

Rutland County Council: Rutland Skills Boost Grant Guidance

1. Introduction

This guidance outlines the criteria for the Rutland Skills Boost Grant, funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

A total of £90,000 has been assigned to the Rutland Skills Boost Grant, which is available for revenue expenditure only. This document provides the details of eligibility and criteria.

One of the key objectives within the Rutland Economic Strategy is **Skilled workers in quality local jobs**, through which we hope to ‘Grow lifelong learning, reskilling & apprenticeship opportunities, especially around future technology, digital and green skills.’

Rutland County Council are keen to provide local organisations the opportunity to invest in the skills they need, with this flexible grant fund.

This scheme is being funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, under the People and Skills Intervention, E38: *Support for local areas to fund local skills needs. This includes technical and vocational qualifications and courses up to level 2 and training for vocational licences relevant to local area needs and high-value qualifications where there is a need for additional skills capacity that is not being met through other provision.*

The objective of the scheme is: *Supporting local areas to fund gaps in local skills provision to support people to progress in work, and supplement local adult skills provision e.g. by providing additional volumes; delivering provision through wider range of routes or enabling more intensive/innovative provision, both qualification based and non-qualification based. This should be supplementary to provision available through national employment and skills programmes.*



Therefore, this scheme will enable organisations to apply for a grant that will address workforce skills shortages and training needs, including:

- Technical and vocational qualifications and courses up to Level 2.
- Training for vocational licences
- High-value qualifications where additional skills are needed but not met by mainstream funding.

2. Grant Amounts Available

- *Micro Business* (fewer than 10 employees): Maximum £3,000.
- *Small Business* (10-49 employees): Maximum £7,500.
- *Medium Business* (50-249 employees): Maximum £10,000.
- The minimum grant you can apply for is £1000

This grant can fund up to 100% of the training costs.

Applications will be conducted in rounds. The first round will close on Tuesday 7 January. If all funded is allocated in this round, no other rounds will open.

Eligible organisations can submit a maximum of two applications, with the second only considered after completing the first and if suitable funds are available. First applications will be a priority over those applying for a second application.

Applications from organisations that have **not** received funding from other projects funded from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will be a priority. However, if organisations have received other support through the UK Shared Prosperity Projects, they are still able to apply.

3. Grant Criteria

Projects that can be funded

Organisations can apply for a grant that will address local skills shortages and training needs, including:



- Technical and vocational qualifications up to Level 2.
- Technical and vocational courses.
- Training for vocational licences.
- High-value qualifications where additional skills are needed but not met by mainstream funding.

This includes:

- More intensive/innovative provision than currently available.
- Both qualifications based and non-qualification based courses.

Key conditions:

- All training and development must begin and be paid for by 28 February 2025
- The organisation must be based and operating within Rutland.
- Employees receiving training must predominantly work in Rutland and be aged 19 or over.
- Organisations at any stage can apply, but if the organisation is under 12 months old, they will need to provide a business plan (free support is available to produce this through NBV).
- All grants are one-off with no ongoing funding commitments.
- Applicants must clearly demonstrate how the training will meet local skills needs.
- The training is not required to be accredited courses but should be quality training that will meet a local skills need in Rutland.

If you are applying to provide training to organisation's/individuals in Rutland, additional key conditions include:

- Meeting the key conditions above.
- Evidence of the need for the training you wish to provide including the demand from Rutland organisation's.
- You can provide training for those in and out of work, but the scheme is unable to support projects/training for individuals who can access the training through the adult education budget or wrap around support provided by the Job Centre Plus/Department of Work and Pensions.



Applicants must demonstrate positive outcomes, such as:

- Addressing skills gaps – current and future
- Improving business performance
- Attracting and training up new staff members
- Enhancing staff satisfaction and retention
- Enabling staff promotion and pay increases
- Providing support for redundancy situations
- Gaining a competitive advantage in your field
- Securing new business opportunities
- Enabling the use of new technologies and systems

Key skills:

This grant is not limited to any specific sector or skills, but we have highlighted some key skills that the council would be keen to support:

- Green/net-zero
- Technical and digital including AI (artificial intelligence) and software development
- Sector specific skills
 - Tourism and hospitality
 - Professional and scientific
 - Manufacturing and engineering

What the Grant Cannot Be Used For:

- Capital costs
- Illegal activities
- Religious promotion
- VAT (if reclaimable)
- Lobbying or campaign groups
- Political activities
- Activities contrary to the Council's regulations
- Retrospective funding



- Courses that are fully funded activities by other government schemes – more information below.
- General organisational training. E.g. health and safety in the workplace, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Equality and Diversity, First Aid etc.
- Regular training you carry out for your staff as standard procedure.

