

National Transition Training Fund (NTTF)

Year 2 Report

November 2023

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Ministerial Foreword



When the Scottish Government launched the National Transition Training Fund as part of our response to the economic impact of Covid-19, we could not have envisaged the long-lasting impacts on our society and labour market. Despite the quick recovery of employment levels in 2021, businesses continued to require support, particularly to mitigate deepening skills shortages in key sectors but also to support growth sectors or those where individuals needed to upskill or reskill to maintain employment.

A skills system that supports a stronger, more resilient, and more sustainable economy is critical to growth. During the Covid-19 pandemic, this meant responding quickly and flexibly to the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on certain sectors and individuals, whilst also mitigating against the effect of the EU exit and supporting future skills transitions, such as the transition to net zero.

It was in this context that Year 2 of the National Transition Training Fund commenced in April 2021 with an expanded remit to offer short-term but rapid and responsive support to individuals and businesses across Scotland. The aim was to address immediate challenges and lay the groundwork for future skills policy with a skills system able to support people throughout their working lives.

In Year 1 of the Fund, the Scottish Government provided over 9,400 training opportunities across a wide range of sectors. In Year 2 I am delighted that we more than doubled that figure with over 22,000 training opportunities available and over 1,900 businesses supported. Funding was made available across 33 projects to support individuals and businesses in their recovery from the pandemic, to combat the impact of the EU Exit, and prepare for future skills transitions.

Although now complete, our experience of delivering the Fund is informing future skills policy. In March 2022, the Scottish Government published its National Strategy for Economic Transformation. This ten-year plan recognises that a skilled workforce is essential to a wellbeing economy. It sets out our actions to ensure people have the skills they need throughout their working lives and that employers invest to achieve the skilled workforce needed to grow their businesses. The learning from the National Transition Training Fund will be important as this work is taken forward.

Looking ahead, as we embark on a major period of reform of the post-school education and skills landscape, we must build on the strong foundations that we have established. Appropriate support must be in place to encourage and implement a culture of lifelong learning that helps to deliver the necessary skills for individuals and businesses. Government, the wider public sector together with the private and third sectors all have a key role to play in facilitating this step change.

It is only by working together that Scotland can create the skilled workforce necessary to succeed.

Graeme Dey

Minister for Higher and Further Education; and Minister for Veterans

Executive Summary

The National Transition Training Fund (NTTF) was introduced in 2020 as a direct response to the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. In its first year over 9,000 training opportunities were provided in sectors most impacted by the downturn, supporting staff retention, diversification and training for new and future skills needs.

In its second year, the scope of the programme was expanded. It continued to respond to the impact of the pandemic, while also offering assistance in key sectors affected by EU Exit or sectors with opportunity for growth. Year 2 of the Fund also placed a more significant emphasis on supporting individuals and employers in the transition to net zero. NTTF funding was invested in 33 projects to continue to support individuals and sectors.

With a move to a more sector-based approach, Year 2 saw demand grow for skills provision to support post-pandemic recovery. In addition to the continuation of programmes in aviation, tourism and hospitality, and creative industries, colleges continued to offer a wide range of Skillsboost courses aligned to local labour and skills demand. 10,995 Training opportunities were available through this strand in Year 2.

With a largely rural and agricultural focus, support to address the impact of EU exit resulted in 478 training opportunities available through paid work placements in rural locations, training in forestry, diversification training for crofters and the seafood industries, as well as the continuation of provision by Lantra.

Recognising the changing skills demands in Scotland's labour market, the strand on Future Skills Transitions saw 5,283 training opportunities in sectors and skills key to our future workforce. This diverse group of projects included childcare, health and social care (child and adult), digital, cyber security and laboratory skills.

The final strand of support focussed on the transition to net zero. This provided 5,510 training places in areas such as climate change awareness for small and medium sized enterprises, advanced manufacturing, aerospace, construction, and engineering. A range of projects directly supporting the Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan – Green Jobs Workforce Academy were managed by Skills Development Scotland (SDS).

In Year 2, greater effort was made to gather equality data from course participants. Disclosure was voluntary and there remained some differences in data sought, so it was not possible to offer analysis at individual course or strand level. However, it is encouraging that there was a good balance between male and female participants (53% and 43% respectively). Given the wide age range of participants, with 77% aged over 29, there is clearly a strong unmet demand for upskilling and retraining at all ages.

In total, NTTF provided 22,266 training opportunities between April 2021 and August 2022 supporting 1,916 businesses. Provision was pan-Scotland and sought to address specific needs at geographic as well as sector level. As we take forward

reform in post-school education and skills, we must ensure that individuals and sectors are able to gain the skills they need throughout their working lives in response to changing skills needs.

1. Background

At the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, governments across the world were required to implement immediate measures to contain the spread of the virus and alleviate the overall harm caused by the pandemic. Since early 2020, the Scottish Government has sought to respond to both the immediate harm that the Covid-19 pandemic inflicted upon society and its ongoing and lasting impact.

The NTTF was introduced in October 2020 in response to the projected rise of unemployment as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Funding was made available to support and provide training to individuals aged 25+ who had been made unemployed or were threatened with redundancy. A total of 9,482 individuals were supported in sectors impacted by the pandemic, such as tourism and hospitality, and in growth sectors such as aerospace diversification and forestry. The final report for Year 1 (2020-2021) can be found here: [National Transition Training Fund - Year 1 Report](#).

As part of our recovery, we recognise that the impact of the pandemic has not been felt evenly – those in society who were already disadvantaged have been affected disproportionately by Covid-19. For this reason, we are committed to rebuilding our economy to be fairer, stronger, and more sustainable. In doing so, we must continue to support our economy in its recovery from the pandemic, but, looking forward, also address the impact of the EU Exit and support future skills needs, including the transition to net zero.

Through Year 2 of NTTF (2021/2022), the Scottish Government aimed to address these challenges. We continued to respond to the impact of the pandemic, while also offering assistance in key sectors affected by EU Exit or sectors with opportunity for growth. Year 2 of the Fund also placed a more significant emphasis on supporting individuals and employers in the transition to net zero, with a package of projects delivered through the Scottish Government's Green Jobs Workforce Academy, launched in August 2021, as one of the key commitments in our Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan.

NTTF funding was invested in 33 projects to continue to support individuals and sectors. Based on the learning from Year 1, Year 2 of NTTF took a more sector based approach, offering training provision to support sectors through current and future labour market and skills challenges, as well as continuing to support individuals. Sectors included those that had been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, for example, tourism and hospitality and aerospace/aviation and those where there remains clear growth in jobs such as digital skills or in social care.

2. Supporting Sector Recovery from the Pandemic

In Year 2 of NTTf, we recognised the disproportionate impact that the Covid-19 pandemic and the measures introduced to contain the spread were having on certain sectors. Through upskilling and retraining, we targeted funds towards those sectors in the greatest need of support to help them recover from the pandemic, whilst helping individuals working or seeking jobs in these sectors to retain or gain employment. Projects were delivered in conjunction with various partners, including the Hospitality Industry Trust Scotland, the Scottish Tourism Alliance, Unite the Union, Screen Scotland and Fèisean nan Gàidheal.

Aviation

Scottish Union Learning – Aviation

Continuing provision from Year 1 of NTTf, the **Scottish Union Learning – Aviation Covid Recovery Fund**, delivered by Unite the Union, aimed to train ground staff and air crew in the aviation industry to protect jobs by increasing skills levels and addressing some essential skills requirements.

