

Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee: Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF)

Expression of Interest (EOI) / BID

Gloucestershire Economic Growth: Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF):

This fund is for the benefit of the whole of Gloucestershire, and utilising funds from the current Gloucestershire Local Authority Business Rates Pool. It facilitates collective work on the economic development agenda and reflects the commitment of the Pool participants to drive economic investment which also links to the planning and infrastructure process. Eligibility criteria for the fund has been established and agreed by all participants, against which bids for funding are assessed.

Access to the Fund is for the principal stakeholders only – the Local Authorities and Local Economic Partnership, and any project or funding request will need to have a clearly identified sponsoring lead organisation/contact. Expression of Interest submissions should be completed and submitted for consideration by the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee Senior Officer Support Group, at a relevant meeting. They will assess its potential against the criteria and whether a good strategic fit. This mirrors the same approach adopted for the consideration of new projects for the Gloucestershire Capital Investment Pipeline (CIP).

Project Name <i>(Be specific not general, to avoid confusion with other similar projects or locations)</i>	
Berkeley Low Carbon Training Centre	
Investment theme: <i>Tick the primary theme that best fits your project. If applicable, also tick a sub theme. If 'other' state and explain.)</i>	
Primary Investment theme: Business Environment Infrastructure Place Shaping Skills and Employment	
Sub investment theme: Education Employment Energy	
Promoter Details	
Promoter Organisation	South Gloucestershire and Stroud (SGS) College (Sponsor Local Authority: Stroud District Council)
Promoter Address	Stratford Road, Stroud, GL5 4AH
Primary Contact (name & job title)	Patrick Mcleod – Assistant Principal, Projects

Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee: Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF)

Email Address	Patrick.mcleod@sgscol.ac.uk
Contact Telephone Number	01453 763424
<p>Project Summary (Max 250 words) <i>(Describe your project idea clearly and succinctly, including what the investment would buy, and why it would lead to economic growth for Gloucestershire. Include the potential timeframe, and any significant drivers or constraints related to the scheduling of the investment.</i></p> <p><i>Include details of the organisation(s) that would be involved in its delivery, and why public funds are needed).</i></p>	
<p>SGS College are applying to the Strategic Economic Development Fund, with Stroud District Council as the sponsor, for a total sum of £450,000 - £300,000 capital/£150,000 revenue.</p> <p>Berkeley Low Carbon Training Centre is the creation and development of a renewable energy and retrofit training centre at the Gloucestershire Science and Technology Park, Berkeley, Gloucestershire. Utilising redundant existing building space, the investment would convert and equip state of the art training rooms, classrooms and office space dedicated to low-carbon skills delivery and assessment. Currently there are few such centres in the UK, mainly operated by private training providers, and therefore a lack of supply to meet the anticipated huge demand. Also unique to Berkeley will be the linkage to the existing low-carbon knowledge cluster already on site, particularly the £36m Government Catapult project 'Active Building Centre', ensuring industry experience and knowledge is at the forefront of learning. Uniquely, the Berkeley centre will be supported by South Gloucestershire and Stroud College, one of the largest and most successful regional FE Colleges. The longer-term ambition is for this model to then be replicated across Gloucestershire, growing a countywide network of green skills centres.</p> <p>SEDF investment would allow for the essential capital works to take place, including the installation of the above facilities. The investment also includes some staffing resource, dedicated to this project to initiate, develop and establish the centre as the go-to green skills training centre for the south west. Having this in the heart of Gloucestershire, along with initiatives such as the Accxel Centre, Hartpury's Agri Tech Centre and related course offerings at FE and HE level across the county, will provide options, progression routes and complimentary courses. This breadth of provision is needed to enable the county to reskill and upskill ahead of demand and to be at the forefront as a national crisis problem solver.</p> <p>The centre will also support the curriculum of the University Technical College already on site. Both the UTC and SGS College will support low-carbon employers with the progression of graduates into jobs and apprenticeships. There are no constraints on timeframe, as the infrastructure and buildings are readily available for conversion.</p>	
<p>Summary of benefits/outcomes that will be delivered (Max 250 words) <i>(Expanding on your summary, provide information on the tangible benefits or outcomes that would be delivered, leading</i></p>	

Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee: Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF)

to the growth of the Gloucestershire economy. These could address challenges or capitalise on opportunities, including those associated with improving productivity. List the expected benefits, estimated quantities and indicate the timescales).

