Future Skills Fund

The Future Skills Fund has been created in partnership with Digital Jersey to help close Jersey’s future skills divide. The island, like much of the world, is facing a technological revolution which will see automation replace many existing jobs, and the lowest-skilled risking exclusion from the wider economy because of a skills shortage. Investment in skills development is about equipping people with the right skills at the right time so the workforce matches the needs of industry for the greater good of the whole community.

The Future Skills Fund will also invest in projects which will transform individuals and communities through developing skills. The aim is to embed and support digital inclusion within the critical work undertaken by the community sector at the front line: whether helping people find employment, improve their health, or manage money.

Now is the time for significant and sustained investment in training and reskilling to ensure Jersey retains a competitive advantage in its digital transformation today, tomorrow and for decades to come.

The Future Skills Fund was launched in September 2021 and is one of the Foundation’s themed funds. Themed funds provide the perfect way for local people to collaborate with others and pool donations to support the causes that matter to them. Whether you are donating £100 or £100,000 this approach to local charitable giving allows you to decide which area you would like to benefit from your donation or, if you’re not sure, your donation can be spread across all our themes.

Throughout the year, the Board of the Jersey Community Foundation will allocate grants from this fund to impactful local organisations.

Objectives of the Fund include:

- The promotion of digital inclusion and diversity by advancing access to future skills training and educational outcomes.
- To improve social inclusion and mobility by accelerating the delivery and adoption of ‘New Economy’ skills and learning styles.
The Issue:

It is estimated that 16,900 jobs in Jersey are at risk of automation between now and 2035. The impact of this automation will disproportionately affect Jersey’s low-skill workforce, who are at greater risk of displacement than high-skilled workers. Like elsewhere, Jersey’s low skilled workforce is concentrated among socially disadvantaged groups who have poorer access to learning, networking and job opportunities. As society continues to adjust to the technological revolution, the gap between those who actively seek out training, with those who don’t will continue to widen.

This has created an urgency to support and encourage ongoing, self-paced learning. This focus should extend beyond young adults to older generations who will need digital skills to adapt to and benefit from the technology revolution. To do this, there is a need to expand and address Jersey’s structural gaps in its higher education and adult learning landscape.

There is limited access for Jersey residents to public and private grants that are otherwise available in the UK/EU through endowment foundations, regional growth funds and skills bodies. This has resulted in underinvestment in the future skills development capacity of the island, meaning that islanders are not prepared for changes ahead. For this reason, we believe that there is a need for a dedicated charitable funding vehicle to support voluntary giving from private donors.

Why it matters:

Like elsewhere, the Island faces significant structural changes to its economy and skills base as companies continue to make substantial investments into labour substituting technologies.

Since the global financial crisis of 2007/8, the living standards of Jersey’s population has fallen by over a fifth, while comparable communities like Singapore, the Isle of Man and Luxembourg have all experienced real-terms growth. This trend is likely to continue, unless we can prepare all islanders for the future skills needs of industry. To overcome this challenge, Jersey will need significant and sustained investment into training and reskilling of its community.

Information for applicants:

Applications to the Future Skills Fund could be considered if the project(s) for which funds are sought fill an educational gap or make more widely available a particular aspect of education or learning. However, any proposals should not duplicate work already being done by another organisation. Applications should meet one of the following requirements:
1. the funds will be used for a particular educational project, or for a specific purpose such as equipment, and not as an addition to the general funds of the applicant.

2. the funds will be used for the promotion of equality and diversity, or to the relief of those in financial hardship or of disadvantaged backgrounds.

To be eligible for support, the application should align with one of the following thematic categories:

**Industry:**

- Bridging the industry and education divide through initiatives that support young people into work.
- Providing a mechanism and platform for new ideas and innovations to be adopted when looking at ways of supporting employment.

**Equipment & Facilities:**

- Support for capital initiatives, such as equipment and facilities which increase the capacity to advance good courses.
- Promote the sustainable development of Jersey's higher education to the benefit of the community.

**People:**

- Democratise learning opportunities by promoting digital inclusion and diversity in access to future skills training and educational outcomes.
- To improve student learning experience, pastoral care, and mobility by accelerating the delivery and adoption of 'New Economy' skills, learning styles and creativity in school.
- Support all generations with the skills to adapt to the technological revolution.

Organisations who would be eligible to apply to the Future Skills Fund, broadly includes:

- Public and non-profit schools
- Relevant charities
- Employers