Working across the majority of Scotland's airports, with the project extended to August 2022 to maximise delivery of opportunities, **1,279** individual training opportunities were undertaken. A broad range of training was delivered covering subjects from management and leadership, customer service and ICT skills through to engineering and warehouse training.

Unite the Union has advised that in addition to the clear benefits of upskilling the workforce, many jobs have been protected across a sector that suffered hugely during the pandemic. There have been improvements in pay for many of the workers. In addition to gaining key skills, trainees reported valuing the opportunity to build networks with those in similar roles in different airports, which is not generally possible.

Creative Industries

Creative Industries Freelance Workforce Recovery Programme

Creative industries were among the hardest hit by the pandemic. To respond to this, the Creative Industries Freelance Workforce Recovery Programme was introduced and managed by SDS. The programme consisted of three individual sub-projects, summarised below. Each sub-project offered up to 50% of available places to eligible individuals in rural Scotland.

- The **Creative Industries Iron Works (Level Up Digital)** project aimed to offer a targeted digital upskilling and reskilling programme for up to 40 existing freelance professionals, practitioners, and sole traders looking to re-enter the sector. The modules were successfully delivered to **39** individuals, 41% of whom resided in rural Scotland, and the project supported **26** businesses. The

project provided a very real opportunity to bring an innovative programme of digital and business thought, leadership, practice, and application to practitioners across Scotland's creative industries.

- The **Creative Industries Lews Castle College (Sustaining Crafts Careers)** project was introduced to deliver a programme of training to support the needs of new entrants into the sector alongside existing practitioners who required new skills to navigate the impact of the pandemic. Overall, the project supported **40** individuals, 60% of whom resided in rural Scotland, and **38** businesses. Two new National Progression Award pathways were established, enabling support for the sector to continue within further education. The partnership has also established a very significant and innovative learning and development resource, possibly a global first.
- The **Creative Industries – Creative Ambitions: Freelancer Skills Programme** was an integrated upskilling intervention, delivered online to enable established creative industries freelancers whose livelihoods were most impacted in the pandemic to upskill and reskill and smooth their return to economic engagement in the sector. **354** individuals participated.

RESET project

To support creative industries to recover from the impact of the pandemic, the **RESET project** was co-designed, co-funded, and delivered in partnership with Screen Scotland, through which two programmes were delivered by TRC media, in partnership with the National Film and Television School.

- The first programme was the **Animation, VFX, and Games Internship** programme, which aimed to give those made unemployed during the Covid-19 pandemic an opportunity to retrain for Scotland's Animation, VFX and Games industries through a 10-month programme of training and paid industry work placements. Overall, **14** interns were supported through the programme, as well as **eight** businesses.
- This programme was expanded to become the **VFX New Entrants Training Programme** with The Fix FX training **14** VFX new entrants in Nuke (industry VFX software) to start them on the journey to becoming skilled VFX compositors and thereby help alleviate a skills shortage in Scotland. Following an initial four to six weeks intensive introduction to VFX course run by the renowned Escape Studios, the interns then began their placements.
- The second programme was an **Introduction to Production Accounting**, which offered those made unemployed during the Covid-19 pandemic an opportunity to gain practical training in production accounting across the film and television sector, allowing individuals to develop skills through a two-day course. A total of **21** individuals benefited from this opportunity.

Many participants had reported that Covid-19 had affected their previous work or studies. The training offered through the RESET project has provided an opportunity for these individuals to transition into a thriving sector.

Treòir | Voar | Virr - Islands



NTTF funded this programme, delivered by Fèisean nan Gàidheal and co-funded by the Scottish Government's Islands Programme. The aim was to aid recovery in education, while supporting retraining and employment opportunities for creative freelancers through live, online, progressive arts-based cultural workshops that supported various aspects of island culture. This included a focus on Scotland's indigenous languages and dialects, music, drama, dance, storytelling, craftwork,

digital and visual art, offered to all primary schools in Scotland's islands. Overall, **62** individuals and **17** businesses were supported. A showreel video can be accessed at [youtube](#).

NTTF offered Fèisean nan Gàidheal the opportunity to strengthen links with island schools, island-based freelance artists, the Islands Team at the Scottish Government and with staff at West Highland College UHI. Feedback indicates the project benefited all involved, creating employment and training opportunities for freelance tutors following a very difficult period.

Tourism and Hospitality

Tourism and Hospitality Talent Development Programme

To continue to support the tourism and hospitality sector, the **Tourism and Hospitality Talent Development Programme** was reintroduced by SDS in Year 2 of the Fund and delivered in conjunction with the Scottish Tourism Alliance and Hospitality Industry Trust Scotland. This project aimed to support employers in the tourism sector to retain/upskill employees with supervisory, management and leadership responsibilities to help support recovery from the pandemic.

Overall, NTTF funding supported **532** business and **1,555** individuals. The project received very positive feedback from participants and attracted individuals from every Local Authority area in Scotland. It has also attracted participants from across the tourism sector including employees from hotels, restaurants, visitor attractions, events and conferences, tour operators, bars and many others. This provision succeeded in motivating and developing the top talent within the sector to help it recover faster from the pandemic.

Projects Offering Cross-Sector Support

Micro-credentials

Following the success of the project in Year 1, NTTF funded a second series of **Micro-credential Upskilling** courses enabling universities across Scotland to

deliver in-demand skills. Micro-credentials are short modularised programmes developed from Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) levels 9–11 which will meet learners' immediate high level skills development needs.

Of the 18 universities allocated NTTF funding for additional micro-credential courses, 17 developed new provision under this funding to further broaden their portfolio and increase their reach. The project also aimed to reach underrepresented adults across sectors, including neuro-diverse learners, women in technology sectors, and third sector employees in sectors acutely affected by the pandemic fallout.

There were **3,200** NTTF enrolments on 210 short courses in 2021/22, a 71.2% increase on the number of NTTF enrolments in Year 1. The most popular subject areas were in Cybersecurity, Digital and Computing Technologies (60 courses) and Business and Management (53 courses) although there are micro-credential courses in all sectors such as manufacturing, sustainability, agriculture.

The provision of micro-credential courses requires collaboration between academic staff and has allowed universities to strengthen the relationships and build new partnerships with key partners, including employers. Together they have identified specific skills gaps and delivered bespoke provision that addresses what they see to be a very specific skills need in their sector that could not currently be met by modules that are already offered as part of existing degrees.

College provision including Skillsboost and Fast-Track HNC

Similarly, Scotland's colleges delivered the **Skillsboost** project for a second year using NTTF funding across a range of growth sectors. In addition, Year 2 saw **Fast-Track HNC** courses delivered across colleges, which offered a shorter learner journey for those looking to access identified gaps in key areas of employment.

Colleges completed their reporting of NTTF funded activity in October 2022, reporting back that they had exceeded their planned activity with **4,205** enrolments taking place across 236 courses. 67 Skillsboost courses were developed specifically to support the NTTF and Young Persons Guarantee. These included Skillsboost courses designed to support careers in Butchery, Barbering and Hairdressing, Sport and Fitness, Cybersecurity and Childcare.

Aside from Skillsboost courses, notably large cohorts which utilised NTTF funding included:

- **153** Ukrainian refugees from West Lothian College who were supported to complete an English for Speakers of Other languages (ESOL) summer school through collaboration with their Local Authority.
- City of Glasgow College which offered a range of Hairdressing courses supported by L'Oreal with **138** enrolments.
- Fife College which enrolled over **50** students on their REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene certificate which is required for multiple roles in the hospitality, care and leisure industries.
- Digital Marketing For Practitioners and Introduction to Cybersecurity were also popular courses with around **50** enrolments on each in Glasgow and Fife.