The key outcome will be to deliver training capacity for the essential skills and knowledge to meet the Gloucestershire carbon reduction targets (80% by 2030) and to also play a significant role in the regional and national solutions to the climate crisis. In its first year, we aim to train 750 installers, 200 design professionals, and we will work with employers to offer the low carbon/environmental technologies pathway as a Plumbing Apprenticeship pathway. SGS College has existing, established links with employers through the apprenticeships already offered through the work our Employer Engagement department does within the community. We have also engaged with 30 installer businesses as part of our consultation and development of plans on their training wants, needs, and accessibility.

We envisage the Berkeley Low Carbon Training Centre having a pathfinder role; developing, piloting and leading on cutting-edge low carbon, renewable energy and retrofit training courses. Working closely with the Active Building Centre at the forefront of decarbonising the built environment, the centre will develop content and delivery models that can be replicated regionally and nationally, strengthening the role of Gloucestershire in being positioned strongly to achieve the UK Net Zero ambition. We plan to work closely with other Gloucestershire initiatives, that are existing and in development, to form a cohesive stakeholder working group. Working with employers will be key to ensure we are delivering courses of value and impact, gaining industry input to develop our content and future proof.

The centre at Berkeley is regionally very accessible for short-course training; Exeter, Birmingham, Reading and Cardiff are all within 90 minutes by road. There is also a main train line at Cam and Dursley, from which we would explore the possibility of a shuttle bus to and from the GSTP to minimise individual travel. We would also encourage and work with employers to coordinate group travel.

The project adds value to the public funds already invested into the GSTP, including the UTC and the UK Government funded Active Building Centre. The low carbon centre would further reinforce the low carbon cluster at Berkeley and support the Western Gateway Region's bid for the STEP Fusion project, again strengthening Gloucestershire's reputation as the leading county for tackling climate change.

Strategic Fit (Max 150 words) *(Give the local, regional or national context for your project. Explain how it clearly aligns to the Strategic Economic Plan v2*
<https://www.gfirstlep.com/downloads/2018/sep-2-update2018v3.pdf>
and complements the local District strategies and delivery plans

Berkeley Low Carbon Training Centre aligns with and supports local and national strategies, further supporting Gloucestershire to become a national frontrunner of impactful action taking place.

Nationally, the centre would support the UK's ambition of Net Zero by 2050¹. There is appetite for more local generation/on site renewables in face of security of supply and cost challenges in fossil fuel sectors. Both the 6th Carbon Budget report², and the Catapult Energy Systems report³, highlight the

Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee: Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF)

necessity for Government to support the development of training and skills required for the change. Jobs in the Green sector are expected to rise 64% from 6,901 jobs in 2030 to 11,335 jobs in 2050.

Regionally, the Western Gateway latest report⁴ concludes an opportunity to be central on the 'design and integration of the next generation green power systems, becoming the ideas factory of the UK', and to prioritise 'Championing skills: Convening to address the core skills gaps afflicting the sectors of strength and supporting the development of adequate talent pipelines to provide opportunities across the Western Gateway.'

Countywide, in terms of strategic relevance, working with educational providers to address the skills and develop green sector specialist courses is supported by the Gloucestershire Skills Strategy 2022⁸, and the Gloucestershire Local Industrial Strategy 2019⁹. Whilst current delivery evidences the commitment at local levels to fund and secure demand that meets the retrofit challenge of our existing built environment, district level public sector projects are working to raise demand by showcasing retrofit solutions and raise awareness and opportunity for others to get involved. More than £14.4m of capital funds has been secured for countywide retrofit works on social and private housing and the development pipeline continues to grow. A further £13m was raised in the first round alone of Public Sector Decarbonisation funds and more has since been raised in the subsequent rounds and will deliver capital works on a variety of public estates. In addition, current activity between Stroud and Cotswold District councils and Local Partnerships is conducting an in-depth 'health check' on our ability to support retrofit and seeking evidence on how current and planned capacity is rising to the challenge with a view to identifying gaps and progression areas to take forward.

Locally, the project supports Stroud's existing Local Plan⁵ and review⁶ (submitted to Government for formal review), where projects associated with low carbon/renewable energy generation are supported. Working with educational providers to address the skills and develop green sector specialist courses is a proposed commitment as stated in the draft Stroud District Economic Development Strategy⁷. The project sponsors, Stroud District Council, have already shown a commitment to sustainability, retrofitting Council offices at Ebley Mill and Brimscombe Port by installing Water Source Heat Pumps.

