

Yorks. & Humber ASC International Recruitment Fund

Bursary Acceptance Criteria

Overview:

Announced in February 2023, the [International Recruitment Fund](#) aims to increase the capacity of Adult Social Care nationally, with the fund dispersed through the 9 ADASS regions.

In our region (Yorkshire & Humber), we have agreed to utilise most of the Fund to offer 360 bursaries of £3k each to Small and Medium Enterprises providing care and support, who would like to recruit from overseas to increase the capacity of their front-line workforce. This the fund can be used to support the international recruitment of care workers, senior care workers, and Registered Nurses.

In addition to increasing capacity within the care sector, the bursary scheme requires an ethical, sustainable approach to international recruitment, with the wellbeing and best interests of the sponsored migrant and the people in receipt of care being paramount.

Application Process

The application process will consist of:

- a. The Provider completing an [online application form](#) before the end of **08-12-2023**.
- b. This will be reviewed by the project team and relevant LA Commissioners.
- c. Applying Providers may be contacted to provide additional information during this period.
- d. A decision be reached and communicated before 22-12-2023.
- e. A second round of applications may be opened in January 2024 if not all bursaries have been allocated.

Prerequisite Requirements:

All bursary recipients must be:

1. a Small to Medium Enterprise (less than 249 full-time equivalent employees).
2. registered with the CQC as a provider of adult social care, with an overall rating of 'Outstanding', 'Good' or 'Requires Improvement', and must NOT be an employment agent or intermediary. Providers must have already received a CQC inspection and cannot be unrated.
3. located (as determined by registered CQC location) and operating in the region, with work undertaken by the sponsored migrant undertaken within the region (neither the worker nor the work undertaken can be passported).
4. considered to have a stable business model by their host local authority (this will be part of our application checks).
5. in good financial order with no risk of financial hardship in the next 12 months, not suspended from their host LA, or subject to any safeguarding intervention.
6. current Sponsor license holders, or with an application underway, to allow active recruitment during the period of this project (1st April '23 - 15th March '24).

7. able to employ sponsored migrants on a permanent, established contract on a full-time basis (at least 35 hours), that offers at least the minimum salary threshold for the skill shortage [occupational code](#), and that is sponsored for an initial period of at least 2 years. The work undertaken be directly delivering regulated care services (neither the work nor the worker can be passported)
8. In addition to the above, providers must be committed to
 - a. using the available resources to support the international recruitment and retention process, as guided by the project team, as appropriate.
 - b. following the national [Code of practice for the international recruitment of health and social care personnel in England](#).
 - c. ensuring that recruitment is done via recognised ethical pathways (such as the [Ethical Recruiters List](#) or a similarly robust agreement with local ICBs).
 - d. undertaking due diligence to avoid involvement in exploitative or illegal recruitment or labour practices (see conditions below)
 - e. accessing peer support and learning within the local health & social care system as appropriate to your geographical context.

Use of Bursaries:

Note that this the fund can be used to support the international recruitment of care workers, senior care workers, and Registered Nurses.

Bursaries must be:

- used towards efforts to recruit and retain staff from overseas using a sponsorship licence. Please note that we will prioritise applications for new sponsorship, but we will accept and consider requests for a bursary which may enhance the offer of support to an existing recruit.
- match funded. International Recruitment is not a cheap option, and it is important that Providers are aware that the £3,000 of a bursary will not be enough to fully subsidise an organisation's financial commitments when undertaking it. The provider must, therefore, commit to contribute at least an additional £3,000 on top of the value of the bursary, leading to a £6,000 total business investment.

Beyond this, we are keen to allow for flexibility in how the monies are used, to meet the local requirement. We would suggest bursaries could be used towards:

- Using the services of a recruitment agent to identify suitable overseas workers, however it must be from an [approved provider](#) and it must be guaranteed that the agent does not charge the individual worker for anything.
- Legal support or specialist agency services such as an advice or an application checking service or compliance audits.
- Use of a technological solution for selection, recruitment, or retention (e.g., support of overseas workers).
- Supporting workers with the costs of coming to the UK (e.g., all or part of flight cost, initial temporary accommodation, furniture or supplies)
- Transporting workers for relocation purposes e.g., meeting them at the airport
- To support new workers (training, peer support/buddying schemes, advanced English language, pastoral activity such as counselling or support to attend diaspora groups)

- DHSC guidance also states that grants can be used towards the cost of home office fees for obtaining a licence / certificate of sponsorship.
- Reimbursing workers for their receipted expenses for visa, professional registration, biometric residents permit, English language certificates, police checks etc.
- The provision of relocation allowances must meet [HMRC regulations](#).

Worker payment and welfare:

Where Care Providers provide services, benefits or additional schemes, any deduction from wages needs to be lawful and must never result in the wage being received by the worker falling below National Minimum Wage after deductions. Similarly, any deductions related to upfront costs must meet the [requirements](#) laid out in the Ethical Code of Conduct.

The provider must ensure the wellbeing of their sponsored migrant; relocating to a new country may result in the worker being vulnerable and susceptible to exploitation. The employing Provider must be aware of [Modern Slavery](#) considerations, and through close supervision and support of their worker (as required in the conditions of [sponsorship](#)) seek to identify and report any concerns to the relevant bodies.

A bursary recipient must ensure that all staff recruited under the bursary scheme receive [good pastoral support](#) (this includes responsibility to thoroughly induct and support staff within your organisation, within the community that they now reside in, as well as signposting them to other support available when needed).

In addition to the training and development requirements of the [Health & Social Care Act](#), and [CQC regulations](#) it is recommended that cultural training and support is provide both to support the sponsored migrant being new to the UK and also to enable than to be aware of health, safety and wellbeing in the UK.

Post-Bursary Requirements:

In addition to meeting the Home Office's requirements of the Skilled Worker Visa, bursary recipients must:

- Uphold good reporting practices, with the ability to evidence sponsorship and how monies have been spent, and to engage with the project to evaluate impact and manage any risks associated with the fund and respond to request for information within 10 days.
- In the event that the sponsorship licence is suspended or revoked, the provider informs the bursary responsible officer within 24 hours. In the event that the certificate of sponsorship is revoked within the 2-year period a proportionate (1/24th for each remaining month) of the bursary is repayable.
- In the event that the employing Provider is found to be in breach of the terms of this agreement, within the 2-year period a proportionate (1/24th for each remaining month) of the bursary is repayable.

Where possible, we would also encourage bursary recipients to be aware of and become active members in relevant local system workforce groups, and to engage in peer support and learning with the local health & social care system. The project team will be able to help Providers to identify and join whatever Communities of Practice exist in their area.