

Employment and Enterprise Bureau: 2026/27 guidance and funding

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Reference: Medr/2026/45

To: Principals of further education institutions

Respond by: Interim report – 29 January 2027
End of year report – 30 July 2027

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Publication summary

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2. The aim of the EEB is to deliver positive employment and self-employment outcomes for learners, by providing a package of support to develop learner employability, enterprise and entrepreneurial skills. This support should be delivered by working in collaboration with employers, Careers Wales, the Regional Skills Partnerships (RSPs), and other key partners to develop opportunities for learners in their regions.
3. The funding should be used to continue to integrate enterprise and entrepreneurship delivery within the EEB, with the aim of increasing the self-employment opportunities available to learners and leavers, as well as promoting embedding employability and entrepreneurship within the curriculum to the benefit of learners.

2026/27 funding

4. The total budget available to support the EEBs from 1 August 2026 to 31 July 2027 is **£1,320,000**. This funding is comprised of £960,000 of Medr funding and £360,000 received from Business Wales, which must be used to support the Enterprise and Entrepreneurship element of the EEB activity in Further Education Institutions (FEIs) in Wales. The total allocation will continue to be split equally between 12 FEIs in Wales so that each FEI receives a total allocation of **£110,000** in 2026/27.

Monitoring and timelines

5. FEIs are required to submit an interim and end of year monitoring report, using the templates at **Annex A and B**, to Medr by the dates set out in the timeline. As the enterprise funding for 2026/27 is provided by the Welsh Government, information that is reported to Medr against those requirements will be shared with the Welsh Government so the impact of its funding can be monitored.

Action	Responsibility	Date
2026/27 EEB first payment of £83,600	Medr	September 2026
Interim report submitted to Medr	EEBs	29 January 2027
2026/27 EEB final payment of £26,400	Medr	April 2027
End of year report submitted to Medr	EEBs	30 July 2027
Statement of Expenditure submitted to Medr	EEBs	31 August 2027

Introduction

6. This publication sets out Medr's requirements and funding arrangements for the Employment and Enterprise Bureau (EEB) activity in 2026/27. It confirms monitoring arrangements, timelines and attaches monitoring templates.

Aim of the funding

7. The aim of the EEB is to deliver positive employment and self-employment outcomes for learners, by providing a package of support to develop learner employability, enterprise and entrepreneurial skills. This support should be delivered by working in collaboration with employers, Careers Wales, the Regional Skills Partnerships (RSPs), and other key partners to develop opportunities for learners in their regions.
8. The funding will support learner transition from education into employment or self-employment by developing the employability and entrepreneurial skills they need to achieve positive outcomes. Preparing learners to enter the labour market and ensuring they are fully informed of the career options available to them should contribute towards preventing them from becoming not in employment, education or training (NEET) when they finish their course of study.
9. The funding should be used to continue to integrate enterprise and entrepreneurship delivery within the EEB, with the aim of increasing the self-employment opportunities available to learners and leavers, as well as promoting embedding employability and entrepreneurship within the curriculum to the benefit of learners.

Background and policy context

10. In 2024, Welsh Government transferred the responsibility for funding the EEBs to Medr, the Commission for Tertiary Education and Research, which was established on 1 August 2024 as the organisation responsible for regulating and funding the tertiary education sector in Wales.
11. In 2026/27, Medr will continue to fund the EEBs to meet the aims and objectives set out in this guidance, building on previous Welsh Government activity. We do not expect EEB delivery or activity to change in this funded period. Business Wales has continued to provide funding to embed and enhance entrepreneurship support within the EEBs in 2026/27.
12. The [Tertiary Education and Research \(Wales\) Act 2022](#) places strategic duties on Medr to *promote tertiary education that is organised coherently to facilitate movement of learners through different stages of tertiary education and into employment or business, and to promote equality of opportunity through the provision of support for students finishing courses of Welsh tertiary education who are members of under-represented groups to continue their tertiary education, find employment or start a business.*

13. Medr's [Strategic Plan](#) sets out its response to the Welsh Government's strategic priorities for tertiary education and research, which includes an aim to focus tertiary education around the needs of the learner, and to create a flexible and joined-up tertiary system where everyone can acquire the skills and knowledge they need for a changing economy and society. Medr will publish an autumn consultation on performance measures to help us achieve consistency in how we assess learner outcomes. It aims to give providers the means to support their own continuous improvement, to drive improved outcomes across the tertiary education sector.
14. [Medr's Operational Plan 2026-27](#) sets out the activities that we will carry out to meet this strategic aim, including how we will evaluate the Employment and Enterprise Bureaus in FE colleges to inform decisions around future funding approaches.
15. The aims of this funding align with the [Well-being of Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) goals and ways of working, and key principles of the Act are embedded in the requirements for this funding.

