

# EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND CALL 3 VISIT

European Social Fund provision in DFPF Limited (trading as  
People 1<sup>st</sup>)

Build a Career in Construction

Report of a Call 3 Visit in November 2022



Providing Inspection services for:  
Department of Education  
Department for the Economy  
and other commissioning Departments



## Contents

Context.....	2
Views of participants .....	2
Focus of the Call 3 Visit.....	2
Key Findings .....	3
Safeguarding.....	4
Overall outcome .....	4
APPENDIX .....	5
A. Call 3 Performance Data .....	5
B. Methodology and evidence base.....	5
C. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate.....	5

## Context

DFPF Limited trading as People 1<sup>st</sup> (People 1<sup>st</sup>) is contracted by the Department for the Economy (DfE) to deliver the Build a Career in Construction European Social Fund (ESF) project, as part of a third Call for projects which will run from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The project is aimed at young people aged from 16 years to 24 years who are not in employment, education or training.

This project is part funded through the Northern Ireland European Social Fund Programme 2014-2020 and DfE. The strategic aim of the Programme is to: combat poverty and enhance social inclusion by reducing economic inactivity; and to increase the skills base of those currently in work and future potential participants in the workforce. It is aligned to the European Union 2020 Strategy for Jobs and Growth.

Following an initial baseline visit in September 2022, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) carried out a Call 3 visit in November 2022 to People 1<sup>st</sup> on behalf of DfE to evaluate the capacity of the project promoter to identify and bring about improvement in the quality of the provision.

## Views of participants

At the time of the Call 3 visit, ten participants<sup>1</sup> were registered on the project.

While none of the participants completed the online questionnaire, ETI met and spoke with a sample of them during their learning and development session and in a focus group.

The participants reported that: they enjoyed their training and their experiences on the project were positive; the project was helping them to develop skills and competences that would allow them to progress; they were well supported during their learning and development sessions; and they felt safe and knew who to contact if they had an issue or problem.

## Focus of the Call 3 Visit

During the Call 3 visit, ETI evaluated the effectiveness of the quality improvement planning processes and focused on two of the key areas which the organisation had prioritised for improvement through its self-evaluation and quality improvement planning processes, to ensure that:

- overall project targets are achieved; and
- 
- participants achieve their individual targets.

The arrangements for safeguarding were also included.

---

<sup>1</sup> All performance data in this report was provided by the ESF project promoter.

## Key Findings

The Call 3 visit identified the following key findings which include any areas for improvement to be addressed for the remainder of the third Call.

- An appropriate curriculum is in place and has been developed to best support the learning and development needs of the participants, all of whom present with barriers to progression and varied educational achievements and profiles.
- Since the ETI baseline visit in September 2022, there has been a review of the recruitment process and the delivery of the project. As a result, there has been increased engagement with community hubs to promote the project, a revision of the qualification units and a change to the training timetable to better suit the needs of the participants, with more targeted support to enable them to better achieve their individual targets. These actions have helped to increase recruitment levels and work is continuing to improve outcomes and demonstrate the impact of the project on the participants.
- The participants have opportunities to undertake a level 1 award in vocational skills comprising two joinery units, two brickwork units, an employment rights and responsibilities unit, and a health and safety in practice unit; and they can also attain a Construction Skills Register (CSR) card. On completion of the project, they can progress to further training and learning within the organisation, including the Skills for Life and Work or ApprenticeshipsNI programmes, also to employment, or to other external training provision. The training accommodation and physical resources in place to support the delivery of the project are of a high quality.
- The learning and teaching observed was effective and well planned. The participants engaged well, and mutually respectful relationships were evident between the participants and the tutor. Questioning was used well by the tutor to elicit the participants' understanding of the work being undertaken and appropriate strategies were used to develop practical joinery skills. There was an appropriate focus on working safely when using power tools. In the workshop, the participants demonstrated a range of skills including measuring, marking out, and the use of hand tools and a power saw to prepare and fix timber skirting boards. The standards of practical work observed were good or better. The work in the participants' portfolios of evidence was also of an appropriate standard with evidence of written responses to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of their vocational training.
- Effective processes are in place to track and monitor the progress the participants are making in their learning and training. Initial assessment and the monitoring of distance travelled by the participants in overcoming their barriers to progression informs well the personal action planning process. The action plans are reviewed and updated regularly by the project team using a Red, Amber and Green (RAG) system, and communication with the participants is appropriately recorded and monitored through a detailed engagement log, including any issues arising.

