

Skills for Growth: A Call for Proposals

Introduction

The purpose of this call definition document is to provide potential applicants with the information needed to submit proposals to the North of Tyne Combined Authority's (NTCA's) Skills for Growth funding call.

This call is a part of NTCA's Skills for Growth Programme, and it seeks to bring forward proposals under two funding Lots, which are set out in section 2. Applicants are encouraged to pay close attention to these funding lots as set out in the body of this Call document, including specific requirements and priorities and should make a judgement on the relative suitability of each funding lot, in relation to the specific activities proposed.

1. Background & Strategic Context

NTCA Cabinet has allocated £5m of NTCA funding to support Skills for Growth to ensure that NTCA funding for innovation and targeted sectoral investment is underpinned by development of the skills and talent pipeline.

The impact of COVID-19 has altered the economic and skills landscape and will create new skills and transition challenges. But our key principle of 'employer-ownership of skills' remains.

Our approach for Skills for Growth seeks to stimulate innovation in both the supply and demand for skills; this includes the skills pipeline and innovation in provision, and support that is required to support both job transition and job creation in key sectors. While complex, this local knitting together of skills supply and demand - and being a catalyst for innovation - is a key role of devolution and wider regional flexibility: incumbent in this is recognising that the future of skills will need to look different from the past.

Investment Context

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to an economic shock that is unprecedented in its size and rapidity of impact - we are starting to see the economic effects of the crisis realised. The pandemic has exacerbated existing high levels of youth and adult worklessness and impacted 97% of our businesses - a significant proportion of our residents are reliant on employment in sectors most impacted such as retail, culture, leisure, and tourism.

Two major events - Brexit and COVID-19 - will have a significant impact on the economic, workforce, and skills profile of our area for years to come. While it is difficult to accurately predict the ultimate impact of these; in the near term, the need to ensure our residents have the right skills to get a good job and progress in work, and that employers have access to an adaptable, resilient and skilled local workforce has never been greater.

The economic impact of COVID-19 is structurally changing the economy and as a result COVID recovery may present in places as more pressing need for skills and labour 'transitioning' within the workforce. There is a need for rapid skills transitions (e.g. where there is a clear evidence of recruitment demand and jobs growth hindered by skills availability) and more proactive or pre-emptive interventions designed to pave the way towards the future of work.

Our approach is deliberately x-sector – boosting growth opportunities through innovation and targeted investment – whilst also building a skills pipeline – this remains as critical post-COVID as it was prior to it. This Call is the first phase of our ongoing work to articulate the skills needs of the area and key sectors through recovery - underpinned by strong employer engagement in our approach and in co-designing innovative provision to meet the future needs of employers and residents.

The NTCA Skills for Growth investment - as a part of the wider funding landscape including the Devolved Adult Education Budget, Apprenticeships, and other mainstream skills funding can add greatest value where there is greatest alignment to our strategic priorities. These include a just and inclusive transition to net zero and a digital economy; addressing gender imbalances in key sectors; and, securing the talent pipeline for emerging major economic opportunities resulting from our key investment programs.

Strategic Skills Context

NTCA's Skills for Growth investment is expected to **principally** focus support on the higher-level skills interventions that are likely to have the greatest impact in terms of addressing sectoral and technical skills deficits, re-training needs and supporting recovery and growth.

The wider mainstream funded skills system provides significant statutory entitlement and capacity at or below level 3, which includes significant pre-employment pathways. Some gaps may exist for Level 2 and 3 skills where they provide a clear pathway to higher level skills **and** are not funded by mainstream provision **and** are overcoming a clear barrier to short term job creation identified by employers.

In line with the government's recent Skills White Paper we aim to place employers at the heart of defining our local skills needs. Employers working collaboratively with skills providers so that education and training leads to jobs that can improve productivity and fill skills gaps. Wider local stakeholders will also be critical - aligning NTCA investment alongside other funding streams and activity to ensure we complement, rather than duplicate the wider learning experiences and opportunities

aimed at supporting our residents (such as the Adult Education Budget, Sector-based Work Academy Programmes & Apprenticeships).

