only)

Examples of structured employability includes but is not limited to:

- Rise2Thrive
- Trailblazer
- Supported Employment
- IPS and/or SEQF
- Any other employability support

Please provide a brief summary of the provision you are delivering and where it is being delivered. (Scored question 500 words max)

Please ensure your answer covers the following:

- The names of the employability projects or programmes you are currently delivering
- A brief overview of the type of provision you are providing
- Where the projects are being delivered – districts, towns, communities
- Is the delivery place based, outreach or both
- Why you think these projects or programmes provide you with the skills and expertise required for delivering Connect to Work.

If you are not currently delivering structure employability in York and/or North Yorkshire, please provide relevant examples of projects delivered outside of the region that meet the criteria listed above.

<i>How are you predominantly delivering this provision? (Information only)</i>
<i>Do you consider your organisation to be locally embedded in York and/or North Yorkshire communities? (Information only)</i>
Better Connect specialises in creating partnerships that utilise the expertise of local organisations supporting the York and North Yorkshires mission to provide place-based provision delivered by local partners. Organisations who are embedded in the local communities will be prioritised in the creation of this partnership. HOWEVER, we will welcome applications from organisation who are outside of the region and will consider including these organisations in the partnership where they are best placed to deliver Connect to Work support.
<i>Please provide details below (Scored question 300 words max)</i>
For organisations who consider themselves to be locally embedded, please ensure you cover the following: • Which communities are you embedded within • Do you have a physical base in this/these communities • What services do you offer within these communities • How long have you been engaging with these communities • How will your positioning in these communities help you to fulfil Connect to Work requirements For organisations that do not consider themselves to be locally embedded, please ensure you cover the following: • Which communities/areas have you identified as possible delivery areas for Connect to Work – be specific • Why have these communities/areas been identified as potential priority delivery areas? • How do you intend to engage and build connections with people in these communities • Where do you intend to deliver Connect to Work provision from
<i>How would you rate your experience of delivering IPS provision (Information only)</i>
<i>What do you understand the main differences between Connect to Work and other flexible provision to be?</i>
Please ensure the following points are covered in your answer: • Examples of employability provision currently available in York and/or North Yorkshire and how these are different. • Key overarching differences. • The participant journey • The model • The difference in expertise required to successfully deliver Connect to Work and how this is different to other provision.
<i>Please provide a rationale for the rating provided in the question above (Scored question 500 words max)</i>
Please ensure the following points are covered in your answer: • Why you have given this rating • Detail what specific IPS experience your organisation has • Please include the skills, experience and qualifications of delivery staff who are likely to be delivering Connect to Work in York and North Yorkshire • What steps are you going to take to ensure that you can maintain or improve (where relevant) this rating over the course of the programme. • What key lessons have you learned to date that are relevant to the delivery of IPS.
<i>Please provide 2 relevant programme/contract examples that evidences your organisation's ability to meet the requirements of Connect to Work (Information only)</i>
Type of contract examples are: • Employability • Skills and learning

- Social Inclusion
- IAG
- Supported Employment

Using the examples provided above, please provide details of any rationale for under or over delivery and lessons learned that will be relevant and applied to the delivery of Connect to Work should your application be successful. (Scored question 500 words max)

Please ensure your answer covers the following:

- A brief overview of the contracts/programmes provided – what were they designed to achieve?
- Why you chose these examples
- Under delivery and/or over delivery for both examples are acknowledged in this answer
- Lessons learned are clearly documented
- How will these lessons be applied to Connect to Work to ensure successful delivery of this programme

Section 6: Connect to Work delivery

The guidance provided in this section will help you to fulfil the scoring requirements for each scored question. Please ensure that the answers you provide as a minimum meet the bullet points listed for each.

Please indicate from the list below, which priority groups your organisation will engage through Connect to Work (Information only)

This is the exhaustive list of priority groups as identified by the York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority. People that do not fit in these priority groups will not be eligible to receive Connect to Work support.