Evidence of need or demand (Max 150 words) (give details of the evidence you can reference that supports your case that there is a need or demand for this project)

Having researched numerous low-carbon sector employers at different networking/showcase events including COP26, 96% said they would be interested in either environmental awareness courses and/or retrofit/renewable energy courses. Gloucestershire is projected to have 12,584 low carbon jobs by 2030 and is expected to rise by 61% to 20,263 low carbon jobs by 2050¹⁰.

Within existing low carbon schemes, such as heat pump installations in social housing schemes, we are seeing errors at every stage in the process; specification, design and installation, leading to poor quality schemes and reputational damage. This only leads to corrections needing to be made soon after, costing the customer financially and having a detrimental impact on progress. A prime example of this being the Green Homes Grant Scheme, where a lack of skilled trades people resulted in only

Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee: Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF)

672 retrofit measure being installed across the county despite a target of 5028; this is a tangible demonstration of how having the correct workforce impacts the success of the deliverables.

As the UK government develop policy for the adoption of low carbon technologies, there will be a drive to decarbonise the public estate and a desperate need for high quality, effective training. Low-carbon workforce predictions are set out in the government-commissioned Skills for Net Zero report. This is further supported by the Catapult report, which outlines the skills shortages holding back home decarbonisation.

Summary of the project costs and any sources of funding: *(Estimated total capital cost of the project, and (if available) list the main elements of the budget. Provide details of any potential or secured source(s) of funding and the likely shortfall.)*

Berkeley is in the fortunate position of having land, buildings, and associated infrastructure already operational. This project would initially look at redeveloping 5 rooms within the John Hugget building, to accommodate:

- 2 Training rooms with training rigs installed, 60-70% of total budget
- 2 Classrooms, 20-30% of total budget
- 1 Office, up to 20% of total budget

We aim for the training rooms to be as adaptable and flexible as possible, to host several training courses, so we are not restricted in future growth. The costs and items listed above are at this time estimates only, with a large part of the project being the obtaining and comparisons of quotes to ensure value for money and longevity of the project.

We estimate the capital investment for the installation of training rigs and redevelopment of room works to be approximately £300,000.

Summary of the Revenue Investment(s) required *(Explain how the project would be deliverable and sustainable by explaining the sources of revenue funding to support the likely cost needed to deliver the project following the capital investment)*

We will need a Project Manager to not only take on the redevelopment of the training centre itself including capital works, but also the initial set up, recruitment, and marketing of the Training Centre and the opportunities presented there. We will need some additional staffing resource for at least the first 2 years, to write, develop, deliver and assess the courses we wish to deliver. Once established, the centre will be self-sustainable, securing revenue primarily through full-cost short course training. Delivery of apprenticeships and adult-skills funded courses will also contribute.

For 2 years of staffing resource, including on costs, we estimate up to £150,000.

Match Funding from SGS College

External funding is needed for the project as SGS College simply do not have the revenue needed. However, we can provide in kind match funding by way of:

- Site use. As we already own the GSTP, there would be no purchase or lease of buildings. This will save a substantial amount.
- Infrastructure. Similar to above, the infrastructure needed to firstly open the site and run it operationally on a daily basis is already in place.

Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee: Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF)

- Utilities. Although utilities will increase due to increased room use, SGS College will manage and maintain these costs as part of the overall site use.
- Back office functions. As this is a multi-faceted and complex project, additional support will be required from SGS College departments including marketing, finance, HR, IT infrastructure, and executive team.
- Administration. There will be project monitoring and reporting needs, which will be completed by SGS internal staff.

Although a monetary value is not available at the time of application submission, the above is estimated to be in the region of £100,000 per annum.

Sustainability Post Project

For project sustainability, a Strategic Development Fund bid administered by the DfE is also being submitted. This bid is a collaborative bid involving all Gloucestershire FE Colleges and will focus on Green Skills and Digital Skills. The elements included in the SDF bid will complement and build on work completed by the SEDF at Berkeley, expanding the curriculum offer by increased revenue support ensuring a multitasked approach is taken. This will also enable more cross-county work and collaboration to take place, adding value to the SEDF project.