Skills for Growth will ultimately contribute to delivering NTCA's skills priorities as set out in our latest **Strategic Skills Plan**¹.

Skills Supply and Demand

To support NTCA's vision of a more social and inclusive economy, our region requires a skills infrastructure that is fully informed by and responsive to sectors with labour and skills shortages and planned growth in our economy, both current and projected.

The skills system has a key role to play in meeting our region's economic and social challenges, developments such as withdrawal from the EU, rapid technological change and population ageing all demand a prompt and effective response.

Longer-term, underlying economic challenges post COVID-19 remain important and the Skills Sector in the NTCA area has a key role to play. For example, in meeting demand from employers, supporting progression to the growing number of higher skilled jobs, tackling persistent skill shortages, and ensuring that everyone has basic digital skills.

Activity through this Call should prioritise activity where there are failures of supply and/or demand within the current system.

Skills Shortages

Pre-COVID, skills shortages impacted on our region's productivity and success - demonstrated by the most recent Employer Skills Survey (ESS) (DfE 2019) - which suggested employers in our region were reporting difficulties in filling vacancies – for technical skills roles in particular there was a lack of candidates with appropriate qualifications and experience. We suspect that skills shortages in particular areas will remain, though post COVID entry level skills will be more available, largely due to increased unemployment.

Employers in the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP) area cited 30% of vacancies were hard to fill due to a low number of applicants with the required skills and 19% of hard to fill vacancies were due to a lack of work experience that the company demands. Skills shortage vacancies (SSV's) vary across sectors, in the NE LEP SSV density (the proportion of vacancies which were skills shortage vacancies) was highest in Construction and Manufacturing (48%), with reported SSV's in Manufacturing increasing by 11 percentage points on the 2017 ESS survey.

These findings suggest the need to develop the skills of our residents who may be employed in low paid, low skilled occupations as well as provide higher level technical skills to meet skills shortages in our key sectors. More needs to be done to ensure individuals in our area are developing the skills required by employers and gaining the valuable work experience employer's demand. Truly embedding the connection

¹ <https://www.northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/projects/adult-education-budget-devolution/>

between education and industry will enable the skills gaps to close – as will NTCA deploying its resources to support skills in a targeted and coordinated way.

Skills Needs of Key Sectors

NTCA's key sectors have the potential to underpin our economic recovery and offer employment opportunities and significant productivity and economic growth well into the future. Our key sectors have some distinct skills needs – forming a part of a dynamic economy that includes:

i. A fast-growing tech and digital sector

Across the NTCA area there is evidence of a strong, diverse, and inter-connected digital sector that is leading the way in developing and applying new technologies and data analytics capability. Digital skills are becoming near-universal requirements for all employment, regardless of sector² – with the move up the career ladder from low to high-skill jobs accompanied by increased demand for specific digital skills.

To maximise chances of success in the digital economy, job seekers must go beyond baseline digital skills and develop more specific skills. Businesses in the sector continue to report that they face skills shortages. In addition, these specific digital skills are not solely required in the tech sector but are in demand across all sectors of the economy.

This may include digital tools such as Adobe Photoshop for designers; computer-aided design for engineers and manufacturing workers; customer relationship management software for sales and marketing professionals; and computer programming and networking for IT professionals. These specific digital skills are required in 28% of low-skill jobs, 56% of middle-skill jobs, and 68% of high-skill jobs³.

ii. A Green Economy

The green economy is defined as one in which value and growth are maximised across the whole economy, while natural assets are managed sustainably.

Such an economy would be supported and enabled by a thriving low carbon and environmental goods and services sector. The low carbon economy is predicted to grow four times faster than the rest of the economy over this decade⁴, the transition to this green economy provides a real opportunity for driving the economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis in the NTCA area.

