

EXAMPLE ONE

Project Proposal: Developing Digital Construction Skills

Disclaimer: The following example is provided to support applicants in understanding the level of detail and content expected during the application process. It is intended for illustrative purposes only and does not indicate any preference or endorsement. The details are purely fictional and should not be considered reflective of specific program requirements or priorities.

Project Title: Digital Construction Academy

This proposal seeks **£2.3 million** from the Asset Skills Enhancement Capability (ASEC) Fund to establish the **Digital Construction Academy**, a specialised training facility addressing the growing demand for digital construction skills in the Sizewell C project and beyond. The Academy will provide advanced training in Building Information Modelling (BIM), virtual design, and other digital construction technologies, ensuring that the regions workforce is prepared for the evolving needs of the construction sector. This initiative will prioritize accessibility for individuals from underrepresented groups and deprived areas, creating a future-ready workforce and a lasting skills legacy for the region.

Project Objectives

The Digital Construction Academy will meet the pressing need for digital skills in the construction industry by:

1. Training 450 individuals in advanced digital construction techniques over three years.
2. Upskilling 12 trainers in cutting-edge technologies to deliver high-quality instruction.
3. Developing and delivering a curriculum aligned with Sizewell C's digital construction needs.
4. Enhancing diversity by targeting recruitment from underserved communities.
5. Creating pathways to employment and further learning opportunities in digital construction.

Evidence of Regional Need

The UK construction industry is rapidly transitioning toward digital technologies, with Building Information Modelling (BIM) now a standard for large-scale infrastructure projects. Sizewell C, as one of Europe's largest infrastructure projects, will rely heavily on digital construction practices to manage its complexity. However, a skills gap in this area persists both nationally and regionally.

Suffolk's Technical Skills Legacy report highlights the need for skilled workers proficient in digital tools for construction management, design, and maintenance. Locally, research shows

that only 15% of construction workers in Suffolk possess digital skills relevant to BIM or virtual design. Without intervention, Suffolk risks over-reliance on external contractors, as seen at other infrastructure projects.

This proposal draws inspiration from the Hinkley Point C Digital Construction Skills Initiative, which successfully trained over 400 individuals in BIM and related technologies, reducing dependency on out-of-region workers and leaving a digital skills training legacy for the Southwest. The Digital Construction Academy aims to replicate and expand on this success, tailored to the region's needs.

Project Details

The Digital Construction Academy will focus on delivering advanced training in BIM, 3D modelling, virtual reality (VR)-based project management, and drone-based site mapping. These skills will be critical for Sizewell C's main civils and mechanical phases, enabling precise planning, efficient resource management, and improved project outcomes.

The Academy will be housed in a repurposed facility in Ipswich, outfitted with state-of-the-art technology, including VR headsets, high-performance CAD systems, and drone equipment. The curriculum, developed in partnership with Sizewell C Co. and local employers, will cover:

- BIM fundamentals and advanced applications.
- 3D modelling for construction and design.
- Digital site surveying using drones and other technologies.
- Data analytics for project planning and management.

Outreach efforts will target underrepresented groups, including women, young people from deprived areas, and career changers. Financial support, such as travel subsidies and bursaries, will reduce barriers to participation.

Outcomes and Impacts

The Digital Construction Academy will equip 450 individuals with industry-relevant digital construction skills over three years, directly reducing reliance on external labour for Sizewell C and future regional projects. The initiative will improve employability, increase average wages, and create pathways for lifelong learning in digital construction.

Additional outcomes include enhanced regional capacity for digital construction, improved project delivery efficiencies, and stronger collaboration between local employers and training providers. The Academy's legacy will extend beyond Sizewell C, establishing the region as a hub for digital construction expertise.

Partnerships and Collaboration

Key collaborators include:

- **Sizewell C Co**, offering guidance on workforce needs.
- **Local Employers**, including construction firms in the Sizewell C supply chain, contributing in-kind support such as equipment loans and guest trainers.

- **Further Education Institutions**, including College X, supporting curriculum development and delivery.

Funding Request and Allocation

The requested **£2.3 million** from the ASEC Fund will be allocated as follows:

- Facility refurbishment and technology procurement: £1.2 million.
- Curriculum development and trainer upskilling: £600,000.
- Program delivery, including staffing and outreach: £500,000.

Additional funding includes £450,000 in match contributions from X. and in-kind support from local employers, ensuring the project's financial sustainability and broad stakeholder engagement.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The project will be closely monitored to ensure alignment with its objectives. Progress reports will track metrics such as enrolment, program completion rates, and post-training employment. Employer satisfaction surveys and participant feedback will inform continuous improvement efforts.

Upon project completion, an independent evaluation will assess its long-term impact on digital construction skills provision and regional economic outcomes. The evaluation will provide insights for scaling the model to other infrastructure projects.