Requirements, outcomes and activities

16. Providers should work collaboratively with key partners and stakeholders to deliver activities which create referrals, progression, employment, self-employment or business start-up opportunities, and which improve learner choice and avoid duplication or displacement of activity offered elsewhere. Partners include, but are not limited to, other tertiary education providers; employers and local businesses; third sector organisations; entrepreneurs; Regional Skills Partnerships; local authorities; Careers Wales; and Welsh Government funded services, such as Big Ideas Wales and Business Wales.
17. The outputs and outcomes for the EEBs in 2026/27 continue to be:
 - Learners engaged with the EEB.
 - Learners supported through the EEB.
 - Learners that have engaged in work experience opportunities.
 - Learners supported into employment or an apprenticeship.
 - Learners supported into further/alternative learning or higher education.
 - Learners supported into self-employment.
18. In order to deliver the outcomes, EEBs are required to maintain a physical presence so that they can deliver a range of activities accessible to learners from the list set out below:
 - i. support learners to develop their employability and entrepreneurship skills, through provision of information, advice and guidance and one to one support and mentoring, based on learner need.
 - ii. signpost to other support services or organisations, including Big Ideas Wales and Business Wales, to facilitate self-employment.

- iii. work with employers and third sector organisations to arrange work experience; taster sessions; employer engagement activities; self-employment placements or opportunities; and employer mentoring or shadowing.
- iv. provision of a range of employability activities, such as support with CV development, job search training, assessment centres, and interview techniques.
- v. provision of a range of entrepreneurship activities to make positive steps towards self-employment, including support with business ideas; presentation of ideas or models; writing business plans; running a business; working in a SME; preparing for self-employment or apprenticeship opportunities; and accessing start-up support / programmes.
- vi. enhance learner understanding of the opportunities for employment and self-employment in the region, informed by the Labour Market Information (LMI) published by Regional Skills Partnerships and Careers Wales, as well as providers' own intelligence from their links with employers. This approach should strengthen the opportunities for quality, sustainable employment and self-employment for learners in their region.
- vii. promote access to, and participation in, safe, fair and rewarding work, which includes opportunities for personal development and progression.
- viii. promote fair work, by raising learners' awareness of employment rights and the role of Trade Unions.
- ix. connect to opportunities throughout the FEI which enable students to gain higher technical and employability skills, such as through participation in skills competitions held regionally, nationally, and internationally.
- x. raise learner awareness of the future skills needs across their chosen industry in relation to the journey to Net Zero, so that they are able to progress into sustainable roles or enter sustainable self-employment.
- xi. embed enterprise/entrepreneurship into careers and job fairs, induction weeks and organise activities to participate in Global Entrepreneurship Week held annually in November.
- xii. identify and, as far as possible, remove barriers for disabled learners accessing support through the EEB in line with the social model of disability¹. The Welsh Government's team of [Disabled People's Employment Champions](#) are available to provide practical advice on all matters relating to the recruitment and retention of disabled workers.
- xiii. raise learner and employer awareness of the employability benefits of Welsh language in relation to job and careers opportunities and roles.
- xiv. support learners leaving other parts of the post-compulsory education and training system, such as schools, with a focus on employability.

¹ The [Social Model for disability](#) is a framework created by disabled people to address the challenges they face. It emphasises that people are disabled by barriers in society, not by their impairments. Further resources available for employers to recruit and retain disabled employees are available at [Disabled People's Employment](#). In addition, Welsh Government's Disabled People's Employment Champions can be contacted at dpec@gov.wales.

