



North of Tyne Community Led Local Development

Quarterly Progress Report

Grant Recipient:	The Recruitment Junction	
Project Name:	Ex-offenders Employment Programme	
Project Number:	R4-ESF-1015	
Period covered by this Report:	From: 1/10/21	To: 31/12/21

This progress report must contain suitable commentary on the performance and progress of the project to date and the planned activity going forward. This should provide sufficient detail to demonstrate successful delivery of the activities and outputs and if there is any slippage of performance, measures being put in place to bring the project back on track.

1. PROGRESS

Activities – Please explain what activities you carried out this quarter. This should relate back to your plans as explained in the Application Form. If there have been any delays or issues encountered in the period, these should be detailed along with measures to address them.

Each candidate enrolled has received the core assistance of a reworked CV and disclosure letter, and all who wished to attend training did so. Groupwork has still not started, due to caution around Covid.

In 2021, 20 unique inward referral agencies have sent us candidates– police/probation/3rd sector referring charities/job centres/welfare-to-work providers/recovery workers.

Across all projects, we have fully engaged with 165 candidates, placed 100 into paid work and observed re-offending rates of only 2%.

We expanded our network of employers who will take on people with convictions, with 17 new organisations hiring our candidates for the first time between October – December 2021:

[REDACTED]

Are there any case studies / best practice examples / achievements that you are especially proud of this quarter and you would like to share with us?

[REDACTED]

Financial Performance – Please explain project's performance in terms of actual expenditure against the profiled values contained in the Grant Agreement. Consideration should also be given to whether the project is still on track and to budget. Any expenditure slippage should be explained and justified with plans outlined on how the slippage will be addressed. Any potential overspend / underspend in the overall project budget or a request to re-profile expenditure should be flagged up here.

Outputs - Please report on the actual achievement of targets against the profile outlined within the Grant Agreement. Identify any specific issues encountered relating to measuring or evidencing the targets. Variances from the contracted profiles i.e. 'slippage' must be explained and detail provided of remedial measures to bring things back on track. Any request to re-profile project outputs should be outlined here. If you are collecting any additional outputs, please report on them here as well.

16 candidates enrolled onto the programme in the period October to December 2021, total 46 to date (expectation 72 in 9 months). The earlier lag is starting to catch up, but we do not expect to fully catch up on ourselves before at least the end of Q4.

We signed a contract with the [REDACTED] to send referrals directly from the [REDACTED], starting June. As noted, this only took effect from September. To date they have only referred 7 candidates (expectation 50 referrals).

Our renewal contract with [REDACTED] was due to start in June. As noted, it was only live from the end of August. By this stage we have received 58 referrals (expectation 63 referrals).

Combined, this is a shortfall of 48 referrals against expectation.

Match Funding – Please report on the match funding received during this quarter. Any potential changes to the funding package should also be detailed.

Match Funder	Contracted Value (£)	Match Funding received Q1 (£)	Match Funding received Q2 (£)	Match Funding received Q3 (£)
DWP				
Private donors				
Junction 42				
Vardy Foundation				
Watson Family Trust				
Total:				

All match funding is on track, and in some cases, such as [REDACTED] and private donors, running ahead of expectations as at this stage. We have a high degree of confidence that all necessary match funding will be received by the close of the project.

Equal Opportunities & Sustainable Development – Please report on the project's contribution to these cross-cutting themes in particular where there are specific project objectives relating to these themes or where the project considers it has exceeded standards.

Our entire beneficiary group consists of a highly marginalised and discriminated against group, but one which does not benefit from any legal protections against discrimination. We are confident our activities have contributed greatly towards enabling this group to access the same opportunities as the rest of society.

2. PLANNED ACTIVITY

Please report on key activities that are planned for the next quarter including any key dates or events.

Future events planned:

With funding from [REDACTED], we will be running a number of employer, and candidate, online training events around offence disclosure, and appropriately interviewing/hiring ex-offenders, until September 2022.

Joining the newly created “Employer Board” of HMP Northumberland, created at the request of [REDACTED], to better foster employment links through the gate and into work.

Member of the inaugural “Members Panel” of the criminal justice system infrastructure body Clinks, better fostering joint working across the sector.

Past activity:

All 5 front line staff qualified as Mental Health First Aiders.

Hosted 2 x “Theory of Change” round-tables in October / November to look at improved partnership working between HMP Low Newton (ladies) and HMP Northumberland (men), Probation, Police, DWP and the 3rd Sector, including 7 x women and 7 x men with lived experience of the criminal justice system.

Delivered 60+ Christmas hampers to current ex-offender job seekers and those recently placed into work, in early December.

3. PROJECT ISSUES AND CHANGES

If not covered previously, please report on any issues or significant changes to the project that will have impact upon the plan of activities, outputs and budget. If applicable, the project change request form may need to be completed in addition to this Quarterly Progress Report.

As discussed in recent email correspondence with [REDACTED], the project has suffered in the initial months from a low level of referrals by our partners, and we may need to consider submitting a Project Change Request over the coming months to request an extension to the project close date. All staff have however been fully engaged on the project, prospecting potential employers and working intensively with the current cohort of referred candidates.

4. STATE AID

Please confirm if the project has maintained its ‘no aid’ model this quarter (= support provided only to individuals and not to businesses).

We confirm that the state aid status of the project has not changed.

5. PUBLICITY

Please report on any publicity activity that has taken place this quarter. This may include publicity

material, leaflets, banners or stationery and any press releases, newspaper articles or publicity events – please submit evidence where available.