



Co-op Levy Share Receiving Employer Toolkit



It's what we do

What's the Co-op Levy Share?

At Co-op, we are committed to helping people to find and stay in meaningful employment. Covid-19 has exacerbated existing inequalities and far from being a great 'social leveller', the virus has highlighted social disadvantages, particularly in relation to race, class and age.

We recognise that it can be difficult to spend the levy, even for organisations who already provide apprenticeship opportunities and believe that the unspent funds (£330 million was returned to Treasury in 2019/20) could be better used to support people into employment and to progress in their careers at a time of economic turmoil.

Since April 2019, levy-paying employers have been able to transfer a maximum of 25% of their annual funds to other organisations. In February 2021 we announced our collaboration with Business In The Community (www.bitc.org.uk) to create a Levy Share opportunity in order to support apprenticeships for individuals from underrepresented groups. We want to work with other like-minded employers to create a £15 million fund that will support the training and assessment of thousands of apprentices.

We have a specific ambition to close the 'opportunity gap' in apprenticeships for individuals from ethnic minority

backgrounds who are underrepresented within apprenticeships, (making up 15.6% of the working age population but just 10.5% of apprentices) and support as many people into employment and career progression as possible; however the scheme is intended to address underrepresentation in all groups.



Any employer receiving funding for the training of an apprentice from the Co-op Levy Share service must commit to paying them the National Living Wage.

What are the benefits of taking part in the Co-op Levy Share?

By connecting with organisations who wish to donate some of their levy, you will be able to use the funds to achieve your apprenticeship ambitions. You'll receive full funding for the training and assessment costs, and the money can be used either for new recruits or to support the development of existing colleagues. The funding is available to organisations who already have Apprentices as well as those who are at the start of their journey.

Although there isn't any requirement to engage with the donating organisation beyond sharing funds, this could be a great opportunity to form links-either in relation to the Apprentice activity or in a wider business context.

The donating organisations will have control over how and where their unspent levy is used, targeting sectors, geographical locations or communities they want to support so you may wish to consider if there are avenues you would like to explore. For example: could Apprentices from the donating organisation mentor or support your new Apprentices, sharing experience and learnings and creating an external network? Do you have expertise in a specific skill or sector that could be helpful to the donating organisation or vice versa? Does the donating organisation have insight or networks that could support you in your priorities for this year or beyond? Even if there aren't immediate opportunities for collaboration, participation in the service will create a link between the two organisations that can be explored at a later date should you wish to do so.

How does it work?

We have created an online matching service www.cooplevshare.co.uk. Once you have registered, you can create an opportunity which will be visible to levy donors who are registered on the site (the site works on an algorithm that matches the preferences of levy donors with the opportunities posted by organisations looking for funding).

It is important to point out that we cannot guarantee a levy transfer match will take place, however posting an opportunity on the site will certainly raise the likelihood of finding a donor.

On the portal you will have access to supporting videos and FAQs. When you have registered you will be contacted by the The Growth Company (our Partner for the service) if there are any suitable matches in the system.

What the fund covers

Funding is for Apprentices of any age, from levels 2 (entry level) to 7 (post Graduate level).

The money you receive will support the training and assessment costs of the full apprenticeship. It will be paid monthly for the duration of the apprenticeship (from one to five years depending on the level) and **cannot be used to pay salaries or any other associated costs of employment.**

The Apprentices can be new hires or existing employees.



If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact us info@cooplevshare.co.uk

Supporting your Apprentices

If this is the first time you will have Apprentices in your organisation, we've found that incorporating the following into their time on the programme can be really beneficial:

- Regular 1-1 time with their Line Manager to discuss progress and any support that they may need.
- Regular 1-1 time with the person accountable for Apprenticeships to ensure that they are receiving the required 20% time off-job to complete their studies and any other support they need, as well as to receive feedback of their experience with the Training Provider.
- Assign a mentor- this could be a previous Apprentice or a colleague with experience of the role they are doing.
- Include the Apprentice in all meetings and events, as you would any other member of the team.
- Make sure that the Apprentice has a Personal Development Plan.

Things to think about

The Levy Share service is one part of Co-op's commitment to Social Mobility and Inclusion. If you don't already belong to the following networks or charters, we'd highly recommend taking a look:

- Apprenticeship Ambassador Network (engage.apprenticeships.gov.uk/aan)
- Young Apprenticeship Ambassador (amazingapprenticeships.com)
- Race at Work Charter - Business in the Community (bitc.org.uk)
- All Equals Charter - (allequalscharter.com)
- Stonewall (www.stonewall.org.uk)
- The Valuable 500 (thevaluable500.com)
- Disability Confident - Are you disability confident? (campaign.gov.uk)

Further incentives to support apprentices:

Employees receive £3000

for new employees of any age who start their apprenticeship from 1 April 2021 to 30 September 2021.



Additional £1000

for apprentices 16-18 and those under 25 with an Educational Health Care Plan.



Employers receive £1000

for up to 10 traineeship learners supported throughout work placement.



Employers receive £750

for each work experience placement offered to students 16-14 on a T-Level programme.



Kickstart scheme

Government pays wages for 6 months for a young person 16-24 and on Universal credit and at the threat of long-term unemployment.



Additional £1000

when employing a new apprentice under 25 through the Recruit Retain Reward scheme.

