



Durham SME Internships

Guidance for Employers

Are you an SME, based in Durham? With an interest in enhancing your business through the support of a student or graduate intern? If you are looking to research or develop new products or services for your business, then you might be interested in the Durham SME internship programme, brought to you as part of the ERDF 'Durham Internships and Collaborative Enterprise' "DICE" project which aims to provide business growth in small or medium enterprises (SMEs) based in County Durham.

Project offer from Durham University

- Benefit from the up to date knowledge and high-level skills of a Durham University student or graduate
- Eligible SMEs will be given 50/50 match funding for a full-time/part-time paid internship of up to 12-months. (based on a min. salary of £18.5k and grant reimbursement of £9.25k)
- Full support with the recruitment and selection process
- Guidance on all information that must be retained under ERDF guidelines.

Project eligibility

To be eligible:

- You must be an SME as defined by the EU (up to 250 employees and annual turnover does not exceed €50 million). This includes social enterprises engaged in economic activity.
- You must be based within County Durham
- Most businesses are eligible but there may be some restrictions, please see below:
 - Fishery and aquaculture sectors supported by EFF
 - Primary production, process and marketing of agricultural products, supported by EAFRD
 - Coal, steel and shipbuilding sectors
 - The synthetic fibres sector
 - Generalised (school age) education
 - Banking and insurance companies

Project requirements:

This is an ERDF funded project, please see below for key funding requirements

- You must retain and send to us the necessary financial paperwork e.g. bank statements and payslips so that we can provide the funders with evidence that the intern's salary has been paid and defrayed from the company accounts – we can't pay out the grant until we've received this information
- You will need to complete a project evaluation form at the end of the internship
- You will receive the grant after the internship has been completed – your business cash flow must allow for you to pay the intern for the 3 months prior to reimbursement.
- You must provide adequate evidence of third party liability insurance, employers insurance, Health and Safety policy and an Equal opportunities policy.



Application process

To apply please complete a short application form detailing information about your business and state aid you may have received to date, see contact details below. You will also need to submit a job description and person specification which will be used to advertise the role, along with a short statement about how you intend to support the intern throughout their employment.

A panel will review each application and will be particularly interested in internships that will:

- Enable the SME to develop a new product or service to the business
- Enable the SME to develop a new product to the market
- Increase the future prospects of both the SME and the intern (both short and long term)
- Provide the intern with opportunities to utilise and enhance the skills, knowledge and experience gained during their studies

EXAMPLE

Christine has recently completed her undergraduate studies and wants to gain experience in market research within a small organisation which will potentially lead to a permanent position. The SME has a project which they believe will give them the competitive edge and produce a new product in the market. However, they've had to put it on hold for lack of human resources. Christine is employed to spearhead the project during a 12-month full-time internship.

SME outlay: £18,500

Reimbursement to SME: £9,250

For more information or to request an application pack please contact:

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