- Dundee and Angus College supported **37** enrolments on their Introduction to Scottish Criminal Law.

Workers' Educational Association

The **Workers' Educational Association** project offered various courses with the aim of addressing inequality by targeting provision at those disproportionately affected by the pandemic, or who otherwise face disadvantage in the labour market, including those whose first language is not English.

As part of this, the project aimed to increase the number of people with enhanced digital skills to increase their job prospects or improve their job security. Overall, **212** individuals benefited from courses to increase their employability prospects. Courses offered included ESOL for Digital Skills, ESOL for Employability and Health and Social Care Employability, with significant demand for the ESOL related provision.

Case Studies

Treòir | Voar | Virr - Islands

Na h-Eileanan Tarsainn – Eigg, Muck and Rum Primary Schools, Highland

One strand of the programme was the Eileanan Tarsainn project, which aimed to protect and promote local Gaelic culture and storytelling, by giving students contemporary as well as historical context.

Nan Fee is a singer, drama worker and teacher and was paired with traditional musician and artist Gabe McVarish, who, like Nan, is based in Eigg. Both spoke very highly of the impact of the project on themselves and the local communities. Participants were encouraged to hear, learn and develop stories in their local environment. The class teacher of one primary school that benefited reported the following:

“Working alongside Nan and Gabe on the Treòir project was an incredibly enriching experience. Everyone always really looked forward to the sessions and the activities were always well-planned, engaging and a lovely, collaborative experience. There was so much variety for the children to engage with, and it was wonderful watching them grow in confidence and express their creativity. Storytelling in the classroom improved and this helped the children develop their skills in speaking and listening. They thoroughly enjoyed sharing their own ideas inspired by ‘The Wee Bannock’ and ‘The Secret of Kells’ and were especially proud of all the beautiful artwork and texts they created. Overall, the project was a fantastic opportunity. We all learned a lot about storytelling and benefited greatly from the richness of Scotland’s heritage and culture.”

Skillsboost

Introduction to Butchery – Forth Valley College

The Introduction to Butchery course was developed in response to industry partners struggling with recruitment. It offers three SVQ units, including introduction to the basics of Butchery, practical work and the accredited REHIS Elementary Food Hygiene certificate, and is combined with a work placement with industry partners – mostly Scotbeef.

After the work placement, students are guaranteed an interview. If unsuccessful, the college works with them to find an alternative position within the industry. Two successful courses were piloted in Spring 2022 – eight students for the first course gained employment with 80% employment success rate and five in the second giving a success rate of 75%.

Forth Valley College continues to work with The Department for Work and Pensions and local charitable organisations to provide opportunities to people furthest from the job market. The long-term aim is to offer a full-time butchery course to support growth and development within the industry.

Workers' Educational Association

ESOL for Employability - Shabnam

Shabnam joined the ESOL Employability class and, during the initial session, disclosed to the tutor that she felt her English was not good enough to find work and that she wanted to find a job in Glasgow. She had worked as a baker in her home country, but lacked the confidence to apply for work in Scotland. She did not understand how to apply for work and talk about her skills, nor did she believe she would be able to secure anything that she would enjoy and related to her previous experience. She had worked previously in a food service outlet, but had a negative experience which had severely knocked her confidence.

The tutor worked with the class, focusing on confidence and motivation, as well as interview skills. Shabnam worked hard in class and completed all homework that was assigned, but it took her a long time to start developing her confidence, particularly in her English language skills. Gradually, Shabnam's outlook began to change. As the group learned about finding jobs online, deciphering the adverts, and working out which jobs were right for them, she began to build up the confidence to be able to do this herself.

At the second last session, Shabnam arrived to class absolutely ecstatic. She had seen a job advert online, applied, had an interview, and was offered a job as a barista at the Moxy in Glasgow. The group celebrated her achievement in class and Shabnam said the following about her classes with WEA:

“I am so happy that I have now found the confidence to apply for a job. I’m very excited – I start on Friday!”

3. Transitioning from the EU

In addition to supporting recovery from the pandemic, Year 2 of NTTF had a broader role to play in supporting Scotland's economic recovery. As part of this, the Fund aimed to target provision to sectors that have been disproportionately hit by the impact of EU Exit. Upskilling and retraining opportunities were introduced to promote the retention and attraction of a talented, skilled workforce. Seafood and rural industries were identified as needing significant support. Delivery partners included Scottish Enterprise (SE), the Scottish Crofting Federation, LANTRA and Confor.



Rural Industries

Redesigning Rural

Building on the success of its pilot in Year 1, the **Redesigning Rural** project was reintroduced in Year 2 by SE, with the aim of developing opportunities for businesses and providing support to individuals within the sector that have been negatively impacted by EU Exit and the pandemic. Leveraging the network of Scotland's Rural Leaders (graduates of the Rural Leadership Programme, one of SE's flagship programmes), the project reached out to the network with an 'ask' – to provide interesting and worthwhile job placements for a period of 10 weeks. The project succeeded in providing **51** placements across **46** businesses, with 67% of Scotland's Rural Leaders confirming they would continue to work with their placement. Redesigning Rural again created long-lasting benefit to both individuals and to businesses of Scotland's Rural Leaders looking to create new opportunities and test new markets in the post-pandemic and EU Exit environment.

Crofting Skills for Local Food

Delivered by the Scottish Crofting Federation, the **Crofting Skills for Local Food** project offered an opportunity to support crofters to develop skills that would help them create and contribute to robust local food supply chains throughout the Highlands and Islands. Overall, the project supported **220** individuals and **13** businesses through NTTF funding. A diverse range of courses were offered to individuals, with 85% of participants stating that the training helped them to consider new ways of working. The Scottish Crofting Federation feel that the project went some way to support crofters and their local communities to be better integrated, providing access to a greater variety and quantity of croft-produced, locally-sourced, nature-friendly food and products, reducing carbon impact by lowering food miles, and improving community resilience to supply system shocks.

Springboard for Skills

Building on the demand for and success of the project in Year 1, Lantra's **Springboard for Rural Skills** facilitated effective mentoring and provided on-going support, professional development, diversification and networking opportunities for

instructors and assessors (including those working in seasonal roles). The project succeeded in directly supporting **32** individuals and **32** businesses, with training providers, such as the Scottish agricultural and rural business Machinery Rings, also benefiting from access to a wider pool of freelance instructors. The main benefit of the project for many participants was the diversification of skills and business services. It has also helped participating small rural businesses to diversify and become more resilient in the post-pandemic and EU Exit environment.

Fast Track Forest Machine Operator & Timber Haulage Operator Familiarisation

Recognising the disruptive impact of the EU Exit on the forestry industry, NTTF funding in conjunction with Scottish Forestry funding supported Confor to provide two training programmes for the sector. The **Fast Track Forest Machine Operator (FMO)** project was a short training programme that fast-tracked new entrants and gave them skills to allow them to gain employment as an FMO. The **Timber Haulage Operator Familiarisation** project offered a four-day intensive course to support hauliers to develop the specialist skills needed for forestry haulage to gain employment. Across the two programmes, **25** individuals and **seven** businesses were supported through training. The majority of participants expressed a desire to enter the industry after completing the training, with several having already gained employment.