Post SEDF and possible SDF lifespan, there are several income streams that will enable the centre to be financially self-sustainable:

- Adult skills. Utilising the adult education budget, both regionally and nationally, will allow funds to be drawn down per participants (terms and conditions apply).
- 16-19 funding. As above, if eligible, funds can be administered for delivering a full-time qualification to a learner aged 16-19.
- Skills Bootcamps. A Government initiative focusing on running short courses designed specifically for employer needs.
- Paid for courses. If participants do not fall into one of the above categories, we would charge either the individual or the employer to attend the course.

If successful, much of the business planning for post project will commence immediately so we have a clear vision and financial plan to ensure stability and longevity. This will include the SGS Group CFO and executive team.

Project Status *(select from one of the following, and provide brief explanation)*

Developed Stage *(clear project plan, deliverable, but seeking funds)*

We have a plan, developed for an earlier Department for Education Strategic Development Fund bid. We have identified the building space and obtained realistic figures of installation costs for training rigs. We have conducted market research and are at a good starting point, when capital investment can be received.

Project Status: key milestones *(where applicable, provide brief notes on the current situation)*

Promoter identified	SGS College
---------------------	-------------

Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee: Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF)

Full Business case available	Yes
Planning Status	n/a
Land Assembly (potential requirement for CPO)	n/a
Confirmed Funding Sources	None
Design Detail Stage	In progress
Earliest Potential Start Date	October 2022

Key challenges associated with Project *(give brief indication of the main challenges or risks associated with the successful delivery of this project)*

Challenge / Risk	Potential Impact / mitigation
Innovation. This project is ahead of the curve, what we want to develop is innovative and therefore carries an element of the unknown.	Lack of support from other investment sources. Unless someone takes this approach and the associated risks, we will not move forward with the national ambition. Our research with existing employers establishes that there will sufficient demand for training but we require the capital investment
Developing suitable training courses.	We will establish a Green Skills Stakeholder group, including employers to ensure we maintain currency of the curriculum. Work with current renewable course awarding bodies and associated Higher Education institutes, to understand delivery pre-requisites and delivery models.
Uncertainty on the makeup of the future green skills workforce.	We do not know how much of the emerging sector will be made up of fossil-fuel converts, or new entrants. This will impact only on the detail within the training programmes, not on the demand. However, as a national ambition, getting on board and upskilling in these areas will be pivotal to their future continuation. The Green Skills Stakeholder group will support the understanding of this and help shape the courses appropriately.
Risk of not establishing the training centre	Our employers will access training out of the region and we will lose the opportunity to strengthen the role of Gloucestershire at the centre of climate change solutions.

Declaration by Applicant

I certify to the best of my knowledge the information submitted on this form is true and correct.

I have the appropriate level of responsibility to submit this Expression of Interest on behalf of my organisation.

I am aware that acceptance of a project on to the CIP does not automatically result in further support or funding through any partner organisation.

May 2021

Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee: Strategic Economic Development Fund (SEDF)

Signed (on behalf of Promoter)

Patrick Mcleod

Brendan Cleere (project sponsor, SDC)

Status of signatory (e.g. CEO, company director, authorised agent)

Assistant Principal, Projects

Strategic Director of Place (project sponsor, SDC)

EOI submission details (see list on front page)
Sent to:
Date submitted:

1. [net-zero-strategy-beis.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
2. [The-Sixth-Carbon-Budget-The-UKs-path-to-Net-Zero.pdf \(theccc.org.uk\)](#)
3. [Skills shortage in 4 key job roles and 3 sector challenges holding back home decarbonisation - Energy Systems Catapult](#)
4. [Proposal_A4 \(western-gateway.co.uk\)](#)
5. [stroud-district-local-plan_november-2015_low-res_for-web.pdf](#)
6. [contents-pages_hyperlinked_pre-submission-draft-plan-2021-copy.pdf \(stroud.gov.uk\)](#)
7. [draft-economic-development-strategy.pdf \(stroud.gov.uk\)](#)
8. [gfirst-lep-gloucestershire-skills-strategy-2022-27.pdf \(gfirstlep.com\)](#)
9. [gloucestershire_draft_local-industrial-strategy_2019-updated.pdf \(gfirstlep.com\)](#)
10. [Local green jobs - accelerating a sustainable economic recovery | LG Inform](#)