Sectors will see a change in the profile of skills required and a significant potential to deliver new jobs. Research by the Local Government Association has shown that in the North, where many workers are specialised in power generation, storage and low

² Source: [No Longer Optional: Employer Demand for Digital Skills | UK \(burning-glass.com\)](#)

³ Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/employer-skills-survey-2019-england-results>

⁴ Source: Aldersgate Group - UPSKILLING THE UK WORKFORCE FOR THE 21ST CENTURY <https://www.aldersgategroup.org.uk/asset/1702>

carbon technology and processes, the wind, nuclear, hydrogen and Carbon Capture and Storage industries could create over 84,000 potential jobs by 2050⁵. There is also huge potential for job creation in the low carbon transition in other sectors of the economy including buildings, energy, manufacturing, transport, and ICT.

These jobs will require a diverse range of skills and expertise to support the production and deployment of clean technologies. Some of these jobs could involve installing heat pumps, manufacturing wind turbines, engineers with renewable energy skills and installers of EV charge points. The transition to a green economy requires a workforce with the right skills. This includes not only skills in the low carbon and environmental goods and services sector, but also those needed to help all businesses use natural resources efficiently and sustainably and to be resilient to climate change. Skills gaps are already recognised as a major bottleneck in a number of these sectors, such as renewable energy, energy and resource efficiency, renovation of buildings, construction, environmental services, and manufacturing.

iii. A Healthy Ageing Economy

The Healthy Ageing Economy is growing and transforming society. Rather than fixating on the fiscal costs related to demographic ageing there is an increased focus on the considerable economic opportunities associated with our growing older population⁶.

Skills is an essential component in unlocking the significant social and economic potential of our ageing and longevity economy. Activity is required to support start-up businesses and entrepreneurs to innovate to serve the evolving tastes and consumer preferences of our older generation and the need to transform public services and models of delivery.

Also, training is required to support our rapidly ageing workforce; people aged 50 and over are working longer than ever before, generating a growing share of earned income. Skills providers can support employers to retain older workers and utilise their extensive experience and talents. Finally, the skills sector can also help older people to overcome barriers to gaining employment, increasing qualification levels, and providing employability support. This includes ensuring our older population can adapt to digitalisation and benefit from the many employment and social opportunities that digital skills provide.

iv. Culture, Creative and Tourism Sector

The North of Tyne has a unique city, coast and country offer and boasts key assets in the cultural, creative and tourism sectors.

⁵ Source: Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (October 2017) *Clean Growth Strategy*; Local Government Association (June 2020) *Local green jobs – accelerating a sustainable economic recovery*

⁶ [Maximising the longevity dividend - ILCUK](#)

The COVID-19 crisis has had a significant impact on these sectors due to the sudden and massive loss of income generating opportunities, especially for more fragile businesses. At the same time, the importance of culture, creativity and tourism for society has become even more clear for our mental health and wellbeing.

The reinvigoration of the events and cultural / creative offer is a priority for NTCA, our environment and heritage are key economic key assets and we recognise the role that the creative industries and the visitor economy play in driving economic growth and job creation across the region.

Skills investment in this sector is crucial to develop more resilient freelancers, businesses and organisations as well as ensuring our residents have access to the many employment opportunities in this sector.

2. Funding Lots.

Proposals are sought against **two funding Lots**. Applicants should satisfy themselves that they understand the administrative requirements of each funding regime before applying.

LOT 1: UK Community Renewal Fund (UK CRF)

The £220 million UK Community Renewal Fund (UKCRF) was launched alongside the Budget2021. Funding will be allocated competitively following the submission of bids by the 'lead applicant' of up to £3m 'per place' – £9m in total across the 3 NTCA authorities – while North Tyneside has not been deemed a 'priority place' through this fund, proposals will still be submitted covering this area.

NTCA is the Lead Applicant for the NTCA area and is inviting proposals that would be suitable for UK CRF through this funding call.

NTCA must submit bids to Government for this funding by Friday 18 June, and projects are to be complete by March 2022. Funding available is 90% revenue and 10% capital.

Bids to this lot should be in-line with the funding priorities set out in this call document, the NTCA's Community Renewal Fund Prospectus⁷ and should be developed in line with the guidance⁸ set out by Government. Only proposals with a major focus on skills will be considered through this call – proposals related to other funding priorities within the UK CRF will be invited separately.

