



THE INSTITUTE OF THE
MOTOR INDUSTRY

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27 November 2012

Dear Automotive Sector Employer,

We'd like to take this opportunity to tell you about an exciting opportunity open to the automotive sector that could revolutionise training and development in your business and result in the upskilling of your workforce, maximising your productivity and profitability in economically challenging times.

On Monday 19 November, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) launched the second round of their Employer Ownership of Skills programme. Businesses across the country can now bid for a share of a £150 million pot to create the training schemes they need to grow their companies.

The prospectus was released with the full backing of Government. Matthew Hancock MP, Skills Minister said, "I would encourage businesses – large and small – to be ambitious and innovative in their vision for how the fund can help them grow, from creating new apprenticeship programmes to setting up specialist training academies."

The idea is to provide funding directly to employers, giving them greater purchasing power to develop and implement solutions bespoke to their businesses.

What does this mean for your business, and how can the IMI help?

You could receive funding directly from Government to spend on the development of your workforce to specifically meet the needs of your business. Working individually, or in collaboration with other companies, you can design, develop and implement training and development programmes to meet your needs.

The IMI has already been successful in bidding in to similar funding pots. In two rounds of Employer Investment Fund bidding, the IMI secured nearly £4,000,000 worth of funding to develop and implement skills solutions for our sector over the next two years. In addition, during 2012-13, our submission to the Universal Services Fund resulted in over £150,000 of funding to support the development of standards, Apprenticeships and qualifications in the sector.

Over recent years we have built up a track record of proven success and experience in winning and then managing Government-funded programmes such as these and we would like to deploy all of this for the benefit of your business and of the sector as a whole.

Since becoming the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for the automotive retail sector in 2007 we have developed close and collaborative working relationships with key government departments, and agencies, such as the UKCES. We have a close and positive relationship, and we are seen as a best practice model in many areas of the work of a SCC.

Unlike the first round of the Employer Ownership of Skills, where SSCs we not able to participate, this round is more flexible. This time, the IMI can directly support you, not only in terms of your submission, but also in participating in the projects themselves, acting as intermediaries and/or partners.



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The expertise on offer

In order to secure as much development funding for the automotive sector as possible, the IMI has built up a catalogue of services that we can offer your business in support of innovative and fit-for-purpose projects that really meet your needs. We'd like to take this opportunity to outline these for you and arrange a date and time that we could come and discuss the many opportunities open to your business.

Research

The most successful bids are those supported by focused and precise research. We have an excellent research facility here at the IMI, carrying out extensive and detailed research on skills needs, gaps and shortages. We can carry out specific and bespoke research to support a submission in to the Fund. Or we could collate and/or tailor our existing research reports to concisely support your aims and objectives.

Advice and guidance on bidding

We can provide advice and guidance in the bid-writing process, identifying the key elements that will need to feature in a successful bid to the UKCES. The IMI has successfully negotiated three rounds of differing funding pots, since their introduction in 2011. This has involved developing, writing, evidencing application forms and resulting detailed discussion and negotiation over costs and outcomes. We can advise in all areas of funding applications – including reviewing written bids prior to submission.

Writing bids

We can write your bid for you, working in close collaboration with you to ensure the bid reflects your aims and objectives. We have a proven track record in writing successful bids, not only since the Employer Investment and Universal Services funds came in to being in 2011, but also in writing successful bids for additional Government funding of projects over and above the contracted schedule of work for a SSC, since 2007.

Project and programme management

We can offer a range of assistance in this area from project management to ensure key deliverable and timelines are met to quality assuring the outcomes. We are seen as best practice within the UKCES for the way we project manage and deliver our programmes of work. We have an established model that ensures delivery of outcomes to time and quality and a highly-regarded reporting model that gives the UKCES confidence in our ability to deliver.

Monitoring and evaluation expertise

If successful, you will be required to demonstrate how your project is having an impact on your business, in terms of raising the skills levels of your workforce. You will most likely be asked to monitor and evaluate your processes on an ongoing basis and measure the impact of your activities on the expected outcomes. We have successfully implemented a UKCES-approved monitoring and evaluation programme for our funded projects, which has been shared with other SSCs as best practice. We can help you design and implement, and even manage, a fit-for-purpose, relevant monitoring and evaluation programme.

Return on Investment expertise

We have a department here at the IMI that delivers Return on Investment (RoI) studies for the automotive sector. We have established a RoI model that is fit-for-purpose for every type of automotive business, from SMEs to larger dealer groups and independent garages. Our model is capable of being adapted to your particular business model and we can help you manage this work. RoI will enable you to clearly identify the impact that your project has had on your business and those who work within it.

Development of Apprenticeship frameworks

Over the past two years the IMI has developed over 10 new Apprenticeship frameworks for the automotive sector in England and Wales of high-enough quality to attract public funding. We have a detailed knowledge of the legislative requirements of Apprenticeships and the extensive quality assurance processes needed to ensure successful approval. Should you wish to develop either a regulated or non-regulated framework, we have the expertise to do so.

Development of qualifications and units

Approved to operate under the regulated qualifications framework – the QCF – from 2008-2010 we developed over 650 new units and 48 qualifications for the automotive sector. If new and changed qualifications form part of your bid, we can successfully deliver the qualifications to you, approved by Ofqual and eligible for public funding.

Full range of skills development solutions

We have a full range of skills development solutions from providing careers advice and guidance and job-matching service, if you're looking to recruit new entrants on to your programme, to our successful Automotive Technician Accreditation (ATA) scheme for experienced and established workers and our innovative accreditation scheme for managers, Automotive Management Accreditation (AMA). If you want to recognise your staff's achievements and gain recognition as a business that invests in its people, you could have them placed on the new voluntary license-to-practice scheme, the IMI Professional Register and all the benefits that come with it, like discounted CPD courses.

Our invitation to you

The UKCES have indicated that the full application form and guidance will be published around mid-December 2012. The deadline for employer registration is 11 February 2013, with a deadline for submission of 28 February 2013.

We would very much like to discuss with you ways in which we can help you access this new and exciting Employer Ownership of Skills fund to really help your business grow and thrive in this tough economic climate.

We would be delighted to hear from you and please do not hesitate in contacting me here at the IMI using the address included, or by e-mail at ceooffice@theimi.org.uk.

Further information can also be found at <http://www.ukces.org.uk/employeroownership>.

We look forward to hearing from you very soon.

Yours sincerely



Linda Stansfield
Chief Operating Officer