



## A high-support Apprenticeship Programme in Sunderland.

A new initiative designed to increase Level 2 and Level 3 apprenticeships across Sunderland, with a focus on the advanced manufacturing sector.

### Why it matters

The original Training for Growth Pilot, completed in March 2025, demonstrated that financial support helps small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) overcome barriers to hiring apprentices. That pilot resulted in 17 Level 3 apprenticeships across 10 local businesses.

Building on that success, Training for Growth isn't just a grant, it's a funded, high-support business improvement service designed to solve your specific operational challenges.

### Why an apprentice is a smart business move

An apprentice is a cost-effective way to build a loyal, skilled workforce.

For an SME, the benefits are immediate:

- **Boost Productivity:** Apprentices are motivated to learn and add value quickly.
- **Increase Loyalty:** Investing in someone from day one builds loyalty, saving you long-term recruitment costs.
- **Develop skills you need:** You train talent in the exact way your business operates, filling your specific skills gaps.

### What's on offer

The Training for Growth programme is designed to support businesses at every stage of their apprenticeship journey - whether you're navigating the system for the first time or looking to enhance your existing approach.

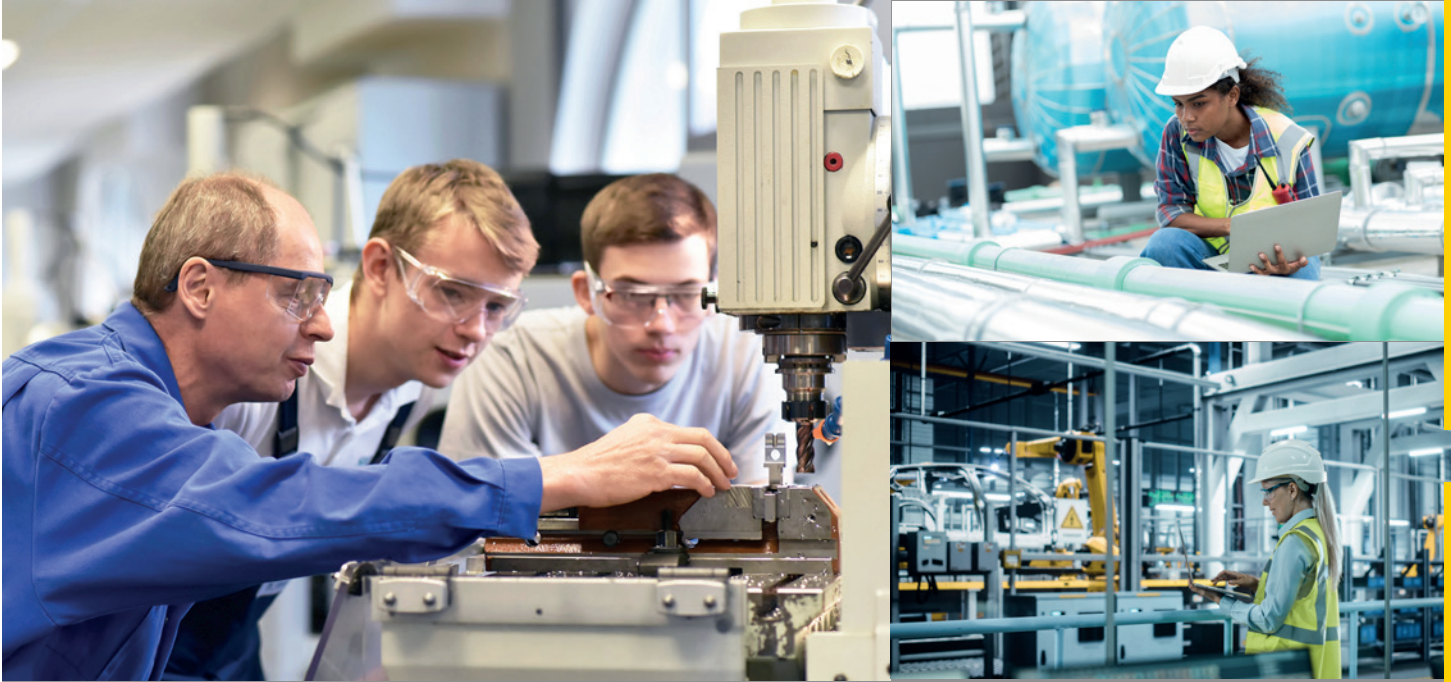
It provides financial support to help cover the first-year costs of a new apprentice. Plus, it will provide direct, hands-on consultancy from the NEAA to ensure your apprentice delivers a tangible, measurable impact on your business.

Funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and managed by Sunderland City Council on behalf of the Sunderland Partnership.



Funded by  
UK Government

# Training for Growth



Training for Growth, which will run until March 2027, will support the first year of a programme which will increase Level 2 and Level 3 apprenticeship starts in advanced manufacturing businesses in Sunderland.

## More than a grant - it's a funded mechanism to growth

The NEAA will personally...

**Help you select the best pathway:** The Level 2 and 3 apprenticeship system can be confusing. We provide expert, impartial consultancy to help you select the right pathway that directly solves your biggest business challenges.

**Define and design a high-impact project:** The NEAA Skills Strategy Lead will collaborate with you and your chosen training provider to define and design a concrete workplace project. This ensures the project delivers a clear and immediate benefit.

**Help organise your internal support:** A successful apprenticeship requires a good support system. We will help you organise the internal coaching and mentoring structure your apprentice needs to thrive and succeed throughout their journey.

- Assist a network of SMEs in the Sunderland region to recruit Level 2 or Level 3 apprentices (e.g. electrical, maintenance, AI, digital, data sciences, business).
- Support new apprentice positions across the Sunderland local authority area.
- Facilitate a supply of potential apprentice candidates for SMEs to evaluate.
- Deliver apprenticeship training using a range of training providers.
- Provide UKSPF funding support to contribute to the additional costs that employers will incur in the first year of the apprenticeship programme.
- Increase the supply of skills to support further investment and growth in Sunderland and the wider North East region.

**Dont miss this opportunity! If you're a Sunderland-based SME, get in touch with the NEAA team to discuss how we can support your apprentice needs now:**

[enquiries@northeastautomotivealliance.com](mailto:enquiries@northeastautomotivealliance.com)

[www.northeastautomotivealliance.com/nea-projects/training-for-growth-L2/](http://www.northeastautomotivealliance.com/nea-projects/training-for-growth-L2/)

