

Inspiring Futures Fund 2023/24

Terms and Conditions

The terms and conditions set out in this document rule the award of Inspiring Futures Fund (as defined below) and must be complied with.



What is the Inspiring Futures Fund?

The University of Suffolk know how vitally important it is for students to gain work experience, to build up experience skills and confidence in the workplace. It also enables employers to see how useful you could be for them and their workforce.

We want to help you with some costs of undertaking your career related work experience. Therefore, the Careers, Employability and Enterprise (CEE) Team has a dedicated fund which is open to most current students:

- part-time, full-time
- undergraduate and Masters, but not PhD.
- classed as home or international
- studying in the following locations: Ipswich, East Coast College, Suffolk New College, and West Suffolk College.

The scheme offers financial support in accessing high-value work experience/other opportunities to those who may have otherwise faced financial barriers to undertaking this.

The scheme supports low or unpaid¹ work experience/other opportunities that can be in the UK, overseas or for research-related experiences (e.g. Research project at the University or within an organisation that is undertaking research), for example, help getting to interviews, assessment centres, insight days or fund to access professional clothing. You may also want some help to fund a training course that is relevant to your personal and skills development and aligned with your career goals and future aspirations.

The Inspiring Futures Fund will be awarded on a competitive, first come first served basis, assessed against the strength of the information provided in the application form (see “How to Apply” below), until the allocated funding for the Inspiring Futures Fund has been exhausted. There is no guarantee that an application will be successful or that you will receive the full amount requested.

Below you can find the processing times for incoming applications:

Opening Date	Closing Date	Panel Dates
18/09/2023	08/12/2023	Flexible depending on applications
02/01/2024	29/03/2024	
15/04/2024	28/06/2024	

Applications will close on the dates above, or when all funds have been allocated, whichever comes first, so early submissions are advisable where possible. If you do not return your evidence/ documents in a timely manner, your funds may be allocated to another student.

If you are entitled to apply for the Inspiring Futures Fund you may be able to get up to a maximum of:

- Up to £300 - UK Opportunities
- Up to £400 - Overseas Opportunities e.g. United States of America (USA) and Asia
- Up to £150 - Research projects/Training courses/Other – negotiable and must be relevant to your professional development.

Students who have opted into the Build your Future scheme will have exclusive access to ringfenced funding in the current scheme but still having to follow the above funds allocation criteria.

The Work Experience

You must secure your own Work Experience, which can either be full-time or part-time. We are unable to provide funds for opportunities organised by the University. The Work Experience must be conducted with a reputable organisation, company and must comply with, amongst others, the following conditions.

The work experience must:

- contribute to your personal development, your skills development and/or support your future career aspirations;
- offer enhancements to your employability;

¹ Unpaid opportunities will only be supported if it can be evidenced by the employer that the placement does not contravene National Minimum Wage regulations. The University of Suffolk Careers and Employability Team do not endorse unpaid opportunities that may contravene National Minimum Wage regulations and would urge students considering unpaid opportunities to contact the Careers, Employability and Enterprise team to discuss in further detail. Further information about unpaid work experience and your rights can be found on [TARGETjobs](#).

- be completed before, or on, 30th September 2024, except for final year students who must complete their opportunity by 31st July 2024.

For final year students who anticipate their opportunity is going to end after 31st July 2024, please outline this in your application so that consideration can be given to this on a case-by-case basis.

The work experience must not:

- form part of a degree programme if mandatory e.g. mandatory work-based learning modules and those undertaking professional practice placements within Health and Professional courses;
- exceed 16 hours per week term time, or above 40 hours per week during holiday periods (and for those with a Tier 4 visa, do not exceed the working hour allowance set out within your visa);
- promote or endorse illegal activity;
- be immoral, unethical, offensive, or otherwise detrimental to the University's reputation or interests;
- relate to a pyramid, multi-level marketing or similar style selling scheme;
- represent an undue health and safety risk;
- involve writing or sharing academic related material for use by other students;

The University reserves the right to assess the suitability of the Work Experience as part of the application process and its decision is final. Work experience that the University deems to fulfil any of the above will not be supported; however, you will be signposted to relevant support services, including the CEE team, to support you in finding an appropriate opportunity.