Funding rules set by Government will be used to administer projects funded through the UK Community Renewal Fund⁹.

⁷ <https://www.northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/support/funding-opportunities/>

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus>

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus>

LOT 2: Match Funding against European Social Fund (ESF)

An ESF funding call has been launched by the Department for Work and Pensions with a closing date for applications to be received by DWP of 31st May 2021¹⁰. Up to £11.25m of ESF funding is available for the NE LEP area, excluding Durham, to support c.11,485 individuals – projects can run up to 31st December 2023.

The funding is available under ESF priority 2.1 – which focusses on Recovery and Renewal and Skills for Growth. The funding call sets out the following target groups:

- Existing Staff who need to upgrade their skillsets to remain competitive in the labour market
- People made redundant & furloughed staff
- The Self-Employed Workforce

Examples of activities set out in the ESF funding call include:

- skills shortages or needs in sectors or local areas, which are not currently being addressed by employers or individuals.
- leadership and management training in Small and Medium size Enterprises (up to 250 employees).
- training and support for people at all levels, in particular addressing the needs of disadvantaged groups in and out of the workplace.
- access to learning; information about learning and skills.
- brokerage of opportunities between learners and employers.

ESF funding is available for **50%** of the eligible project costs. The minimum size of application to this fund has been set by DWP as £5.6m (£2.8m ESF; £2.8m match funding).

NTCA is inviting proposals for match funding against this ESF Funding Call **for activity to be delivered in the North of Tyne area**. Due to the minimum values placed on the Call by DWP we would expect larger consortia applications to be required to access this funding.

Proposals submitted to this lot should address the principles and priorities set out in this document and demonstrate why ESF funding is a good fit for the activity proposed, that the match funding request of NTCA has been minimised and that the proposed activity delivers added value for NTCA residents and businesses.

NTCA expects to support *up to 2* projects under this LOT. As any NTCA funding awarded under this lot would be contributing to a project Funded by the European Union/European Social Fund, projects will be required to adhere to the relevant EU rules and compliance regimes in addition to NTCA's Conditions of Funding.

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/european-structural-investment-funds/recovery-and-renewal-skills-for-growth-north-east-oc25s21p1823>

3. Call Details: Overarching Principles, Funding Priorities & Focus

This funding call presents an opportunity for a range of organisations and partnerships to come forward with ideas for projects, collaborations and proposals for co-investment with the potential to have a strategic and significant impact on the skills landscape in the North of Tyne area, and the immediate and longer term performance of our economy and businesses.

The Overarching Principles for this call are that proposals submitted under any of the three funding lots should be:

- Evidence led and clearly demonstrate need, complementarity to existing support/investment, and strong strategic fit with local and national policy objectives.
- Innovative or novel in approach and show significant ambition.
- Collaborative, partnership based and, where possible, business led or backed. This might, for example, include formalised consortia approaches where appropriate.
- adding value to a wide range of other support and not duplicating existing activity.
- leveraging other funding where possible.
- flexible to adapt not only to changing circumstances and environments but also to evolving national government support and the changing needs of the economy.
- consistent with wider NTCA values, including around a Social and inclusive economy and sustainability objectives.

Proposals under either of the Lots should specifically enable:

- skills activity that is explicitly **employer-led** and co-invested in by businesses.
- rapid prototyping and innovation in skills provision with sectors and businesses.
- Proactive approaches to addressing evidenced gaps. With clear additionality and alignment with other NTCA projects and programmes and wider Government funding including Youth Employment Partnerships, Kickstart, Employability and Skills Programme Phase 1, and Adult Education Budget (including Lifetime Skills Guarantee and SWOP's).
- rapid skills transitions – directly responding to the demands of COVID recovery.
- a focus on 'just transitions' which means ensuring increased opportunities for learning and skills to prepare workers for the transition required due to economic changes as a result of environmental or other priorities – providing

a clear pathway to new jobs for residents engaged in (e.g.) at risk carbon intensive industries.