Enterprise and Entrepreneurship

19. Welsh Government is providing funding for enterprise activity through the EEB, which aims to develop the internal eco-system of support for entrepreneurship within a Further Education Institution (FEI) and enable the EEB to act as an ambassador for entrepreneurship. It should be a catalyst for change, increase entrepreneurial capacity across the organisation and provide a lead conduit between learners, staff and partner organisations. In addition to the activities set out above, further requirements related to enterprise and entrepreneurship include:
- i. designate an Entrepreneurship Champion to develop the community of support for self-employment and act as an ambassador for entrepreneurship, including continuing to build constructively on the Enterprise Champion network.
 - ii. identify staff champions who will lead efforts to support entrepreneurship by engaging employers, and help to promote, embed and measure entrepreneurship in the curriculum.
 - iii. support the institution's role in the community by undertaking outreach work which promotes enterprise and entrepreneurship in local schools, youth and community groups.
 - iv. publish an entrepreneurship annual impact report showing the value of grant support and the outcomes of enabling work undertaken within the institution.
 - v. develop and communicate a clear start up journey for learners and support their decisions and transition to start up by bridging the gap between aspiration and business start-up.
 - vi. develop communication channels to raise awareness and report on impact of work and achievements internally as well as to partners, business community and stakeholders.
 - vii. actively engage the business community, in particular local businesses to lever in private sector support to tailor and add value to activities to meet regional needs and create unique opportunities for learners.

Continuous improvement

20. In order to ensure the support delivered by the EEBs meets the needs of learners and aligns with employer need, providers are expected to evaluate the employability and entrepreneurship activities delivered to identify the activities that have most impact to inform their delivery. We therefore expect providers to consider mechanisms for taking account of the learner voice and employers' views. EEBs can continue to use [Big Ideas Wales feedback forms](#) to evaluate as one of the mechanisms for demonstrating impact in relation to entrepreneurship.
21. We also expect providers to share good practice and learning from delivering this activity, through the existing Employment and Enterprise networks. Providers should consider whether there is scope to work together to offer support to their own learners.

Monitoring and demonstrating impact

22. FEIs are required to submit an interim and end of year monitoring report, using the templates at **Annex A and B**, to Medr by the dates set out in the timeline at paragraph 39. As the enterprise funding for 2026/27 is provided by the Welsh Government, information that is reported to Medr against those requirements will be shared with the Welsh Government so the impact of its funding can be monitored.
23. The main outputs continue to be the number of learners engaging in support through the EEB, including entrepreneurship support which leads to positive steps toward self-employment², as well as the number of learners supported into employment, self-employment, apprenticeships or further/alternative learning. In addition, the entrepreneurship update (section 5 of Annex A) should include a narrative of work undertaken to engage learners by raising awareness and aspirations around entrepreneurship, empower them through entrepreneurial experiences and opportunities, equip them with the skills, knowledge and confidence to pursue entrepreneurial pathways, and enable them to access the networks, support and resources needed to progress into self-employment or business creation.
24. We require EEBs to develop case studies which demonstrate the learner journey and impact of engagement with employers, support organisations and learners supported into self-employment or business startups. We expect case studies which demonstrate both the employability and entrepreneurial aspects of activity.

Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR)

25. In spring 2026, Medr engaged with all FEIs to explore the scope for recording learners supported through the EEB within the LLWR return from 2026/27 onwards. Capturing this information will provide a clearer understanding of the demographic profile of supported learners, contribute towards measuring progress against Medr's strategic duty to promote equality of opportunity in tertiary education, and establish an evidence base for analysing the longer-term outcomes of learners supported through the EEB through matching learner data with Longitudinal Educational Outcomes (LEO) data.
26. The 2026/27 academic year will serve as a pilot year for FEIs to establish and test data collection processes, and for Medr to assess the robustness of the data for future analysis. It is for FEIs to determine the most appropriate time to submit data to the LLWR, provided that all learners supported through the EEB in 2026/27 are recorded in the LLWR by the September 2027 LLWR freeze date. We will also continue to engage with FEIs to identify and address any issues or challenges arising from this requirement.
27. FEIs should record via the LLWR those learners on programmes funded through the [Post-16 Funding Framework](#) and receive meaningful support through the EEB. It is for each FEI to determine the threshold for what constitutes meaningful engagement for employability related activities. Learners who attend large-scale events only would not normally be expected to be recorded unless they have also

² Self-employment includes freelancing, starting /launching a business and starting a social enterprise.

received additional support that could demonstrate impact. Given there are tiers of engagement set by Business Wales for enterprise related activity, we require FEIs to record learners who engage in activity which meets the empower objective to be reported in the LLWR.