The University Job Board, found within [FutureMe](#), includes a variety of job vacancies that may be appropriate, and the University would encourage students to research opportunities available on the job board (keep checking every week for new opportunities), as well as undertaking their own research and networking to source an appropriate opportunity. The CEE team are available to offer support with where to search, applications and interview skills, and can be contacted on careers@uos.ac.uk.

What can the Inspiring Futures Fund cover?

- Costs of travelling (In the UK or Overseas)
- Medical Requirements/Vaccinations
- Insurance
- Visa/Permit
- Living costs and utilities bills
- Accommodation
- Dependent care costs ²

² Dependent care costs are those associated to costs incurred to find suitable support and care for children or dependent relatives during the work experience. You will need to provide evidence of the provider and their applicable certifications e.g. OFSTED registration if a bursary payment is contributing towards childcare. Please contact inspiringfuturesfund@uos.ac.uk for further details if you have any questions.

- Other costs:
 - training courses
 - research projects
 - financial help getting to interviews/assessment centres
 - insight days
 - professional clothing
- Something else that would help you overcome barriers to accessing your opportunity

Fund payments could be used to support you in more than one work experience opportunity within the specified timeframe, and more than one application could be submitted. However, to ensure we can support as many students as possible with our fund, you will receive no more than £300 if your opportunity is in the United Kingdom, £400 if your opportunity is overseas and £150 if 'other costs' as listed above, in fund payments during the 2023/24 academic year and up to the **closing date for applications mentioned in the above table**.

When to Apply?

The fund for 2023/24 is open for applications and the last **closing date for applications on the 28th June 2024 – 23:45 pm**, with all disbursements needing to be made by 31st July 2024. If a work experience opportunity may require payments after 31st July 2024, please state this clearly in your application as this will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please note that it cannot be guaranteed that payments could be made after this date and planning for this should be taken into account. For those in their final year of study, payments will not be made after 31st July 2024.

Applications can be submitted by those that have already been offered an opportunity, or by those that are in the process of submitting a placement application (if we are able to support you, we will provide written confirmation of this, but funds will not be disbursed until you can confirm that you have been successfully offered the opportunity and supporting evidence is supplied).

The University reserves the right to close the Inspiring Futures Fund earlier if all funds are disbursed before the closing date, and University-wide announcements will be made should this occur.

How to Apply?

Make sure that you follow the steps below to increase your chances of making a successful application!

- Before completing the application form, ensure you have read and understood the Inspiring Futures Fund ('Terms & Conditions'). The Terms & Conditions outline your responsibilities should you be awarded.
- Complete the online application for via Microsoft Forms [here](#)
- Send to inspiringfuturesfund@uos.ac.uk the necessary supporting documentation upon submission of your application form.

A final decision cannot be made until the following supporting documentation has been received:

- Your current CV
- Evidence of your work experience – signed letter from your employer or contract of employment
- Job description or job outline from your employer (including dates/hours of work experience)
- **If you have not received a job offer yet, but are in the process of applying for an opportunity, and need confirmation of the intention for us to support you before being able to commit:** the job advert, **AND** receipt from the employer of your application;
- **If training course, research project or other** please provide the reasons why you want to do it, why this will benefit your career aspirations/employability **AND** a reference from your tutor at the University of Suffolk stating how important it is for you to do it. Regarding the topic of the training course your tutor must clearly state that it is not part of your degree programme.
- Use (“Budget Template”) to provide a breakdown of the amount of funds required, including evidence of why you have requested the specific amount of funds - Download Budget Template [here](#).
- If you request payments against travel mileage you will be paid 45p/mile along with government recommendations website <https://www.gov.uk/expenses-and-benefits-business-travel-mileage/rules-for-tax>.
- Evidence to outline why you require the financial support of the fund e.g. household income (via info submitted to Student Finance England), account statements, Loans, Scholarship Approval or Grants Letters (please contact our Student Adviser (Finance) for advice)