- an evidence base to support the longer-term view of sector skills needs.

Specific Funding Priorities

Any proposals submitted should clearly contribute to one or more of the following NTCA priorities:

1. **Workforce Retraining** – including support for:
 - Supporting a just transition for the workforce to a lower carbon economy.
 - Post-furlough re-training support (response to redundancy)
2. **Skills for Business Growth** – supporting the skills needs and pipeline of companies locating and growing in the North of Tyne.
3. **Skills for Business Resilience** – programmes including digital skills; automation; and responses to post-Brexit skills needs.
4. **Innovative employer led skills provision** – including non-regulated learning and approaches to address the high-level and technical skills needs of key sectors.
5. **Improved approaches to apprenticeship participation** – including approaches that increase SME ability to offer apprenticeships in key sectors.

The following are examples of **outcomes** that the NTCA expects as a result of activity funded through this call:

- the primary intent of the investment will be to directly fund qualifications for residents of North of Tyne – therefore significant outputs in relation to qualifications and employment gained (or safeguarded or progression secured) are expected.
- A small proportion of activity (~<20%) could relate to improvements in the responsiveness or quality of the skills system in North of Tyne and therefore have limited direct outputs using NTCA standard definitions. Should business cases for this type of activity come forward they will be expected to clearly articulate their rationale, impact, and value for money.

Outputs

For Lot 1 UK CRF: Outputs for this lot should be in line with published Government guidance¹¹

For Lot 2: Proposals should deliver against several of the following NTCA Outputs and performance Indicators¹²:

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus>

¹² <https://www.northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/North-of-Tyne-Combined-Authority-Outputs-Guidance.pdf>

- 007 – Number of residents Supported
- 008 – Participants in Education/Training upon leaving
- 009 – Participants in employment/self-employment upon leaving
- 012 – Participants gaining level 3 qualification and above
- 015 – Number of apprenticeship/traineeship opportunities achieved
- 005 – Number of enterprises receiving support
- 003 – Direct Jobs Safeguarded
- Any Relevant ESF Output and Result Indicators

A full list of all NTCA Outputs and associated guidance is included with the project proposal form.

Summary of Call Parameters

<p>Funding Priorities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workforce Retraining – including support for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just transitions to low carbon economy • Post furlough re-training support (response to redundancy) 2. Skills for Business Growth – supporting the skills needs and pipeline of companies locating and growing in the North of Tyne. 3. Skills for Business Resilience – programmes including digital skills; automation; and responses to post-Brexit skills needs. 4. Innovative employer led skills provision – including non-regulated learning and approaches to address the high-level and technical skills needs of key sectors. 5. Improved approaches to apprenticeship participation – including approaches that increase SME ability to offer apprenticeships in key sectors.
<p>Focus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • projects should be cross-geography. • projects should be expected to demonstrate demand and that mainstream funding is not being displaced by the activity. • a predominant focus on higher level skills – but including Level 2 and 3 skills where they provide a clear pathway to higher level skills and are not funded by mainstream provision and are overcoming a clear barrier to short term job creation identified by employers. • activity including ‘traditional’ and ‘transitioning’ qualifications including non-regulated learning; industry led training and industry partnerships.
<p>Dates</p>	<p>The first stage EOI Skills for Growth Call will open w/c 29th March.</p> <p>LOT 1 and 2 Deadline: To enable applicants to meet the deadline for ESF applications set by DWP and UKCRF applications set by Government, expressions of interest seeking either of these funding sources will close on 7th May to allow assessment of EOIs and a decision on any in-principle funding offers to be taken at NTCA Investment Panel in June 2021.</p>