28. FEIs should continue to collect and report data against the agreed outputs set out in our guidance and monitoring templates. These remain unchanged for 2026/27 and are not affected by this new requirement.
29. Providers may use one of the following three fields to indicate that a learner has received EEB support whilst enrolled on a [Post-16 Funding Framework](#) eligible programme:
 - LP44 – Provider Specified Field 1
 - LP45 – Provider Specified Field 2
 - LP75 – ProvLPRef
30. We will monitor the use of these fields and review whether the introduction of a dedicated field is required for 2027/28 to support this process more effectively.
31. Providers that are unable to use any of these fields are not required to submit this information through the LLWR. However, they must provide a written explanation detailing why none of these fields can be used in 2026/27.
32. Where a learner receives EEB support whilst enrolled on a [Post-16 Funding Framework](#) eligible programme, one of the following references should be recorded against the relevant programme record in the selected LP field:
 - EEB - learners who engage in both employability and enterprise support
 - EEBEMP - learners who engage in employability activity only
 - EEBENT - learners who engage in enterprise activity only
33. As learners may be enrolled on more than one programme, the appropriate EEB indicator should be recorded against each fundable programme where EEB support has been provided.
34. Where a learner is enrolled on multiple programmes, different EEB indicators may be recorded for each fundable programme, reflecting the support provided within that programme.
35. As funding for enterprise related activity is ringfenced from Welsh Government, it is important to be able to identify and report on learners who have engaged solely in enterprise-related activity only in the pilot year so we can demonstrate the impact of that stream of funding.

Funding

36. The total budget available to support the EEBs from 1 August 2026 to 31 July 2027 is **£1,320,000**. This funding is comprised of £960,000 of Medr funding and £360,000 received from Business Wales, which must be used to support the Enterprise and Entrepreneurship element of the EEB activity in FEIs in Wales. The total allocation will continue to be split equally between 12 FEIs in Wales with each receiving a total allocation of **£110,000** in 2026/27 (£80,000 to focus on Employability and £30,000 to focus on Enterprise/Entrepreneurship).
37. Medr will make payments in two instalments of £83,600 in September 2026 and £26,400 in April 2027.
38. FEIs **must** use their allocated funding on costs associated with providing a package of support to develop learner employability, enterprise and entrepreneurial skills provided through the EEB to achieve positive outcomes. Providers must comply with Medr guidance and return a statement of expenditure using the template at **Annex C** for the period 2026/27. We reserve the right to reclaim any part of the allocation that has not been spent (i.e. paid out) by 31 July 2027.

Timeframe

39. The timeline for payments and monitoring is presented in the following table:

Action	Responsibility	Date
2026/27 EEB first payment of £83,600	Medr	September 2026
Interim report submitted to Medr	EEBs	29 January 2027
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Acknowledgement of funding

40. Providers should acknowledge activities funded by Medr through the use of the approved **Funded by Medr** logo in marketing materials, publications, communications and promotional activity. To request a copy of the logo and associated brand guidance, please contact skillsandemployability@medr.cymru.
41. It is the responsibility of a provider to acknowledge activities wholly or partly funded by the Welsh Government through appropriate use of the Welsh Government logos and statements in marketing materials or communications. **This only applies to funding that FEIs receive for enterprise activity.** Where activity is partly funded

by the Welsh Government, the appropriate part-funded logo should be used. Where activities are fully funded, FEIs should use the funded by the Welsh Government logo.

42. Guidance on the correct format, resolution and use of logos should be requested directly from the Welsh Government's branding department brand@gov.wales to ensure media compliance.
43. All public promotion of entrepreneurship activities should acknowledge the Youth Entrepreneurship Programme, in particular the use of services provided by the Youth Entrepreneurship Services operationally known as Big Ideas Wales. This includes Big Ideas Wales Role Models, workshops, events, and 1-1 business advisors. This drives the use of Business Wales as the main provider of Business Support in Wales.
44. Promoting the support of Welsh Government funding should be applied to institutional websites, brochures and materials. This includes any promotional merchandise purchased with grant funding to support entrepreneurship activities.

Marketing and promotional example text

45. Suggested marketing and promotional example text are set out below, and can be personalised to your EEB or amended as appropriate:
 - **Insert EEB name** is supported by Welsh Government as part of the Big Ideas Wales Programme to inspire and support young people to develop entrepreneurial skills, explore self-employment and take their business ideas forward.
 - **Insert EEB name** is supported by Welsh Government through the Big Ideas Wales Programme. Part of Business Wales, the programme supports and inspires young people aged 5 to 25 across Wales to develop entrepreneurial skills, explore self-employment and start their own businesses.
 - **[Insert EEB Name]** is part/fully funded by Welsh Government through Big Ideas Wales, inspiring and supporting the next generation of entrepreneurs across Wales.

Further information

46. Any queries regarding this publication should be directed to Emma Mock or Rachel O'Gorman (skillsandemployability@medr.cymru).

Medr

Y Comisiwn Addysg Drydyddol ac Ymchwil
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