Courses that are funded through other government schemes:

- Local Skill Bootcamps: <https://www.skillsforcareers.education.gov.uk/pages/training-choice/skills-bootcamp>
- Free courses for jobs: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/free-courses-for-jobs>
- Apprenticeships: <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/employers/explore-funding-options>
- Essential Skills: <https://www.skillsforcareers.education.gov.uk/pages/training-choice/essential-skills>

Your project may be eligible if you plan to deliver/procure a similar course to one that is already funded, but require it to be face-to-face, shorter in duration, more specific in focus, or with a more intensive or innovative delivery approach.

Organisational Requirements

The following organisations can apply:

- Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)
- Social Enterprises (e.g., CICs)
- Public Sector Organisations (for resident or student benefit, not routine business activity)
- Registered charities
- Parish and Town Councils
- Schools or Academies (for wider resident/student benefit)

Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Registration with HMRC, Companies House, or other relevant bodies
- UK-based bank account in the organisation's name
- Safeguarding policies (where relevant)
- Appropriate insurance (e.g., Public Liability Insurance)
- Businesses that are in administration, insolvent or where a striking-off notice has been made, are not eligible for funding under this scheme.
- The Local Authority must confirm with the business that in accepting the grant, the business confirms that it is eligible and where they no longer meet the eligibility criteria, they will be required to contact the Council.
- Not reached subsidy limit. A public authority can choose to give a subsidy of less than £315,000 as 'minimal financial assistance' (MFA) subsidy. No enterprise or group of enterprises under common control can receive more than £315,000 of MFA subsidy from any source or for any purpose within a three-year period. Businesses that have already received grant payments equivalent to the maximum allowable government or public subsidy levels will not qualify for additional funding. Hence, businesses will need to disclose any grants they have previously received in their application (Minimal Financial Declaration).

Application Process

Step 1: Review criteria

Firstly, organisations should review the criteria of the grant scheme to understand if both the project and organisation are eligible. Applicants should review and prepare for the application form questions, and the documents required.

Step 2: Application Form

Once your project is ready, you should complete an Application Form, which requires detailed information on the proposed training, impact, and a financial breakdown.

Organisations will be required to submit evidence via email within 1 working day after submitting their application.

Step 3: Eligibility review

Your application will be assessed to check it meets the eligibility criteria. If more information or clarification is required, someone will get in touch. If your project is not eligible, your application will be rejected. If it seems to meet the criteria, your application will be progressed to the next stage.

Step 4: Panel review

Applications will then be reviewed by the grant panel.

Step 5: Grant decision

After the panel review, applicants will be notified of the decision. If your application is successful, you will be sent a grant offer letter. After signing the letter, applicants can progress with their project.

Step 6: Grant payments

Grants will be paid in arrears. Payments must be made and evidence submitted by 28 February 2025.

Application deadlines: Applications for the grant closes on Tuesday 7 January 2025. These will go to the grant panel in early January for approval.

Grant Funding Agreement

If awarded a grant, a formal Grant Funding Agreement will be drawn up between the council and your organisation. No spending should begin until the agreement is signed.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Successful applicants must complete an end-of-project evaluation. This helps demonstrate the value of public funding and identify successes or challenges. The council will work with applicants to:

- Show how the funding positively impacted the organisation and individuals



- Verify the training or development took place as planned
- Collect feedback (including photographs, surveys, and publicity)
- Ensure inclusion and accessibility

Disclaimers

Rutland County Council reserves the right to modify the terms of this scheme. We will make every effort to inform organisations that have registered their interest with the Council of any such changes.

The Council also reserves the right to pause applications to this grant scheme to evaluate the programme and implement any necessary changes. We will make every effort to inform organisations that have registered their interest with the Council of any such changes.

Finances: Any grant awarded will be paid in arrears. If the outcomes are not achieved to the satisfaction of the grants team, the Council reserves the right to reconsider the final amount of funding based on the project's outcomes.

Tax: Any grant received may be subject to tax, and organisations may wish to consult HM Revenue and Customs or a qualified independent financial advisor.

Publicity: Any organisation receiving a grant must agree to publicly acknowledge receipt of the grant and participate in any publicity or promotional activities associated with the funding. Additionally, they must agree to participate in any monitoring and reporting required by the Council, whether specified in the grant approval notification or not.

Information: Personal data supplied on the application form and any supporting documentation will be held on our systems and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The information provided will be used for statistical analysis, management planning, and service provision by the Council. Grants are subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and information about grants may be shared upon request under this Act.

Fraud: The application administrator will perform anti-fraud assessments, including comprehensive reviews of each application and grant issued. If any applicant is found to have falsified records to secure grant money, they will be subject to prosecution. Additionally, any funds granted under false pretences or by mistake will be reclaimed.