- The project staff are well-experienced in working with young people with learning and personal and social development needs and are committed to mentoring the participants and supporting them to progress. They spoke about the good working relationships and opportunities to undertake relevant continuous professional development.
- The number of participants recruited to the project to date is 67% against the overall recruitment target; most have been retained on the project. None of the participants have progressed to employment to date. Progression to education and/or training is 38% against the target. Management is committed to ensuring that as many of the participants as possible, who remain on the project to the end of Call 3, complete and achieve their individual targets. Consideration is also being given to how longer-term support can be provided for participants, if required. In the meantime, however, it is necessary that the project promoter considers and reviews as appropriate the overall targets with DfE.
- The project is led and managed effectively. A concise self-evaluation of the quality of the project has identified key strengths and relevant areas for improvement and an appropriate action plan has been put in place, which is reviewed regularly. Overall, the leadership and management is planning appropriately for learning and quality improvement, including planning for sustainability and progression of participants.
- Appropriate links and partnerships have been developed with a range of stakeholders including statutory agencies, support organisations, community and voluntary organisations and employers for referral and recruitment purposes, and to support and signpost participants to enable them to overcome their barriers to progression. The employer interviewed indicated that effective communication and working relationships have been developed with the organisation, including timely and responsive support in dealing with any emerging issues.

## Safeguarding

Based on the evidence available at the time of the Call 3 visit, the arrangements for safeguarding participants of the Build a Career in Construction ESF project reflect current legislation and practice.

## Overall outcome

At the time of the Call 3 visit, and in the areas evaluated, People 1<sup>st</sup> demonstrates capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the quality of provision for the Build a Career in Construction ESF project.

# APPENDIX

## A. Call 3 Performance Data

### European Social Fund – Build a Career in Construction Since 1 April 2022<sup>2</sup>

Numbers of enrolments and % against target	16 (67%)
Numbers of participants into employment upon leaving and % against target	0 (0%)
Numbers of participants into education and/or training upon leaving and % against target	3 (38%)
Retention – Number of early leavers and % against target	2 (88%)

## B. Methodology and evidence base

ETI observed one learning and development session, spoke with a sample of participants in their learning and development session and in a focus group, had discussions with an employer and key staff (to include quality improvement and safeguarding arrangements). The participants had the opportunity to complete a confidential questionnaire. Inspectors also scrutinised relevant data and documentation.

ETI's Inspection and Self-Evaluation Framework is available on the [ETI website](#).

## C. Reporting terms used by the Education and Training Inspectorate

In this report, proportions may be described as percentages, common fractions and in more general quantitative terms. Where more general terms are used, they should be interpreted as follows:

Almost/nearly all	-	more than 90%
Most	-	75% - 90%
A majority	-	50% - 74%
A significant minority	-	30% - 49%
A minority	-	10% - 29%
Very few/a small number	-	less than 10%

<sup>2</sup> 1 April 2022 – 28 November 2022.

## Overall outcome

ETI use one of the following outcomes when evaluating the overall effectiveness of the project promoter:

At the time of the Call 3 visit, and in the areas evaluated, xxxx demonstrates a high level of capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the quality of the provision for the xx ESF project.

At the time of the Call 3 visit, and in the areas evaluated, xxxx demonstrates capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the quality of provision for the xx ESF project.

At the time of the Call 3 visit, and in the areas evaluated, xxxx has not demonstrated sufficient capacity to identify and bring about improvement in the quality of the provision for the xx ESF project. ETI will continue to monitor how the project promoter brings about improvement and the Department for the Economy may consider further action.

## Safeguarding outcome

ETI use one of the following outcomes when evaluating the project promoter's arrangements for safeguarding the participants:

Based on the evidence available at the time of the Call 3 visit, the arrangements for safeguarding the participants of the xx ESF project reflect current legislation and practice.

Based on the evidence available at the time of the Call 3 visit, the arrangements for safeguarding the participants of the xx ESF project reflect broadly current legislation and practice.

The project promoter, however, needs to: ....

Based on the evidence available at the time of the Call 3 visit, the arrangements for safeguarding the participants of the xx ESF project are unsatisfactory. <DN insert detail>.

ETI will return to the project promoter within six working weeks to monitor and report on progress in addressing the safeguarding issues which have been identified.

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2023

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part, except for commercial purposes or in connection with a prospectus or advertisement, provided that the source and date thereof are stated.

Copies of this report are available on the [ETI website](#)

Follow us on  [@ETI\\_news](#)  [@ETInews](#)  InsPIRE