

BRIEFING PAPER FOR UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND PROJECT DECISION

Overview of project



BACKGROUND

Devonport Futures

Devonport Futures is an innovative skills programme linked to the 200th anniversary of the founding of Devonport. A key challenge faced by skills programmes, especially those targeting people experiencing disadvantage, is connecting learning to real work opportunities and tangible outcomes.

By linking Devonport Futures with key strands of Devonport 200 – a programme of community activities commemorating the histories, achievements, communities, opportunities and challenges that shape Devonport - participants will be inspired and enabled to develop new skills; access residencies, work experience, volunteering and connections to employers.

Devonport Futures has two pathways - **Immersive/Tech** and **Blue/Green** - supporting individuals who are economically inactive, unemployed or employed, looking to engage, retrain and develop future facing skills. Working with PCH, who have a large property stock in Devonport and other areas of deprivation, and a unique connection with their residents, Devonport Futures will trial an innovative approach to breaking the cycle of endemic unemployment and economic inactivity.

The **Immersive Tech** pathway focuses on skills for high-tech jobs in key growth sectors (creative digital; marine, marine automation; engineering; health) delivered through 3 strands:

- **Digital Natives** – Uncovering digital skills, understanding application in workplace/future workforce needs. Exploring digital skills in broad range of businesses, including the use of 360, VR, AI. Targeted at those furthest from the labour market, enabling people to uncover interests/aptitudes, connecting them to skills pathways and jobs.
- **Immersive tech skills for individuals and business** – introductory/intermediate skills sessions and intensives covering topics such as 360 filming & editing; spatial audio; virtual production; projection mapping; VR; use of software (Unity/Unreal etc); immersive live events and business. The sessions are a progression from Digital Natives and offer opportunities for people in work to retrain and develop future facing skills.
- **Residencies/small commission** opportunities linked to large-scale immersive events for Devonport 200 and international festivals. Work-experience and volunteering linked to Devonport 200 and connections with businesses through Devon and Plymouth Chamber of Commerce.

The **Blue/green** pathway focuses on growing blue/green skills, including those to deliver Net Zero, retrofit 100,000+ homes in Plymouth, and connect communities with nature. Reflecting Plymouth's

commitment to climate emergency, the National Marine Park and Devonport's historic connection with the sea, the pathway supports people through 2 strands:

- **Blue/Green Connections** - targeted programme, identifying people furthest from the labour market, in and beyond Devonport, supporting them to connect with skills development, training and job opportunities in blue/green.
- **Blue/green skills for individuals and business** - introductory and specific skills sessions bridging the gap and connecting people with existing blue/green skills programmes (e.g. City College Plymouth's Retrofit Academy; PCH apprenticeships). Work experience and volunteering linked to practical green projects for Devonport 200, connecting skills to work.