Indicative Fund Allocation:	<p>NTCA has agreed a budget of up to £5m from its Investment Fund to support Skills for Growth – this is in addition to funding that may be available from Government through the UK Community Renewal Fund.</p> <p>NTCA intends to select multiple projects though may not allocate all of the available funding through this call. The total funding available is inclusive of any fund administration costs which should be costed into the overall programme budget at a flat rate of 15%.</p> <p>NTCA reserves the right to decrease or increase the indicative budget allocation or support more or fewer proposals, subject to the volume and quality of proposals received. NTCA does not provide any guarantees of funding and all proposals developed are at the applicant's own risk.</p>
Added Value	<p>Applicants are expected to submit proposals which demonstrate impact and additionality. NTCA funding is not intended to replace existing funding.</p>
Minimum Application Values and project durations	<p>Lot 1 = Minimum project value of £500k – as per Government Guidance. All activity and spend must be complete by 31st March 2022.</p> <p>Lot 2 = No minimum value of NTCA investment – though projects must be able to meet or exceed the minimum Project Value set by DWP of £5.6m (£2.6m ESF) and NTCA will require proposals to be submitted to it by the lead applicant for the ESF funding. All activity and spend must be complete by the end date of the European programme.</p>
Geographical Scope	<p>All interventions should be focused on activity within the North of Tyne area – where applications under Lot 2 cover the LEP wide geography NTCA funding and outputs must be clearly articulated and be able to be demonstrated separately for monitoring and compliance purposes.</p>
Deadlines	<p>For this call, applications will be assessed within each lot following the published deadline for that specific lot. Applications for either Lot received after the published deadline will not be considered.</p>
Application selection	<p>Applications for Lot 1 – UK Community Renewal Fund will be assessed in line with Governments published assessment criteria¹³.</p> <p>Applications for Lots 2 will be scored in line with the NTCA assessment criteria set out in section 5 and Appendix 1.</p>

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-community-renewal-fund-prospectus>

Eligible match funding	Proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they will maximise value for money and leverage against NTCA investment. This includes demonstrating that the funding requested is the minimum required; and that opportunities for match funding have been maximised including through public and private sources.
Procurement	All procurement must be undertaken in line with UK regulations or where European Funding is included European and UK Regulations.
Eligible Applicants	Applicants must be legally constituted at the point of signing a Funding Agreement and be able to enter into a legally binding Funding Agreement. The Applicant will be the organisation that, if the application is successful, enters a contract with the NTCA and therefore carries the liability for ensuring that the terms of the Funding Agreement are met by them and to all delivery partners.
Desired Impact	The primary intent of the investment will be to directly fund qualifications for residents of North of Tyne – therefore significant outputs in relation to qualifications and employment gained (or safeguarded or progression secured) are expected.

4. Submission of Proposals

Application forms for each lot are available on the NTCA website, or by emailing CRF@northoftyne-ca.gov.uk

If possible, it would be useful to provide further **complementary detail or supporting evidence as appropriate including:**

- Letters of support
- A description of your organisation, its structure and the biography of key team members.
- The organisation's knowledge of the needs of the Key Sectors in the North of Tyne or strategic value that can be added as a result of regional, national or international experience, expertise and track record.
- Relevant performance information and relevant examples of past performance and impact.

Queries from applicants should be sent to CRF@northoftyne-ca.gov.uk. Applicants should be aware that queries may be anonymised and responded to publicly through a Q&A Log on the NTCA website.

Please consider the following strategic documents that may help you with your application.

- [North of Tyne Economic Vision](#);
- [North of Tyne Inclusive Economy Statement](#);

- [North East Strategic Economic Plan](#)
- [North East COVID-19 Economic Response: Our work so far and next steps Report](#)
- [NTCA's Strategic Skills Plan and Adult Education Budget funded activities](#)

Completed applications should be sent to CRF@northoftyne-ca.gov.uk by the deadline. Before doing so, please ensure that you have followed the guidance, completed all questions and entered an electronic signature.

5. Assessment & Selection Process

Lot 1 – UK CRF

Applications for UK CRF will be assessed through a single stage process in-line with Government and NTCA Guidance.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/970059/UKCRF_Assessment_Criteria.pdf

And NTCA's UKCRF Prospectus <https://www.northoftyne-ca.gov.uk/support/funding-opportunities/>

Lot 2 – Match Funding for European Social Fund (ESF)

Lot 2 will be developed through a two-stage process. Expression of Interest and Full Business Case.

