



SCHEME LAUNCHED AIMS TO HELP CONNECT CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYERS AND CRAFT APPRENTICES

CITB NI, with funding from the Department for the Economy's Apprenticeship Challenge fund, has launched a new scheme called Apprenticeship Connect (NI) - find, match, hire which will help match construction employers and prospective craft apprentices.

The scheme, in collaboration with employer and apprentice service provider Workplus, will ease the process for employers wishing to promote their craft apprenticeship opportunities by helping with promotion and shortlisting. The scheme also aims to help apprentices find craft apprenticeship opportunities with construction employers.

Open to any employer working in

the construction industry and craft apprentices seeking a career in the construction industry. There is no fee involved plus the opportunity for employers to claim up to £8k of available funding (T&Cs apply).

The process to get involved is simple

Find

- Employer can register their opportunity now on <https://bit.ly/AppConnectNI> up until 8th January

- Aspiring craft apprentices can apply from 18th January - 26 February on <https://bit.ly/AppConnectNI>

Match

- From 8th March onwards employers will be able to match themselves with top local talent and invite them to attend for interview

Hire

- By the end of April, employers will be able to hire a suitable apprentice and claim up to £8k of funding which is paid at different stages throughout the apprenticeship term.

Apprenticeship Connect (NI) - find, match, hire, is a vital part of CITB NI's three-year careers strategy - Build Your Career, which helps to promote careers in



construction and advise the next generation of the opportunities a career in the industry can bring. Build Your Career focuses on employers, young people and their influencers and helps promote and provide information and initiatives that demonstrate how construction is a viable career option as well as encouraging employment opportunities and investment in apprenticeships.

Construction apprenticeships are an important part of the career ladder and are beneficial to both the apprentice and the employer. Learning on the job is crucial to skills development whilst gaining the formal qualifications at the same time. Skills shortages, an ageing workforce and poor perception of the industry are pulling the construction industry at risk. Consequently, the industry needs to do more to successfully promote itself to young people and careers influencers and meet the future demands.

Launching Apprenticeship Connect (NI) - find, match, hire, Barry Neilson Chief Executive of CITB NI said:

"CITB NI is delighted to launch Apprenticeship Connect (NI) - find, match hire. Thanks to the support from DfE and in collaboration with Workplus, we can provide employers and craft apprentices with a scheme that takes the hassle out of the promotion and short-listing process that will help employers promote their craft apprenticeship opportunities in 2021 and help apprentices find them - all for no fee! CITB NI wants to help employers realise the importance of apprenticeships, their value and help them find and recruit a young person into an apprenticeship role. We also want to highlight construction apprenticeships as an excellent career choice for young people. We encourage both employers and young people, who are considering a career in construc-

tion and a construction apprenticeship, to get involved in this fantastic scheme."

Economy Minister Diane Dodds said:

"This Challenge Fund was designed to give those working in apprenticeships an opportunity to develop and test new and innovative models of apprenticeship development, recruitment and delivery. I wish CITB NI and Workplus every success and look forward to seeing the outcome of their project."

Director of Workplus, Richard Kirk added:

"We are very pleased to be working with CITB NI to promote craft apprenticeship opportunities in the construction industry. This scheme will allow construction employers and aspiring apprentices to come together on one platform, making it easier for employers to promote opportunities and potential apprentices to discover them, giving craft apprentices a single place to apply. While this has been a bleak time for many companies, we hope that this campaign will convey a positive message - that there are opportunities in a broad spectrum of roles for young people and those wishing to retrain; roles in which they can learn new skills, develop professionally and continue their education."

Employer deadline to register an opportunity is Friday 8th January 2021. For further information or assistance to register an opportunity, call Amanda Stevenson on 07753971878 or email Amanda.stevenson@citbni.org.uk. Craft apprentices will be invited to register interest from 18 January until 26 February 2021 - details available soon.

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