Seafood

Seafood Business Improvement Programme

The seafood sector has been significantly impacted by EU Exit, in addition to the disruption caused by the pandemic. To boost this sector, the **Seafood Business Improvement Programme** was administered by SDS and delivered in partnership with Polaris Learning, Scottish Seafood Association and Seafish.

This project aimed to deliver a package of training options based on identification of sector needs to build skills capacity within the industry. There were two components to the Programme: a training element of 44 courses and a bitesize webinar element of seven sessions. The former was delivered through a blended and in-person format with the webinar programme delivered online, recorded and made available on the Seafood Scotland website.

The provision has enabled a total of **150** individuals to upskill and retrain within the sector and has supported **21** businesses. Many new businesses and individuals accessed skills support for the first time through the programme. The project has undoubtedly created a demand for this type of support within the sector and Seafood Scotland are exploring ways in which the progress can be built upon in the future.

Case Study

Seafood Business Improvement Programme

Laeso Fish, who are based in Peterhead were an early participant in the Seafood Business Improvement Programme with staff taking part in over 40 training interventions. Quality Assurance Manager, David Park, commented that the business would not have undertaken training on this scale were it not for the programme. Staff have benefited from the courses not just in their day to day duties but are also gaining confidence and awareness and that there is an expectation that the business will benefit from improved productivity resulting from the training.

In addition, staff attended courses such as Food Authentication which would not have been seen as beneficial had a full training needs assessment not taken place at the outset of their participation. David feels that this scheme has very definite benefits for the individuals, the business and for the broader industry. In summing up their participation in the scheme, David commented that this was a 'great scheme' and exactly what the industry needed after the challenging time since 2020. The only downside of the programme was the required paperwork which was administrative and felt a disproportionate burden on the business.

4. Supporting Future Skills Transitions

In response to ever-changing labour market and skills demands in Scotland, we must continually update and develop our skills system to meet the critical challenges that we face as a society and deliver for the future. Year 2 of NTTF aimed to contribute to these ambitions, providing upskilling and retraining opportunities to ensure that the sectors that will be most affected by these changes remain flexible and agile. Key sectors that NTTF sought to support through upskilling and retraining included digital and aerospace.

Childcare

Early Learning and Childcare Taster Programme

The **Early Learning and Childcare Taster Programme** offered an opportunity to gain experience with industry recognised learning to help individuals apply for entry level positions in the sector. The development of the programme recognises the known current and future vacancies in this sector as a result of Scottish Government expansion policy. A key ambition in its development was the desire to increase the diversity of recruits to the sector, including those who have not previously considered a career in childcare.

Referrals for the programme were disappointing but reflected the tight labour market operating during 2021/22 and the difficulties many sectors were experiencing in addressing labour and skills shortages. However, **48** individuals accessed the programme, and benefited from increased knowledge about the childcare sector, qualifications and routes and improved employability skills.

Digital

Advanced Cyber Security Skills

Jointly funded by NTTF and the Scottish Government's Cyber Resilience Unit, the **Advanced Cyber Security Skills** project was delivered by ScotlandIS to offer businesses support to train workers in cyber security to address skills gaps in the workforce, with the intention of enabling staff progression to open up opportunities for recruitment. ScotlandIS successfully upskilled **119** individuals and supported **38** businesses through the project, with an estimated 26 junior-level vacancies projected to be created within the next 18 months as a result of the upskilling courses being undertaken. There was overwhelming interest in the fund with over 150 employers showing interest.

The fund was managed in such a way that organisations from all industries could gain access to it, and 32% (against a target of 25%) of organisations who have accessed the fund came from out with the Scottish technology sector, and range from oil and gas organisations, public and third sector organisations and construction. This highlights the importance of cyber security skills required out with our core technology companies.

Two organisations (both from Aberdeen) who have utilised the fund have already successfully hired new members of staff as a direct result of the upskilling their identified learners had undertaken.

Organisations from all parts of Scotland, from Orkney to the Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway accessed the fund. Most organisations who were successful came from Aberdeen, with 26% of companies being based there. 89% of companies who accessed the fund classed themselves as a start-up or SME organisation.

OSP Cyber Security noted:

“We were looking to upskill one of our team and due to the cost involved for a certified training course for cyber/information security we had put this on hold. Access to the ScotlandIS fund allowed us to go ahead with the training and we now have new clients as a result of the skilled member of the team now delivering cyber audits.”

Code Your Future



To increase the number of individuals from under-served and diverse backgrounds in the digital sector, **Code Your Future** aimed to help widen the talent pipeline with much-needed, highly-skilled tech professionals and to diversify the Scottish technology ecosystem. One of the main objectives of the project was to sustain and expand vocational training to support a wide range of vulnerable people in Scotland. This included adults struggling with unemployment due to redundancy in the pandemic, adults living below the poverty line, adults from ethnic minority backgrounds and adults seeking refuge in the UK.

Delivered across three strands: Software Development Course, Introduction to Digital Course and Tech Projects, Code your Future has enabled individuals to access training and job opportunities in key roles in digital.

Of the **25 participants**, **19** graduates from the Software Development Course have achieved positive outcomes, with **17** moving to new jobs in companies such as BigSpark, Sopra Steria and Capgemini. There have been **112** registrations for the

Introduction to Digital Course. Completion of this online programme is long term but at the close of reporting for NTTf, **41** individuals had completed the course.

The Tech Projects funding enabled sponsorship of ongoing and new development of internal digital tools (including their critical Student and Volunteer Dashboard) by CodeYourFuture alumni, providing them with further valuable work experience and providing the organisation with tools that sustain and improve their vocational programmes and community cohesion.

Digitally Enabled Learning Pilot

The **Digitally Enabled Learning Pilot** project provided access to a wide range of funded online learning provision via LinkedIn Learning and Future Learn for adults in Scotland, which enabled individuals to upskill and reskill. The project aimed overall to help individuals be more prepared in applying for job opportunities as they look to get back to work, progress in their career or change direction. Users accessed a wide variety of training via the two platforms with courses on excel analysis, project management and digital skills proving particularly popular. 85% of users surveyed who accessed LinkedIn Learning via the free licenses agreed it had helped expand their knowledge, with 77% saying it had helped them gain new skills.

The most common benefit of digital learning of those surveyed was the flexibility digital learning provides to train at a time that most suits the learner. 94% said they would be likely to use digital learning again in the future. As of January 2023, there were, **2,390** activated accounts for LinkedIn Learning and **1,516** enrolments by 723 individuals for Future Learn.

Digital Skills Catalyst Fund

To further support the digital sector, the **Digital Skills Catalyst Fund** was introduced and administered by SDS. This pilot fund aimed to support businesses to develop and implement bespoke advancing digital technology skills training, where mainstream provision didn't exist elsewhere, and support the workforce to increase their advancing digital skills capability to align with emerging digital technologies. A total of **99** people were directly supported through the Fund and **three** businesses were supported to develop and implement bespoke advancing digital technology skills training. The outcomes for this project will be realised over a longer period of time as the training and skills interventions permeate through other business areas.

Digital Skills Pipeline

Recognising the skills gap facing the digital sector, the **Digital Skills Pipeline**, administered by SDS, aimed to address reskilling challenges by stimulating the creation of new, modular courses at four strategic intervention levels: excluded, untapped talent, hidden talent, and existing workforce. The project successfully supported **280** participants through a variety of training courses. The project created opportunities for a range of learners, recognising that not all learners will immediately be able to move into digital technology employment and may instead progress onto further learning such as at college or an apprenticeship. This ensured learners could

begin to develop skills which will help them articulate into further learning or move into employment.

