

Working together to create career opportunities in West Cumbria

Friday 5 September, 2025

A new fund has been created to help people into employment in West Cumbria, thanks to a partnership of companies who work together to deliver major infrastructure projects at Sellafield.

The Programme and Project Partners (PPP) Social Impact Fund – managed by Cumbria Community Foundation, and funded by Kellogg Brown and Root Ltd, Amentum Clean Energy Ltd, Morgan Sindall Infrastructure, and Altrad Babcock Ltd – will provide grants to individuals and community groups.

The fund aims to enable access to educational and training activities that raise career aspirations; support individuals in becoming “work ready”; facilitate entry into meaningful employment; and remove barriers to employment and economic participation.

The first grant has been awarded, to Goodlives, a charity that runs training centres for adults facing long-term unemployment, social exclusion or poor mental health, in Cleator Moor and at West Lakes Science Park, near Whitehaven. A grant of £10,000 will go towards salary costs for a Project Trainer to provide support for adults to improve their skills and self-confidence and help with their job search.

The training centres run courses in areas such as food and nutrition, horticulture and customer service, equipping unemployed people with transferable skills to take into the world of work. Goodlives also offers help with CV writing, interview preparation and work experience placements.

Karen Jones, Managing Director of Goodlives, said: “Our project offers local, long term unemployed and ‘hard to reach’ benefit claimants the chance to learn new skills, build confidence and motivation.

“Many suffer from chronic lack of confidence, low self-worth usually brought about by a change in circumstances, generational unemployment, long term unemployment or lack of skills/ability. Additionally, the factors of rural isolation and limited, expensive local transport imprison this group.

“We also have younger people come to us for support with job hunting who may not face these additional challenges but are having difficulty securing employment.

“We stay in contact with people for up to six months after they have found a job as we find it can be a vulnerable time, making that transition into employment, especially if they haven’t worked before, or not for a long time. We help them overcome any issues that come their way – we want the positive move on to be a lasting one, not a short-lived success.

“We believe that everyone is capable of more than they realise – they just need a chance.”

Laura Doughty, Head of Strategy for Major Projects at Sellafield, said: “This fund is more than an investment in skills – it’s an investment in the future of West Cumbria. By working together, we’re helping people overcome barriers to employment and build meaningful careers. It’s about working with Sellafield to create lasting change in the communities we’re proud to be part of.

“This sits alongside PPP’s long-term commitment to extracting maximum social value from our supply chain – a consolidated, collaborative effort spanning 20 years. Together, these actions reflect our dedication to building a stronger, more inclusive West Cumbria for generations to come.”

The Programme and Project Partners (PPP) Social Impact Fund will prioritise projects that support unemployed people, particularly those facing complex barriers or living in areas of high deprivation.

Grants of up to £2,000 are available for individuals aged 18 and over, living in the former boroughs of Allerdale and Copeland. Applicants must have the backing of a recognised professional, such as a support worker or teaching professional.

Voluntary and community groups in the same areas can apply for up to £10,000 to deliver projects that improve employability and raise aspirations. Groups must demonstrate at least 50% match funding as part of their application.

Dr Jenny Benson, Director of Programmes & Partnerships at Cumbria Community Foundation, said:

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“We’re delighted to work with Partnership and Project Partners to ensure this funding reaches those who need it most. We know many people in West Cumbria face significant barriers to securing employment and are confident this new fund will provide practical support where it is most needed.

“Projects could include work-readiness programmes, such as CV writing and interview preparation, or vocational training courses.”

The PPP is a 20-year partnership established by Sellafield Ltd in 2019 to transform how major projects are delivered. The fund is supported by donations from Kellogg Brown and Root Ltd, Amentum Clean Energy Ltd, Morgan Sindall Infrastructure, and Altrad Babcock Ltd.

[Find out more about the fund.](#)

For further information, please contact the Grants Team on 01900 825760 or email grants@cumbriafoundation.org.

Cumbria Community Foundation gives around £7 million in grants a year to local charities and voluntary groups through over 100 grant making funds set up by generous businesses, individuals and families.

To find out more about setting up a fund and supporting those in need in Cumbria, contact Development Manager Caroline Adams on 01900 820825 or email caroline@cumbriafoundation.org.

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