How and why have you identified this/these cohorts to support through Connect to Work? (Scored question 500 words max)

Please ensure the following points are covered in your answer to this question:

- How have you identified this/these cohort(s) as a priority group?
- Why do you believe your organisation is best placed to provide support to this/these cohort(s)?
- What experience do you have of engaging and working with this cohort
- Do you have any stats or data that supports the need for this support specific to the cohort(s) identified.
- How do you ensure that caseloads are well managed to 'avoid bottle necking'

Where will your Connect to Work delivery take place? (Information only)

Please indicate where in the districts identified above that delivery will take place (Scored question 500 words max)

Please ensure the following points are covered in your answer to this question:

- Please include the names of the towns/villages/communities where delivery will take place
- How have you identified these areas?
- Will the provision you offer be place based or outreach?
- Where will Connect to Work be delivered from?
- If you have selected more than one district – please indicate which areas would be your preferred delivery areas and why

Please indicate in the table below the number of Connect to Work participants you anticipate working with throughout the lifetime of the project. (Information only)

Please ensure you consider that caseloads per full time employment specialist cannot exceed 25 active participants at anyone time. This will be closely monitored through Fidelity assessments and programme management.

The total number of participants the whole partnership will be required to engage are shown in the table below. This is a partnership project and will be awarding profiles and associated funding to multiple organisations. Please take this into account when you complete the table in the application form.

Lot 1: North Yorkshire

Year	Out of Work Participants	In work participants	Total
2025/2026	48	9	57
2026/2027	212	38	250
2027/2028	461	81	542
2028/2029	422	75	497
2029/2023	0	134	134

Lot 2: York

Year	Out of Work Participants	In work participants	Total
2025/2026	7	1	8
2026/2027	30	5	35
2027/2028	65	12	77
2028/2029	60	10	70
2029/2023	0	19	19

Please indicate the number of staff/roles your organisation will dedicate to delivering Connect to Work (Information only)

This figure should represent the number of FTE roles dedicated to Connect to Work delivery. This does NOT need to be a whole number.

Caseload sizes should be considered

Will you need to recruit for staff resource to deliver this programme? (Information only)

How many staff will you need to recruit (only available if the answer to the previous question is Yes). (Information Only)

Please upload the staff details spreadsheet. (Information only)

Please ensure that this information is submitted on the spreadsheet template provided by Better Connect.

When do you anticipate your organisation being ready to begin Connect to Work delivery? (Information only)

It is likely that not all partners will be asked to begin delivery in Year 1 and we will use this period to upskill employment specialists and embed systems and processes ready for delivery beginning in Year 2. Your preferred year for beginning delivery will not impact our decision in naming organisations in the partnership.

Please confirm that you can provide in person Connect to Work support. (Information only)

The delivery of the programme must be participant led and therefore some participants may prefer face-to-face and others virtual support. There is an expectation that all initial assessments are completed in person. It is unlikely that we will be able to contract with organisations that solely offer online support.

How do you intend to triage potential participants, ensuring that they are referred into the right type of employability support? (Scored question 500 words max)

Please ensure that you include the following in your answer:

- How you intend to confirm eligibility and suitability for potential participants
- How will you embed a 'no wrong door' approach for potential participants seeking employability support?
- Awareness of other employability programmes in the region
- Provide at least one example of when a participant would be eligible and suitable for Connect to Work and one example of when they would not. What provision would you refer them into instead?

- How will you work with other delivery partners within the partnership and other external employability service providers?

Describe your approach to delivering the Supported Employment Model. Ensure all 5 stages of the model are included in your answer. (Scored question 1000 words max)

Please ensure you include the following:

- Your approach to **engagement** – this should include how you will build relationships with local services and referral routes as well as your approach to the initial meeting to be held with potential participants.
- **Vocational Profiling** and the development of a Vocational Action Plan
- **Employer Engagement** particularly how you will proactively engage employers to build a diverse range of employment opportunities AND how you will support these employers to recruit and retain Connect to Work participants.
- **Job Matching** – considerations should be given for how you would support both out of work and in work participants.
- **On and Off the job support** – what will this needs based look like?