LEAD Scotland – Build Back Digital

The purpose of the **LEAD Scotland – Build Back Digital** Training Programme was to provide a range of advanced digital learning opportunities for disabled people, carers and practitioners who in turn become more digitally agile, confident and skilled to work in online spaces. The project succeeded in providing training to **108** individuals in total. The project worked with a variety of organisations, predominantly the public and third sectors.

LEAD Scotland believe that delivering the series of ten online accessibility webinars, allowing participants to audit their own organisation's digital presence and services, was a significant step forward in ensuring that disabled people across Scotland are included when services are being designed or reviewed in relation to online spaces.

Reaching into businesses to offer guidance on how they can improve their accessible services has left a project legacy of essential contacts, improved understanding of accessible service design, and positive steps forward in our vision of a fair society where disabled people and carers have an equal opportunity to learn, participate, and achieve their potential.

Health and Social Care

Open University – Adult Social Care Career Boost

The **Adult Social Care Career Boost** project aimed to offer a range of health and social care provision to support those looking to transition into the care sector and/or to transition into different roles within the sector or into more advanced positions. The project was administered by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and delivered by the Open University in Scotland (OUiS), supporting a total of **76** individuals and **25** businesses. 59 learners were recruited across Scotland to undertake accredited health and social care modules.

Five modules were available, providing learning options for those new to the sector, as well as those already in health and social care careers. Additionally, a further 17 learners were chosen to study a selection of accredited micro-credentials. Following strong interest in their leadership and management module, learners were offered a selection of courses which covered this skill area, including change management, people management and management of uncertainty. The individuals that benefited from the courses have been equipped with new skills that can facilitate their careers within the sector and help the sector to address existing skills gaps.

Introduction to Adult Social Care

Through the **Introduction to Adult Social Care** project, colleges across Scotland aimed to develop and offer a robust five-unit (60-hour) online programme of learning in adult social care at SCQF level 5. The project was supported by the College

Development Network Care Strategy Steering Group and endorsed by the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). Overall, the project succeeded in supporting **187** individuals through NTTF support. The course was recognised as impactful across organisations, employers, and those who delivered and undertook the learning. Students who completed the course are now progressing on to other college courses or entering employment.

Looking ahead, the course is currently being accredited by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA). Most colleges have indicated they will continue to deliver the Introduction to Adult Social Care programme in a variety of ways including as part of their mainstream programme, for senior phase school pupils or in their programme for communities.

Laboratory Science

Forth Valley and Glasgow Clyde College Lab Skills

The pandemic has highlighted increased demand for competent lab-based staff who are knowledgeable in health and safety requirements and have a working knowledge of industry standards, increasing demand for such staff. The **Forth Valley and Glasgow Clyde College Lab Skills** project aimed to train and upskill new laboratory staff who, on successful completion of the course, would be able to work safely in a lab environment to industry standards. The project was introduced and funded in Year 1 of NTTF and continued into Year 2. Overall, **20** individuals and **five** employers were supported through the project. The colleges worked in collaboration with various industry partners to enhance the success of the project, including Charles River, Accubio, Antibody Analytics, MiAlgae, and Oracle Bio.

Life Sciences

SULSA Life Sciences

The Life Sciences sector in Scotland continues to provide exciting career opportunities in a variety of scientific and operational roles. There are currently more than 41,700 people employed in over 700 diverse businesses and higher education institutions in Scotland and growth of the sector is set to continue.

Responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, the sector moved at pace to develop therapeutics, vaccines and innovative healthcare solutions. This was possible due to a resilient and skilled workforce. As the sector innovates and diversifies, demand for future talent provision in both existing and emerging innovative fields of advanced therapies, drug development, medical and health technologies is growing. Training provision remains key to not only sector growth, but also importantly providing further quality opportunities for the Scottish workforce.

Managed by the Scottish Universities Life Sciences Association (SULSA), the **SULSA Life Sciences** project funded the development and delivery of courses to address a practical skills gap in new entrants to the Life Sciences sector. The project was successful in delivering a portfolio of different skills training courses and careers

events to more than 600 individuals across Scotland, engaging the Life Sciences ecosystem and connecting industry, universities, colleges, and public bodies.

Overall, **303** individuals received training through the project and **16** businesses were supported in working with **16** academic institutions, with an additional 318 individuals attending Glasgow 'Lighthouse Lab' transition events. This project demonstrated the appetite for practical Life Sciences training and engagement, with all activities being over-subscribed. As part of the project's legacy, an Essential Laboratory Skills course has been embedded in the Dundee and Angus College curriculum to support the education of laboratory technicians in the north of Scotland.

A Skills Committee has also been established for SULSA, to bring together upskilling/reskilling expertise and encourage knowledge exchange between SULSA member universities to continue the successful collaborations.

Case Studies

Code Your Future

AJ was one of many asylum seekers in Scotland waiting for their refugee status to be confirmed, when he registered for Code Your Future's free Software Development course. Like many others, AJ was keen to develop his skills for the future and contribute to the society around him. He was fortunate to find out about Code Your Future, and with the help of the organisation and its committed volunteers, AJ began his journey to acquiring the web development and employability skills that he hoped would eventually propel him into a life-changing job in tech. During the course, volunteers from tech and other industries in Scotland supported AJ and his fellow trainees to learn sought-after software development skills alongside fundamental soft skills that were demonstrated on a portfolio of individual and team projects that the trainees were tasked with developing.

Shortly before completing the course, AJ received the positive news that his asylum claim had been successful. Less than a year after starting its Software Development Course, AJ graduated from Code Your Future and interviewed successfully for a life-changing job at an Edinburgh-based company that sees him use his newly-developed skills to grow the machine-learning potential of Scotland's ambitious tech sector. AJ is now volunteering with Code Your Future and helping it to launch and train its next cohort of software development trainees from underrepresented and under-served backgrounds.

LEAD Scotland – Build Back Digital

This project aimed to provide a range of advanced digital learning opportunities for disabled people, carers, and practitioners who in turn would become more digitally agile, confident, and skilled to work in online spaces.

- 100% of respondents said they were more confident about digital accessibility.
- 96% of respondents considered the skills learned were useful in their current role.
- 26% of respondents considered the skills learned were useful in future jobs.
- 21% of respondents considered the skills learned were useful in voluntary roles.
- 100% of respondents reported improved skills in ensuring online accessibility.

Given the focus of the project, LEAD Scotland was pleased to note a number of participants felt that the skills they had learned would be useful in obtaining new or improved employment. Particularly welcome were the participants who reported that what they had learned would come in useful for their voluntary commitments.

This kind of deployment of skills often has a particularly valuable impact at grassroots level in communities, with disabled people very often in the vanguard of those benefiting. LEAD Scotland see this in their own volunteers, many of whom come with a raft of useful skills that they are keen to share with their learners and befriendees.

LEAD Scotland noted: “The more of this type of work we can do, the more we are positively impacting society as we seek to reduce the employment gap between disabled people and their non-disabled peers.”

SULSA Life Sciences – Change to Cell Culture Skills Training course

As part of the Life Sciences project, the Cell Culture Skills Training course ran an innovative training tool for laboratory skills, teaching and training the cell culture process using immersive technologies. The course was developed by Edify and sponsored by Merck. It equipped candidates with practical laboratory skills to enhance employability prospects and make the transition to a laboratory environment more efficient to organisations.

