Bolton's Economic Inactivity Trailblazer: community-based employability support

All awards made 13th and 15th October 2026 - £163,000 awarded - 14 projects funded

Fund aims:

- To test a range of community support projects, delivered by local VCSE organisations in Bolton, helping those furthest from the labour market either into or closer to employment
- Projects aim to support confidence-building, skills development and address structural barriers to improve employment readiness
- To explore and highlight innovative, person-centred ways of working

Target participants:

- Bolton residents (aged 16+) who are
  - 'economically inactive' (i.e. who have not looked for work in the last 4 weeks and are unable to start work in the next two weeks)
  - or people who have been unemployed for 12 months or longer

Target groups:

- Ethnic minorities
- Disabled
- Over-50s
- Economically inactive due to long-term health condition
- Young people not in employment, education or training ('NEET')

Funding made available by Bolton Council through the DWP and GMCA-funded Economic Inactivity Trailblazer. It offers a second round of funding, building on the work delivered through projects awarded in December 2025.

Organisation	Amount awarded	Project Summary
Adullam Social Enterprises	£ 12,719.00	Community-based programme for 25 residents offering wellbeing, literacy, digital skills, life skills and employability training, with peer support and progression routes into volunteering, training and employment.
Backup North West	£ 15,000.00	Pathways to Purpose will support 15 young adults through mentoring, workplace experience, accredited training and employer engagement, helping them build confidence, gain qualifications and progress into employment or education.
Befriending & Adult Autism Support (BAAS)	£ 5,000.00	Specialist intensive support for five autistic adults through tailored one-to-one coaching, confidence building and work-readiness planning, addressing autism-specific barriers and supporting gradual progression towards employment.
Blackrod Sports and Community Centre	£ 16,800.00	Structured programme for 14 residents providing key-worker support, confidence and wellbeing sessions, digital skills, life-skills activities and progression planning, with supported pathways into training, volunteering, education and employment.
Bolton Community Development Partnership	£ 15,000.00	Programme for 20 ethnically diverse NEET young people providing confidence sessions, key-working, employability qualifications, employer tasters and mentoring to reduce barriers and support progression into apprenticeships or employment.
Bolton Lads and Girls Club	£ 20,000.00	Employability programme for 20 young people combining coaching, action planning, workplace skills, employer engagement, work experience and barrier-reduction support to progress participants towards training, education and employment.
Elite Community Hub CIC	£ 7,990.00	Ten-week boxing-led personal development programme for eight residents, combining sport, mentoring, nutrition, qualifications and progression support to improve confidence, life skills and readiness for employment, education or training.

Flowhesion Foundation	£ 16,110.00	Inspire to Succeed will support 18 residents through confidence, motivation, communication and CV workshops, followed by volunteering or work placements and wraparound wellbeing and digital support.
Funding Futures CIC	£ 10,000.00	BaristHer will support 16 women through barista training, employability development, mentoring and links to flexible paid work, helping participants gain qualifications, confidence and realistic routes into employment.
Genuine Futures CIC	£ 1,000.00	Structured leadership and work-readiness opportunity for one volunteer, providing mentoring, practical experience and increased responsibility within community enterprise activities to build skills and support future employment.
Great Places Housing Group	£ 15,463.00	Community programme delivering sector-based training, self-employment support, financial resilience advice and employability workshops, helping 27 residents progress towards jobs, enterprise, volunteering and training opportunities.
Henshaws	£ 5,918.00	Support for 22 residents through youth employability activities and specialist digital-skills training for adults with sight loss, reducing barriers and increasing confidence, independence and readiness for work or study.
Recycle IT	£ 10,000.00	Employment readiness programme for 10 residents combining IT refurbishment work experience, digital skills, accredited training, employability support and mentoring to build confidence, skills and progression towards employment, training or volunteering.
WAVE Adventure	£ 12,000.00	Outdoor leadership programme for 12 adults offering accredited qualifications, coaching, practical leadership experience and employability support, helping participants build confidence and progress into work, self-employment or further study.
Total	**£ 163,000**	