EXAMPLE TWO

Project Proposal: Enhancing Norfolk and Suffolks Capacity for Operations and Maintenance Training

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Project Title: Operations and Maintenance Skills Expansion at Facility X

This proposal seeks **£1.2 million** from the Asset Skills Enhancement Capability (ASEC) Fund to enhance Facility X's capacity to deliver operations and maintenance (O&M) training for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs). By upgrading existing facilities and developing new courses, the College will address critical skills shortages in O&M roles required to support Norfolk and Suffolk's growing portfolio of infrastructure projects, including Sizewell C and offshore wind farms.

The enhanced program will train 300 individuals over three years in high-demand technical skills, equipping residents for stable, long-term careers in infrastructure maintenance. By leveraging existing resources and industry partnerships, this proposal offers a cost-effective way to meet regional needs while leaving a lasting legacy of workforce development.

Project Objectives

The project will expand facility X's ability to:

1. Train 300 individuals in key O&M roles over three years.
2. Enhance existing training spaces with new equipment for hands-on and digital learning.
3. Develop and deliver specialized O&M courses aligned with NSIP workforce demands.
4. Strengthen partnerships with NSIP operators and local employers to ensure job placement opportunities.
5. Increase accessibility for underrepresented groups, particularly from deprived communities in Norfolk and Suffolk.

Evidence of Regional Need

Norfolk and Suffolk is home to a disproportionately high number of NSIPs, with X planned or under construction, including Sizewell C, offshore wind farms, and interconnector projects. Each project requires a long-term, highly skilled O&M workforce.

A regional labour market assessment highlights significant gaps in technical skills for O&M, particularly in mechanical and electrical maintenance, fault diagnostics, and digital infrastructure monitoring. For example:

- Only **15%** of local workers in X possess the technical qualifications needed for NSIP O&M roles.
- Without local training programs, Norfolk and Suffolk risks relying on out-of-region contractors, reducing economic benefits for the community.

Lessons from Hinkley Point C underline the importance of local training solutions. Facility X is well-positioned to replicate this success by enhancing its existing training offerings.

Project Details

Upgrading Facilities

The project will refurbish and equip an existing training workshop at Facility X to deliver hands-on O&M training. Planned upgrades include:

- New mechanical and electrical maintenance tools.
- Digital monitoring and diagnostic equipment.
- Simulators for renewable energy systems, such as wind turbine maintenance.

Developing O&M Courses

Facility X will collaborate with NSIP operators and local employers to design courses aligned with industry standards. These will include:

- Mechanical and electrical fault diagnostics.
- Renewable energy systems maintenance.
- Data-driven infrastructure monitoring and management.

The courses will be modular, accommodating learners from entry-level to advanced stages, and will align with National Occupational Standards for O&M roles.

Fostering Accessibility

The project will target recruitment efforts toward underrepresented groups, including women, young people from deprived areas, and career changers. Support measures such as bursaries, travel subsidies, and flexible course schedules will ensure accessibility for all participants.

Outcomes and Impacts

The enhanced program at Facility X will train 300 individuals in O&M roles, directly addressing regional skills gaps and reducing reliance on external contractors. Other outcomes include:

- Increased employment opportunities for residents in NSIPs.
- Strengthened relationships between local employers and training providers.
- Long-term economic benefits through higher wages and improved career pathways in infrastructure maintenance.

The project will also establish Facility X as a regional leader in O&M skills training, creating a scalable model for other institutions.

Partnerships and Collaboration

This initiative is supported by:

- **Sizewell C Co.**, providing £250,000 in match funding and curriculum input.
- **Scottish Power Renewables**, contributing in-kind resources such as guest trainers and access to live project sites for practical learning.
- **Local Employers**, including contractors in NSIP supply chains, offering job placement opportunities and apprenticeships for graduates.
- County Councils and District Councils will provide support through advisory roles, ensuring alignment with regional economic priorities.

Funding Request and Allocation

The requested **£1.2 million** from the ASEC Fund will be allocated as follows:

- **£600,000** for facility refurbishment and equipment procurement.
- **£400,000** for curriculum development and trainer upskilling.
- **£200,000** for program delivery, including outreach and learner support.

An additional **£250,000 in match funding** from SZC Tier 1 Suppliers., combined with in-kind contributions from Scottish Power Renewables and local employers, ensures robust financial support for the project.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The project will be monitored through quarterly progress reports to the Regional Skills Coordination Function (RSCF). Key metrics will include:

- Enrolment and completion rates for O&M courses.
- Employment outcomes, including job placements in NSIP-related roles.
- Participant satisfaction and diversity metrics.

An independent evaluation will assess the project's overall impact on Norfolk and Suffolk's workforce development, ensuring accountability and providing insights for future initiatives.

By enhancing existing resources at Facility X, this project offers a practical, cost-effective solution to Norfolk and Suffolk's O&M skills gap. The ASEC Fund's investment will enable residents to seize the long-term career opportunities created by NSIPs, ensuring that the region reaps the full benefits of its infrastructure development.