This project created a highly realistic digital 3D counterpart of a general bioscience lab, enabling familiarisation with the lab environment and bioscience specific protocols including the Cell Culture process which prepared staff for industry standard operating procedures (SOPS), higher efficiency in onboarding industry staff, and also the development of a 2D version for use in secondary education to promote STEM careers.

The primary users of the virtual environments and processes were students and/or trainees, higher and further education institutions, industry trainees and early career professionals.

5. Transitioning to a Net Zero Economy

As one of the key commitments in the Scottish Government's Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan (CESAP), Year 2 of NTTF increased the number of projects supporting the upskilling and reskilling of the workforce in preparation for the transition to a net zero economy. Projects supported by NTTF spanned several sectors, including construction, advanced manufacturing and engineering. Partners involved in delivery included Construction Scotland Innovation Centre (now Built Environment – Smarter Transformation Scotland, BE-ST), Historic Environment Scotland, NatureScot, and the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland.

Advanced Manufacturing

National Manufacturing Institute Scotland – Manufacturing Skills Academy

To provide support to the advanced manufacturing sector, the **National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS) – Manufacturing Skills Academy** developed five sub-projects for delivery building on the success of the NTTF Year 1 programme. These were:

- (1) Increasing Inclusivity in Manufacturing;
- (2) Programme to Support Industry 4.0, II;
- (3) Net Zero Carbon and Sustainability;
- (4) Micro-credential programme in Digital Manufacturing to Net Zero; and
- (5) Graduate Trainee Programme II.

NMIS worked with a wide range of partners to deliver the programme including those in Scottish Research Partnership in engineering (SRPe), further and higher education institutions in Scotland, and High Value Manufacturing Catapult centres. A specific focus on addressing a lack of diversity in the sector saw new partners, including Equate Scotland and the Association of Black and Ethnic Minority Engineers (AFBE) Scotland, becoming involved.

Overall, the project provided **821** training opportunities and supported **90** employers. 26 stakeholder-focussed engagements were organised through the project. A total of 178 individuals took part in the Transitions Training programme with Equate and the AFBE, with 40% of participants being female and over 80% BAME. 50% of those who took part in the graduate programme and completed the final survey had been offered full time jobs or extensions to their contracts.

Looking to longer term sustainability, and in addition to delivery of the training, the NTTF2 team built their capability by investing in the development of 13 new upskilling courses, one 20-credit micro-credential course on 'digital manufacturing to net zero', one career accelerator mentoring programme and one carbon accounting accelerator programme.

NTTF has supported the development of international links to the Manufacturing Skills Academy. The development work on the Micro-Credentials Framework has led to international interest and is supporting the building of relationships with universities and employers both in Scotland and across the globe. Flinders

University, who are working with BAE Australia, have signed an MOU with the University of Strathclyde who, along with NMIS, are working with BAE in Scotland. Similarly, VTC Canada are in discussion around some of the CPD created for the Manitoba Heavy Vehicle and Equipment manufacturing community.

Aerospace

Aircraft Decommissioning

To encourage retraining and upskilling in the industry, the **Aircraft Decommissioning** project, administered by SFC, was a six-week training course that was introduced in Year 1 of NTTF and continued into Year 2. The project aimed to build on the foundations of the original NTTF project, which established a training capability at Prestwick. Overall, this project succeeded in supporting individuals through a total of **213** training opportunities, as well as supporting **seven** businesses. The courses exposed individuals to a variety of training which provided them with an improved understanding of the sector and relevant skills. Due to its success, South Ayrshire Council provided additional funds to ensure the continuation of the training programme.

Aerospace Diversification

Delivered by SE, the **Aerospace Diversification** project aimed to upskill the existing workforce to help the aerospace sector to build capacity to address the impact of Covid-19. It also helped develop new capabilities in order to diversify into neighbouring markets, such as Space, Defence, Renewables, and Sustainable Aviation. A total of **1,340** individuals and **14** businesses were supported through this project. While the projects were continuing at the end of NTTF support, the expected outcomes for the programme were:

- Diversification of products and services to enter new markets;
- Increased capacity to undertake new activities in existing and new markets;
- Increased capacity to operate new manufacturing and operational equipment;
- Improved/advanced manufacturing processes;
- Improved continuous improvement processes; and
- Reduced waste, CO2 emissions.

Aircraft Electrification

A similar project introduced by The University of Strathclyde and administered by SFC in Year 1 was the **Aircraft Electrification** project. This project invested in equipment and developed four electrification courses, building a good mix of training content that encompasses presentation material and innovative practical exercises that reinforce learning. While the project received significant demand from the industry in Year 1, the challenges experienced by the sector had considerably impacted on the availability of Scottish delegates to join the planned multi-day courses. As such, the project was continued into Year 2 of the Fund.

In total, **27** learners were supported through this project. The aero-electrical courses offered through this project provided delegates with a valuable appreciation of the

electrification technologies and systems that will contribute to the decarbonisation of air transport. Feedback from participants described the training as excellent and incredibly valuable, while positive feedback and discussion with industry delegates confirmed the ongoing need for such course content in electrification technologies.

Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan – Green Jobs Workforce Academy

To help encourage the societal and economic changes required to achieve net zero ambitions and in line with the themes identified in the Climate Emergency Skills Action Plan (CESAP), five sub-projects were introduced and administered by SDS as part of the **CESAP-related provision - Green Jobs Workforce Academy**.

- The first project was the **Upskilling and Reskilling Fabric and Structure of Net Zero**. This project aimed to support the construction industry to move to low carbon materials and techniques by upskilling key influencers connected to the industry. **90** individuals completed training at the Construction Scotland Innovation Centre (now BE-ST) on one of five topics – Carbon Accounting, Sustainable Insulation, Mass Timber Solutions, Fabric First, Passivhaus and Retrofit Alignment. A further **529** individuals were supported via webinars (142 live, 387 via recordings on YouTube). The programme also supported the development of the training materials as all of these areas are new, with emerging and new legacy resources a successful outcome of the programme.
- The **Climate Emergency Literary Skills** delivered by Keep Scotland Beautiful offered an introductory-level understanding of the climate emergency across society and offered targeted sector specific programmes to support individuals within their sectors work towards transformational change. **220** individuals across **142** businesses gained carbon literacy accreditation.
- **Transitioning at Pace to Meet Net Zero** was delivered by the Verdancy Group and was aimed at senior leaders to upskill within the practices of implementing change within their organisation to achieve net zero ambition. This was delivered to **157** individuals.

Both Climate Emergency Literary Skills and Transitioning at Pace projects are continuing to be delivered through other revenue streams e.g. local authorities and directly by industry.

- **The Working with Rivers Training Placement Scheme (Net Zero Skills New Entrants Training)** was delivered by NatureScot to provide **20** individuals with a short-term placement to provide net zero work experience. It offered access to high-quality on-the-job experience across a range of employers engaged in natural flood management, riparian woodland creation, and river restoration.

The project helped increase capacity to deliver river restoration projects, with benefits for climate change and the resilience of nature and people. 11 of the participants have taken up employment in the sector, eight of these remaining with the employer who hosted the training placement. One further participant

was offered a post, but chose employment elsewhere and at least one participant will work in this and other nature-based sectors on a self-employed basis, following the placement.

