

1. Ad:Venture Enterprise Growth Programme

The Ad:Venture programme has been in delivery for 15 months.

The programme supports pre-start, young and new business with the potential to grow. Support includes:

- One-to-one support – Dedicated business advisors to guide business growth and help develop a business plan.
- High value workshops and events programme targeted to develop skills to drive business growth – in topics such as HR, Strategy, Cash flow forecasting, Sales, Branding, Marketing, Innovation and Research and Development.
- Business Growth Collective – Expert University and academic support to solve business problems
- Access to Incubation Space
- Specialist Advice and Sectoral Support, with some areas offering sectoral opt in's and accelerators.
- Growth Grant funding between £1,000 - £25,000

The programme aims to assist 1240 businesses, create 640 new businesses and help create 2400 jobs.

140 Ad:Venture events were delivered in 2017 and 2018. The programme is currently actively supporting 900 businesses and over 600 individuals and has received over 90 grant applications to date, and have helped to create 200 jobs.

2. Digital Enterprise

Digital Enterprise helps eligible small and medium sized businesses (SMEs) invest in digital technologies to improve business operations, address customer needs and facilitate growth.

There are three strands to the programme:

- A Connectivity Voucher worth between £500 and £1,000 to help eligible businesses upgrade their broadband connection to faster broadband (over 30mbps).
- A Digital Growth Voucher which provides funding of between £2,000 and £10,000 towards the cost of investment in digital or ICT solutions including upgrading a website, enhancing a digital connection, acquiring new hardware or software, or a combination of these. Phase four of this strand will open in October 2018.
- The Digital Knowledge Exchange service, which offers businesses access to expertise and advice on deploying digital solutions via free workshops, digital advisor support, mentoring, large conferences and access to an exclusive business community.

Since its launch in October 2016, Digital Enterprise has received over 1,500 applications for funding and assistance, and it is expected that the programme will assist over 1100 businesses, providing in excess of £3.2 million investment support for digital projects. The project will lead to a £10m boost to the regional economy and help with the creation of around 1400 new jobs.

Over 300 specialist digital suppliers, providing services to organisations seeking to upgrade their technology are registered with the programme.

Further activities include 'Go Digital Live!' the programme's next large digital conference as part of Leeds Business Week in October.

3. Skills, Training and Employment Pathways (STEP)

STEP is a partnership project between Leeds and Bradford Councils and delivers a range of support to unemployed people across the two cities.

The programme targets people over 25 years old, who are inactive or on benefits but have been out of work for at least twelve months, and who need additional support to tackle the barriers they face in accessing work. In Leeds the focus is on people who have mild to moderate mental ill-health, people with alcohol and drug addiction, people with ESOL needs and older adults 50 years plus. Up to £2.8m has been allocated to Leeds to provide tailored employability support for adults furthest from the labour market and is delivered by a range of specialist local delivery organisations

The programme launched in May 2017, with a target of assisting 1,500 people, and to date has supported 665 Leeds residents to tackle the barriers they face in moving into employment.