ULO funding FAQs

This information was provided on 1 April 2025 and we're sharing these queries and responses so all organisations interested in applying for the grant funding have access to the same information.

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Can we offer 1-1 support?

Can we offer 1:1 support with PA recruitment and management, and wider work around day-to-day care package management. I am aware that this isn't exactly training in the structured sense, but I was wondering whether it's something that could be covered in an application, or whether it's something that doesn't quite fit within your remit?

- The funding is part of the Workforce Development Fund, which is provided to Skills for Care by the Department of Health and Social Care to disburse, on their behalf, to the adult social care sector to pay for learning and development of those working in adult social care (in this case personal assistants). ULO funding can also support learning and development of people employing personal assistants.
- The funding cannot be used to pay for ongoing support service in relation to managing a care package, recruiting and managing personal assistants as providing that advice and guidance (either directly or through a commissioned local support service) is the responsibility of a person's local authority.
- Funding has been awarded in the past for training such as being a good employer/how to be an employer of personal assistants which may cover aspects of recruiting and how to manage personal assistants, whether that is delivered on a 1:1 basis or as part of a group training session.

Can a charity registered with Care Quality Commission (CQC) and employs care workers apply?

I am very interested to know if our organisation, who supports all people with disabilities, would be eligible to apply for this grant funding. Our charity's beneficiaries are unpaid carers, and those they care for. Are we able to apply for this funding?

- Organisations that are care providers employing care workers are not eligible to apply for ULO funding, they may wish to consider Learning and Development Support Scheme for the adult social care workforce: a guide for employers - GOV.UK
    - This fund allows employers to claim back money towards the costs of workers completing a broad range of adult social care qualifications, learning programmes and digital learning modules. To claim funding, an organisation must provide an adult social care service and directly employ care staff.
- Organisations supporting unpaid carers that do not employ personal assistants are not eligible to apply for ULO funding.
- Organisations that do not provide services in relation to self-directed support, direct payment support or that do not have direct contact with people employing personal assistants using direct payments or their own money are not eligible to apply for ULO funding

We have service users on our Board of Trustees, to ensure that the organisation is service user led. Are we able to apply for this funding?

- Applicants must be organisations who are run for, and by, people with a disability or long-term health condition (disabled people's user led organisations). For example, organisations that have a minimum membership of 75% of disabled people on their board and employ disabled staff and volunteers, including disabled people, people who use mental health services, people with learning disabilities, older people, and their families and carers.
- Applicants must have direct contact with people who employ PAs (known as individual employers) and PAs, and access to their contact details.

We have a dedicated training room and staff with up to date equipment to teach all topics outlined within the specification for this funding, are we able to apply for this funding?

- If the training you offer is appropriate for individual employers and personal assistants, but your organisation is not able to demonstrate that it is a disabled people's user-led organisation or has direct links with individual employers and personal assistants, you may want to consider partnering/working with a local disabled people's user led organisation that works directly with individual employers and their personal assistants.
- This would mean that the ULO would submit an application for the ULO funding, and you could work together to enable the training you provide to be extended to personal assistants and employers they engage with. Skills for Care locality managers may be able to help facilitate any local links.
- Training providers are not eligible to apply for ULO funding.

Please can you provide any further information around the funding envelope that we can apply for, so that we may model a suitable offer for PAs and their employer?

- We do not specify how much funding can be applied for, this is because any bid should be based on need, which has been identified by carrying out a learning needs analysis or consultation with individual employers and PAs.
- Any application submitted for funding should be scalable and be able to demonstrate value for money.

Can PAs working with children be included on a funding application and access any funded training.

PAs working with children are not able to access the funded training.

When does the training need to be provided?

It is expected that successful funding applications will be announced by the end of June 2025. Any training funded through ULO funding will need to take place between the dates the grant agreement is made and end of March 2026.

Can direct payment organisations apply for ULO funding?

- Applicants must be organisations who are run for, and by, people with a disability or long-term health condition (disabled people's user led organisations). For example, organisations that have a minimum membership of 75% of disabled people on their board and employ disabled staff and volunteers, including disabled people, people who use mental health services, people with learning disabilities, older people, and their families and carers.
- Applicants must have direct contact with people who employ PAs (known as individual employers) and PAs, and access to their contact details.
- Organisations that only provide services for people who access care and support (e.g. payroll providers, charities who are not user-led, etc.) are not eligible to apply for ULO funding

Can we include some kind of surplus for emergency expenditures, like providing a BSL interpreter at the last minute and putting reasonable adjustments in place, on applications?

Costs to meet access needs of those attending training can be included in ULO funding applications.

On the application full cost breakdown spreadsheet do you have to list every single course if you are running the same course multiple times, for example, first aid once per week?

No, you can include a training course subject once and the total amounts and learning outcomes that will be achieved on one line. There is space on the spreadsheet to add more information, which could include deliver dates or how many times the training course will be run.

Are there any types of partners that should not be included on an application form?

- Training providers should not be included as a partner, as they will be included as the learning provider in section 3 of the application.

- Partners should be those that will add value to the project, extend the reach of the funding and the training offer.

When will the funding be confirmed?

We will communicate funding decisions by the end of June 2025.

Can you let me know what the maximum amount is for the funding bids for the next round of grants for DLOs?

We don't have a maximum limit as it's important that you propose the training that your research indicates;

Is really needed and in the way that will best meet people's needs, and

You are confident that you (or your partnership) can find learners for and deliver. Since if you are successful that will be the performance measure and we want to ensure that all of the funding is used appropriately before April 2025.

If it helps, in 24/25 the total fund was £750,000 and that was for 25 grants. The largest amount was for around £80,000 and the smallest around £7,000. We have indicated that we would welcome proposals from partnerships and for successful organisations to collaborate on the offer. The key is that you should be confident that what you propose is both needed and achievable.

Can you apply to the fund more than once, to enable us to work in partnership with different organisations, enabling us to deliver more learning outcomes. Would you be able to confirm if this is the case?

We recommend that you put all the activity you are leading in ONE application and if you feel it's necessary you can describe it as separate parts.

You CAN be named as partners in multiple applications and lead one and be partners in others – but you need to be confident you can deliver everything you are proposing to deliver if all those applications are successful.

Are you looking for one of the funded organisations to take a lead in promoting ALL courses across all organisations? (How many organisations do you fund on average?)

In 24/25 it was 25 organisations, with a total of around 750k. I hope you'd agree it's not helpful to any of us if organisations with similar offers are 'competing' for learners, or duplicating work that can be done once and then used by several people. We are interested to hear how you think the outcome of a cohesive offer can be achieved. I'm assuming that yes one organisation would be well placed to take a lead in promoting ALL courses across all organisations, though it may be that this is

not feasible or that you feel a partnership approach to this would be best - so we are open to suggestions. And with that said we will also want all funded organisations and partners to play their part in promoting their own offer and other organisations offer and in collaborating with the organisation(s) doing the overall co-ordination and promotion.

Is there a webpage set up to promote this? Are there templates in place to collect information and Social Media accounts set up?

No there aren't so if you think this is the best was to promote a cohesive offer to potential learners then we'd be looking to you to offer this and we will offer support from Skills for Care in sharing and promoting this and would expect all funded orgs and partnerships to do this as well.

Can you clarify if you can apply for funding if you're a new company starting up who support people within the criteria?

If its a user-led organisation, its perfectly fine for you to apply as a new company. On the application form there is a link to some guidance as well: User Led Organisation Funding (skillsforcare.org.uk). So as long as you meet the criteria and are able to evidence the courses you want to deliver, learning outcomes, the benefit etc then its ok to do so.