- The final project was the **Net Zero Awareness for Manufacturing SMEs**. With a global focus on decarbonisation as a key part of the economic recovery from Covid-19, this project aimed to ensure that SMEs in engineering and manufacturing are ready to play a role in Scotland's green recovery and can take full advantage of opportunities for diversification, strengthening sustainability, and planning their own net zero route-map. Overall, **100** businesses were supported through this initiative. The project exceeded expectations in terms of awareness, interest, and desire for action from SMEs, with 14 SMEs agreeing to publish a Net Zero Road Map. Scottish Engineering used their own funding to continue the project until December 2022 and maximise its impact.

Green Skills

Green Jobs

To support the transition to, and creation of sustainable jobs, the **Green Jobs** project managed by SE aimed to upskill and retrain workers into sustainable green jobs, providing individuals with job security and career development opportunities, whilst creating a highly skilled workforce.

This project was part of the Green Jobs Fund programme of grants which supported businesses and social enterprises to create and retain jobs that produce goods or services that benefit the environment or conserve natural resources, as well as jobs that help drive more environmentally friendly processes in organisations across Scotland. As this was a capital resource, necessary training for staff involved in delivery of the Fund in businesses was made available through NTTF.

The project succeeded in upskilling **197** individuals and supporting **13** businesses.

Construction

Built Environment –Smarter Transformation (BE-ST) – Skills for a Low Carbon Future

Building on a successful Passivhaus programme in the first year of NTTF, the Low Carbon Learning programme was supported in Year 2 by NTTF and the SFC . In response to growing demand, it expanded to include Passivhaus, retrofit and building fabric.

It provided upskilling and reskilling in Low Carbon Construction with a focus on a fabric first approach to both existing and new buildings. This supported the Scottish Government's 2045 net-zero carbon emissions targets. The **Built Environment – Smarter Transformation (BE-ST) – Skills for a Low Carbon Future** project sought to upskill and reskill existing construction operatives to provide a workforce fit for the future who can rise to the demands of a green recovery. By upskilling the

industry in this way, BE–ST aimed to mitigate the potential for redundancy as it enables the existing workforce to futureproof their skillset.

The project succeeded in training **1,761** individuals, supporting **369** businesses. From a survey of 314 people, 204 (65%) stated that their job had been created or safeguarded due to participating in the Low Carbon Learning Programme. BE-ST also worked closely with Equate Scotland and Women in Property, delivering courses in Passivhaus and Retrofit focusing on female specific sessions. Many of the trainees from the Low Carbon Learning courses are going to utilise this knowledge to impact on large-scale construction projects in Scotland.

Future sustainability of the programme is being developed through successful partnerships with industry, such as Morrison Construction who have led on a collaborative project to design and construct three Passivhaus solution for steel frames. This project is an open learning source for the Built Environment in particular construction industry supply.

Caitriona Jordan, head of retrofit programmes at BE-ST said: “Skills will be an absolutely critical part of helping the construction sector as well as the UK and Scottish economies move towards a zero carbon future. We want to help construction workers develop their knowledge and expertise of the gold standard for energy efficient homes, and the AECB CarbonLite Retrofit course assists in gaining a deeper insight into the fields of retrofit and sustainable building standards.

“More people in the sector with knowledge of these types of buildings and the skills necessary to deliver solutions will help energy efficiency become mainstream. It will also ensure we have a workforce fit for the future and could contribute to creating new jobs in the construction supply chain while addressing societal issues such as fuel poverty.”

Historic Environment Scotland



The **Historic Environment Scotland (HES)** project was introduced by HES to upskill and reskill individuals in construction skills that support their employability needs and the regeneration, maintenance, energy efficiency and retrofit of pre-1919 buildings. Overall, training opportunities were provided for **110** individuals facing the most barriers to work to improve their employability. In addition, partnerships, processes, resources and capacity have been developed through this project to deliver learning opportunities for people facing the most barriers to support them to

enter the construction workforce. This learning is being used to develop new programmes.

Engineering

Energy Skills Partnership

Building on the success of the project in Year 1 of NTTF, the **Energy Skills Partnership** project provided a range of courses supporting Scottish Government's commitment to deliver a Just Transition to Net Zero. Working across the college sector with a range of employers and industry bodies, **412** individuals from the energy and construction sector were upskilled in AY 2021/22 to deliver on Net Zero targets.

Courses delivered included Transition to Wind, Electric Vehicle Maintenance, Air Source/Ground Source Heat Pumps, Solar Thermal and Solar Photovoltaic Installation and Electric Vehicle Charging Systems. The colleges involved in the project demonstrated a good geographical spread and the staff undertaking CPD in Solar Thermal and Heat Pumps were pan-Scotland, positioning colleges at the forefront of training for these sectors across Scotland. This 'train the trainer' approach will allow the NTTF funding to have a continued impact in areas where there is currently high demand such as Solar Photovoltaics, Electric Vehicle Repair and Maintenance Training.

Of those supported, 339 were able to retain their job, whilst 14 have gained new jobs. This will increase the scope for businesses across Scotland who have received training to deliver on large net zero projects.

Case Studies

National Manufacturing Institute Scotland – Manufacturing Skills Academy Graduate Training Scheme

BeYonder

“We are an unorthodox organisation in that we use business as a tool to effect social and environmental change. We use our own modelling to develop roles around people rather than ‘fit’ them into a role. Whilst matching was a core composite of the NTTF programme, we were able to share our modelling so that we could take graduates, who were not so easy to place and work with them over a much shorter period to demonstrate the value graduates can bring to business.

Scotland is rich in diversity of skill, thought, culture and experiences. When you have NMIS and SFC partnering, you want the very best outcomes. Whilst NMIS successfully placed graduates in business using traditional matching methods, they were also very open to working with us to explore our modelling feasibility within the NTTF programme.

We had three graduates placed with us:

- One has now secured full time employment within a software company and will continue to be engaged with us to co-own a new model we will be bringing to raise in six months.
- We have made one of the graduates a co-owner in the project he worked on and we are in the process of going out to raise capital and grant funding for an inclusive, accessible fintech model.
- The final graduate will continue on in part time employment with us through our charity arm as he is going back to university (UWS) to undertake his Masters, where we are in the process of a partnership model with UWS which our NTTF graduate will be integral to.

We are truly thankful to SFC and NMIS for funding the NTTF programme and know that it has been a win for all involved.”

Aerospace Diversification

Martin Precision - Lanark

“To mitigate the impact of Covid we embarked on a strategy of diversifying from Aerospace into the new markets of Medical and Defence. Support from Scottish Enterprise (SE) and Scottish Government through the NTTF allowed us to act quickly and efficiently to reskill and upskill our staff to ensure we had no gaps in capability. As the criteria required in the new markets varies greatly to the standard we worked to for civil aerospace parts this required significant investment which we had not budgeted for.

This training project allowed the team to develop new manufacturing methods, processes and implementation which we hope will reduce our costs, improve quality and help us attract new business. This was an intensive programme which would normally take 12 months to complete however the support from SE allowed us to deliver this as an intensive programme within three months as the trainees were able to spend 100% of their time on this project. To date our staff engagement levels have increased and we have already noted a 15% increase in productivity and expect to see further gains in the future.

Our business development team have been able to seek new business opportunities with confidence that we can deliver to the quality standards expected within the new sectors. We also have a motivated workforce who feel developed, supported and more secure in their working environment and are supportive of the new direction of the business.

This NTTF support has been invaluable, it has allowed us to quote for work we would not have been able to do before and anticipate an increase in sales opportunities in new markets as a direct result.“

6. Equality

In considering how we achieve a fair and equal society, the Scottish Government's [National Strategy for Economic Transformation](#) (NSET) sets out the ambition: 'to create a society that is thriving across economic, social and environmental dimensions, and that delivers prosperity for all Scotland's people and places. A fair and equal society and a wealthier, greener economy are mutually reinforcing.'