Next steps of the application process

- Applications will be assessed on a fortnightly basis. Where possible, fortnightly meetings will be held by the screening panel, containing relevant members of Careers, Employability and Enterprise Team and/or Student Life Team, to assess which applications should proceed to the next stage.
- Students are updated with the outcome within three working days of this screening panel, and invited to an assessment appointment to discuss their application further, and discuss the terms of the agreement; and payment process;
- Further appointments will be booked, as applicable and necessary, to issue further payments, and return receipts and evidence of expenditure.
- A review will be scheduled to discuss the work experience opportunity and discuss the piece of reflective work submitted (please see “expectations of recipients after your work experience or other has been completed” for further information on this).

By submitting an application for the Inspiring Futures Fund, you acknowledge and agree:

- that the University reserves the right to decide at its absolute discretion how it allocates Inspiring Futures Fund to applicants;

- that the University reserves the right to interview applicants, either by telephone, Microsoft Teams or in person should it wish to do so;
- the University may take steps to verify the information and supporting documents provided;
- that all data will be stored securely in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), and only used by applicable staff to administer and record processing of the Fund. Please visit the [BECE Directorate Privacy Notice](#) to find out more.

What happens if I am successful with my application?

You will be required to:

- sign a Bursary Agreement (“Agreement”) prior to the issue of funds setting out the terms of the fund, including the expectations of you, the student, and us, the University;
- complete a Bank Details Form to enable the University to transfer the agreed fund amount to your nominated bank account;
- provide original receipts as evidence of their fund spend in a timely manner, with timescales agreed between the University and the student when the Agreement is signed. Failure to do so will mean that you will have to repay the bursary money.

The University reserves the right to withhold further payments if evidence is not returned within the agreed timescales, and, where appropriate, will claw back payments if it becomes evident that the work experience opportunity is no longer being attended, or funds have been spent inappropriately.

Expectations of recipients after your work experience/other has been completed

As set out within your Agreement, upon completion of your work experience/other opportunity, you will be required to submit a short, reflective piece that expresses how the work experience has benefitted you, your development and your employability. On signing of the agreement, we will agree the format this will take and should be within one month of the end of your work experience or professional development opportunity. This could be, but is not limited to:

- A 500-word log
- A 5-minute video or audio recording;
- A 5-minute presentation, either face to face or via Skype or other electronic software;
- A mini game to outline your development;
- A blog piece; or
- Something else!

You will be required to **submit a short case study** to the Careers, Employability and Enterprise Team as a condition of the award so that you can inspire your peers. Those who do not complete this may be asked to return the Bursary.

Does the Work Experience or professional development opportunity have supported, influenced or made a difference to your career choices and decisions?

Key Information about COVID-19 and the Inspiring Futures Fund

When making an application, you must ensure that any work experience you have arranged adheres to the most up to date government guidelines in relation to COVID-19, particularly in respect to areas that are under different lockdown measures. You can check what the [current coronavirus advice on the .gov website](#).

If your application is successful, you must continue to monitor the current government guidelines in relation to COVID-19 and any associated travel advice that is being given. Therefore, if travel is required you must adhere to government guidance on visiting the location. You can check the [current travel advice on the.gov website](#).

Please be aware that as there may be a gap between when you organise your work experience and the start date of the experience, it is important that you re-check the latest government guidelines prior to travelling and commencing your work experience.

If you have any further questions, or would like to know more, please contact the team on inspiringfuturesfund@uos.ac.uk . We can either book an appointment online or in person.

The Careers, Employability and Enterprise (CEE) Team.