First stage Expressions of Interest should be submitted on the form provided and will be scored against the following criteria. Applicants should note that, in line with the overarching principles of the call, strategic fit and delivery of desired outcomes criteria are **pass/fail**.

Criteria	Consideration	Available marks
Strategic Fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed fit with NTCA Economic Vision, Inclusive Economy Statement and call focus area. • The proposal is effective and will lead to innovation in the local digital ecosystem or significant sector growth; and • The proposal is developed in adherence with the overarching principles for the call and where appropriate evidence is provided in relation to stakeholder support, value added, etc. 	Pass (10-15) or Fail
Delivery of desired outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of clear knowledge of the Digital and Tech sector in the North if Tyne and its specific needs; and 	Pass (7-15) or Fail

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear alignment of proposals with the outcomes set out in the call document. 	
Value for Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The value for money associated with proposals. 	5
Intensity of Grant Request	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall proportion of funding requested from the NTCA as a proportion of total eligible project costs (intensity of grant request) will be assessed. • Projects requesting a lower proportion of funding from the NTCA will score more highly. • Project requesting more than 80% of total funding from the NTCA will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and at the discretion of NTCA Investment Panel; and • Projects requesting higher intervention rates will be required to fully justify the proportion of funding requested from NTCA if invited to submit a full application. 	5
Status of Match Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The degree to which match funding that is confirmed will be assessed. 	5
Subsidy Control Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State aid risk will be established through an assessment of the applicant's understanding of the relevant state aid considerations and solutions and the degree to which they have taken and provided evidence of appropriate legal/professional advice. 	5
Deliverability risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust assessment of deliverability, capacity and risks. Clear explanation of delivery routes, timeframes, and key milestones. Strong arrangements for local transparency, and accountability, monitoring and evaluation. • Ability to deploy the funding within the timeframe set and to implement at pace; and • Evidence of partnership strength, commitment (as appropriate) and strategic backing. 	15
Inclusive Economy Fit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Robust assessment of the inclusive economy implications of proposals and the ability of the project to make a proactive and targeted impact on the inclusive economy ambitions of the NTCA and to have a positive impact on residents. 	10

Project proposals will be scored against the selection criteria in this document. Scoring will be undertaken by a panel made up of Officers of the NTCA and other relevant external members. Clarifications may be sought by NTCA throughout the assessment process.

Strategic fit and project deliverable criteria are Pass/Fail, as indicated in the scoring guidance and matrix.

Following this, project proposals that pass both pass/fail criteria and have a scored a minimum of 46 points out of 75 will be considered by the NTCA Investment Panel. If the combined value of projects meeting this threshold exceeds the funding available, the NTCA Investment Panel will have sole discretion to decide which proposals are invited to submit a Full Business Case. Acceptance of a project proposal to progress to full business case stage does not in any way indicate or constitute an offer of grant from NTCA.

Each Full Business Case submitted following a successful first stage Expression of Interest will be processed in line with the NTCA's Assurance Framework and will be appraised against the HM Treasury 'five case' model and NTCA's additional Inclusive Economy Case prior to being considered for approval by NTCA's Technical Officers Group and Investment Panel and NTCA Cabinet.

Projects which fail to secure support at the Full Business Case stage will be considered as a part of NTCA's longer-term pipeline in preparation for other sources of funding.

NTCA may enter into dialogue with applicants and seek clarification at any point in the application process. This may result in revisions to propositions between the first stage expression of interest and the Full Application and potentially lead to proposals being changed, withdrawn, or combined with the of proposals submitted by other applicants in a new partnership arrangement.

NOTE: a detailed scoring Matrix for lot 2 is provided at Appendix 1.

6. Subsidy Control

Following the UK's departure from the European Union on 31st December 2020, a new subsidy control regime is now in place. As such, NTCA require all applicants for funding to seek advice setting out how projects are compliant with the new UK Subsidy regime. The application includes a specific section for applicants to respond. This is a requirement under the new regime, as set out in the BEIS Technical Guidance (which can be accessed here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complying-with-the-uks-international-obligations-on-subsidy-control-guidance-for-public-authorities/technical-guidance-on-the-uks-international-subsidy-control-commitments-from-1-january-2021>).