In Year 1 of the NTTF, insufficient levels of consistent data were collected across the projects to report on equality. In Year 2, we have addressed this through ensuring a more consistent approach to gathering data as far as was possible across the projects. Providing such data remains entirely voluntary and we do not have data covering all participants. However, sufficient information has been received to offer a view across NTTF, and in particular to highlight areas where we have seen positive outcomes for equality groups.

Data on pregnancy or maternity was not gathered. We are unable to report on gender re-assignment or sexual orientation as the data is not sufficient. In addition, information on religion is very low, although reported below. As a key Scottish Government priority, data on those with care experience has also been reported although again, proportionately few participants provided information on this.

Programme wide equality data

Sex

Of the 15,474 people who completed this part of the application form, 53% participants were male, and 43% were female. 4% preferred not to say or were non-binary/transgender.

Age

Of the 12,186 individuals who provided this information and whose data could be included:

- 23% were aged up to 29;
- 34% were aged 30-39;
- 25% were aged 40-49; and
- 18% were aged 50+

Some projects collected data across different age groups so their information has not been included here.

Disability

Of the 11,260 individuals who provided this information, 15% were disabled.

Race

Of the 11,240 people who provided this information, 12% were from a minority ethnic group.

Religion or belief

Of the 4,366 individuals who provided this information, most (60%) indicated no religion. 32% were Christian, 6% were Muslim. 2% reported 'other religion' while 1% were Hindu and 1% were Sikh. Numbers for the Jewish faith were too low to report.

Other Scottish Government priorities

Care experience

Of the 5,521 individuals providing this information, 7% reported experience of care.

Areas of multiple deprivation.

Of the 10,140 individuals whose data could be processed, 40% lived in the two most deprived Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) quintiles in Scotland.

Summary

It is difficult to interpret data at a high level across such varied projects. The absence of data for some groups in itself highlights an ongoing issue for skills provision and one which we know we must continue to try to address. In addition, as there was insufficient data to report from Year 1, we cannot compare progress.

However, a number of projects were specifically designed to support those facing disadvantage in the labour market, such as LEAD Scotland, the Workers Education Association and one of the NMIS projects. As has been noted this report, they have been successful in delivering provision to help tackle inequality, or in the case of NMIS, attract more women and people from minority ethnic groups into a sector with a traditionally white male workforce. The NMIS work with organisations like Equate will continue as part of its work to bring diversity to the workforce of this key sector.

As the reform of post school education progresses, it will continue to be important to monitor equality data not just in terms of numbers participating but the courses they are undertaking, for example in continuing to tackle the gender imbalance across skills which is part of broader occupational segregation issues in Scotland.

7. Conclusion

As noted at the start of this report, in its second and final year, the NTTF continued to evolve. From focusing primarily on supporting individuals and businesses impacted by the pandemic, its remit broadened to include businesses and areas affected by EU exit and to contribute towards upskilling workforces for the transition to net zero.

With almost double the number of projects across an even broader range of sectors, we have seen over twice the number of training opportunities created in Year 2. The project-based approach enabled a range of different training opportunities in size and type to operate, from small projects such as the Nature Scot Net Zero Skills New Entrants Training supporting 20 people to the Tourism and Hospitality Talent Development Programme which saw over 1,500 individuals undertake the programme.

Scotland's colleges and universities have once again been key delivery partners, with SDS and SE also managing a wide range of projects. Organisations such as the NMIS have again provided high quality opportunities seeking to ensure Scotland has the skilled and diverse workforce needed to help us compete on a global scale in the advanced manufacturing sector.

The programme managed by Scottish Union Learning (SUL) and delivered by Unite the Union saw essential training support offered to the aviation sector at a time when they have faced unprecedented challenges, firstly during the pandemic and then as they addressed skills shortages across Scotland.

Some projects have been less successful than others and we can learn as much from them. There is no doubt that the tight labour market the programme was operating in impacted take up in sectors such as social care, both adult and early years, an issue we have seen reflected in other programmes supporting this sector. Working to a one year budget with short lead in times also affected a number of projects.

Impact on skills landscape

NTTF has enabled colleges and universities to work more closely with local and regional employers to enhance their skills offer for those in and out of work.

Continuing the Skillsboost programme into Year 2, and despite some delivery challenges faced, colleges saw over 4,200 enrolments into short courses linking with local employers to understand and help address skills shortages. There is a clear demand for courses like this and we know some colleges will continue to offer programmes, including the Introduction to Adult Social Care, through their mainstream provision.

Similarly, delivery of NTTF as an addition to the existing Upskilling Fund enabled universities to work more closely with industry to identify workforce training needs and deliver more places, particularly in key sectors such as digital/cyber security and low carbon.

Looking ahead – the National Strategy for Economic Transformation and reform of post-school education, research and skills funding and delivery

Although not continuing into a third year, learning from the two years of NTTF can and will inform the implementation of our NSET Skilled Workforce commitments.

In Year 2 NTTF has reached individuals at all level of learning – from community-based learning through to higher education. As we implement the range of projects within the Skilled Workforce priority of NSET, many of these individuals are in work and some will have accessed training opportunities which would not in the past have been available to them. To achieve a skilled workforce that is able at every stage of working life to access the training needed to meet the changing demand of the labour market, it is critical we understand how to reach those who are not motivated to upskill or reskill.

The work to implement the commitments in NSET will be taken forward within a programme of broader planned reform of post school education, research and skills. This will build on the findings of three key reports:

- The final [Coherent Provision and Sustainability: A Review of Tertiary Education and Research](#) report by the Scottish Funding Council sets out the significant strengths of Scotland’s colleges and universities, the challenges they face and makes key recommendations for system change.ⁱ
- The report by Professor Louise Hayward following her [Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment \(IRQA\)](#) recommends reform of the current senior school phase; and.ⁱⁱ
- The Review by James Withers of [Scotland’s Skills Landscape](#) which recommends major structural reforms to the current way skills are delivered in Scotland.ⁱⁱⁱ

The first key strand of work, the [Publication of the Purpose and Principles](#) for post-school education, research and skills was published in June 2023.^{iv} This sets out the framework for decision making for post-school education, skills and research to ensure the system is fit for the future, delivering the best outcomes for learners, employers and the public investment we make.

The NTTF projects which ran over the last two years can inform all of this work in some way. There is clearly an ongoing demand for flexible, business specific training across a wide range of sectors and in all parts of Scotland which can help to address the skills shortages being experienced now as well as supporting future skills needs.

End Notes

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- ⁱ Coherent Provision and Sustainability: A Review of Tertiary Education and Research report (June 2021), Scottish Funding Council – <https://www.sfc.ac.uk/about-sfc/review/review.aspx>
- ⁱⁱ It's Our Future - Independent Review of Qualifications and Assessment report (June 2023), Professor Louise Hayward – <https://www.gov.scot/publications/future-report-independent-review-qualifications-assessment/>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Fit for the Future: developing a post-school learning system to fuel economic transformation (June 2023), James Withers – <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fit-future-developing-post-school-learning-system-fuel-economic-transformation/>
- ^{iv} Post-school education, research and skills - purpose and principles (June 2023), Scottish Government – <https://www.gov.scot/publications/post-school-education-research-skills-purpose-principles/> and <https://www.gov.scot/publications/post-school-education-research-skills-purpose-principles/documents/>



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