Consideration should be given to participants who are seeking self-employment support (from both an engagement and retention perspective)

Please describe your approach to coordinating access to integrated health and other services (Scored question, 500 words max)

- What local/regional services are you connected to that you could support Connect to Work participants to access?
- Please ensure that your answer is linked to the specific districts and towns where you have identified that Connect to Work delivery will take place.
- How will accessing additional services be of benefit to your Connect to Work participants?
- What challenges have they previously faced in engaging with these services?
- How will you ensure that coordinating access to these services will not detract from delivering IPS provision and that the provision you are offering stays aligned with the Supported Model for Employment?

Section 7: Organisational Compliance

The guidance provided in this section will help you to fulfil the scoring requirements for each scored question. Please ensure that the answers you provide as a minimum meet the bullet points listed for each.

Participant Journey Monitoring – please provide a short summary of your experience of capturing monitoring information and how these experiences will help you to meet the requirements of Connect to Work. (Scored question, 500 words max)

Please ensure that your answer includes the following information:

- That consideration has been given to the 5 stages of the Supported Employment Model and the types of information that will be collected at each.
- What is your approach to collecting and sharing potentially sensitive information?
- How will the information you collect help to show high fidelity (in line with Fidelity Assessment) and evidence that high quality provision is being provided?
- How will you ensure that you are compliant with GDPR and data protection legislation?
- How will the information you collect help to inform the impact of Connect to Work on residents and communities across the region?

Financial Monitoring – please describe the financial processes and controls your organisation has or will put in place to support the delivery of Connect to Work. (Scored question, 500 words max)

Please ensure that the following is included in your answer:

- What current financial systems does your organisation have in place and how will they support you to meet the financial requirements for this project?

• What experience (project/programme examples) do you have of providing financial monitoring, defrayal and evidence to satisfy funder requirements? • How will you ensure that all costs incurred will be evidenced throughout the lifetime of the project? • What skills, experience and qualifications do staff have that will be involved in the financial monitoring element of this programme? • Describe any internal audit functions within your organisation that will support with quality and compliance of financial monitoring and providing financial evidence for this programme.
<i>Please confirm using the list below that you can provide the financial information required to evidence spend on this project. (Information only)</i>
Please note, that this is not an exhaustive list. Should your application be successful, Better Connect will provide you with a comprehensive list of costs that can be claimed through this project.
<i>Connect to Work payments will be made quarterly in arrears. Is your organisation able to cash flow delivery in line with this payment model? (Information only)</i>
If successful, Better Connect will request to be paid monthly in arrears in line with our other York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority Funded programmes. There are no guarantees that this will be possible so it is very important that we ascertain which organisations would be able to make this funding model work.
<i>Project Management – Please detail the systems and resources you will use to achieve project goals and ensure that performance stays on track?</i>
Please include the following in your answer: • What systems do you have in place for measuring outputs and outcomes against profile? • How will you ensure that the ratio of 1:25 employment specialist/participant is always adhered to? • How will you ensure that you fully adhere to IPS fidelity scales? Please provide assurance that you are fully committed to engaging and co-operating with the Fidelity Assurance system • How would you identify and address project under performance? • What dedicated resource do you have for the management of this project?
Section 7: Declarations and Signature
Please read and confirm all the declaration statements and sign in the box indicated. It is important that the person completing this form has permission and is authorised to apply for this funding opportunity.

Deadline for applications: Thursday 6th November 2025, midnight.

To ensure transparency and fairness to all applicants, Better Connect will not answer any questions from individual applicants in relation to the scoring criteria. However, if you have any questions about your organisation's eligibility for the fund or any practical questions about completing the application form, please contact Emma Lyons, Head of Business Development by emailing elyons@betterconnect.org.uk

Please note: Better Connect cannot be held responsible for the accuracy or completeness of any submissions.

Applications received after this deadline will not be accepted.

Applications that are missing key information may not be accepted.

Please ensure your submission is sent prior to the deadline and is fully complete.

Embedded links will not be followed and any intended content will not be considered during the scoring process.

Applications received ahead of the deadline may be scored before– however this is not guaranteed.