Please note the advice should cover both receipt of the Funding from NTCA and the subsequent transfer of that Funding to third parties.

To comply with new subsidy control regulations, all awards that are considered 'subsidies', and with a value of over £300,000, will be published on the new BEIS

transparency database. All awards will be monitored for their ongoing compliance with subsidy control rules.

7. Other information

Fraud, Liability and Payment Terms

The North of Tyne Combined Authority will take swift action against any recipients who have deliberately manipulated records or have committed fraud. Any beneficiaries caught falsifying their records to gain grant funding will face prosecution and any funding or grants paid in error will be subject to claw back.

The North of Tyne Combined Authority does not accept any liability for any issues that may arise for applicants under this scheme, whether they are successful or not.

Following a grant award, the applicant will be required to submit claims to draw down the grant. Only claims which can demonstrate evidence of expenditure will be eligible for payment. Payments will be made directly to the applicant's bank account by electronic transfer, normally within 5 working days of a claim being accepted. Grant awards will be subject to the availability of funds. There will be no appeals process following determination. Beneficiaries will receive written confirmation stating that by accepting the grant payment, they confirm that they are eligible for the grant scheme, and that any payments accepted will be subject to state aid requirements.

Appendix 1 – Detailed Scoring Criteria for LOT 2 Only.

Assessment of Project							
Strategic fit with NTCA Vision, Digital Growth and Innovation Programme 'ecosystem priorities' and Call Specification	[PASS]: 15-13	[PASS]: 12-10	[FAIL]: 9-7	[FAIL]: 6-4	[FAIL]: 3-1	[FAIL]: 0	Pass (10-15) or Fail (0-9)
	Very strong fit and strong evidence of need and rationale for intervention		Moderate fit with limited evidence of need or rationale for intervention		Low fit with poor evidence of need and rationale for the intervention.	No fit with no evidence of need or rationale.	
Outcomes associated with the project	[PASS]: 15-13	[PASS]: 12-10	[PASS]: 9-7	[FAIL]: 6-4	[FAIL]: 3-1	[FAIL]: 0	Pass (15-7) or Fail (0-6)
	Very Likely to deliver exceptional and relevant outcomes		Likely to deliver a reasonable level of relevant outcomes		Likely to provide limited outcomes	Unlikely to meet any of defined outcomes	
Value for Money	5	4	3	2	1	0	5
	Exceptional value for money	potentially very good value for money	represents reasonable value for money	4-3	Offers less favourable value for money.	Unlikely to offer any value for money.	
Intensity of grant request (% of total funding requested from NTCA)	5	4	3	2	1	0	5
	1-20%	21-40%	41- 60%	61-70%	71-80%	80-100%	
Status of the match funding	5	4	3	2	1	0	5
	Fully confirmed		Most match funding in place		Little match funding in place	No source of match funding identified	
State Aid risk/ Subsidy	5	4	3	2	1	0	5

	Independent legal opinion supports compliant route or confirm no State aid.	Applicant identifies a compliant State Aid route.	Relevant State Aid issues understood and clarified	Relevant State Aid issues understood but currently unable to be clarified	No appropriate consideration of State Aid provided	Request not compliant with State Aid.	
Deliverability Risk	15-13 Considered to be have a high chance of success & completion by the timescales indicated - risks well managed. Likely to have a significant and immediate impact.	12-10	9-7 Moderately likely to succeed and be delivered by the timescales indicated, some risks with strategies to mitigate in place.	6-4	3-1 Management and delivery arrangements considered to be weak. High risk of failure with limited mitigation considered. Impact unlikely to be significant or speed of delivery slow.	0 Considered to have a very low likelihood of successful completion by the timescales indicated / multiple high-level risks with no clear management	15
Inclusive Economy fit	10-9 Very strong fit	8-7	6-5 Moderate fit	4-3	2-1 Low fit	0 No fit	10
						Score	/75