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**Working together with WL College - Proposal to improve employer engagement and student help across West Lothian**

TSSG Update on proposal to partner with West Lothian College in supporting an array of employer engagement activities to aid in student work readiness journey and align to offerings within the TSSG forum.

At the last TSSG I sought your initial thoughts on the interest and viability of the Third Sector and the College working together to create a sustainable working arrangement giving students meaningful work experience, including online and in person projects/placements and in turn give organisations the opportunity to get help from the College and its infrastructure to deliver smaller but meaningful tasks that otherwise our organisations may struggle with due to lack of expertise, time or other recourses.

You indicated broad agreement for the proposal to be progressed. Further meetings have taken place between the college and ourselves and I wanted to update you on where we have got to.

We have drawn up a list of who may need / want to be involved.

We have also started thinking about how we use technology to help us with this piece of work.

We have also looked at how and who we need to communicate with to ensure all key stakeholders are involved going forward.

Where we are currently and what we need to do in order to move forward is as follows:-

* Ask for anyone here who would like to be involved in working through the more detailed plan for this
* Investigate how we would fund this work
* Investigate how we would use existing technology for this
* Investigate if there are new / emerging technologies that would be more accessible and useful
* Look into existing ways we as the TSI use our website/other platforms to gather and hold appropriate information, how the College use theirs and the sector use theirs to see if we can align the ways in which information is gathered that helps inform this piece of work and ultimately choose something that doesn't need to be different for different audiences/users as we hope that longer term this can apply to all sectors.
* We need to also check is anyone else doing something similar( i.e. NHS Lothian project looking to match volunteers to the people being discharged from hospital and building a data base to help the required matching to happen)
* Proposed Timescales
  + College is currently working with individual business within the third sector to support work experience on an adhoc basis - these may include the following processes supported by college EE team.
    - Ask business for a volunteers/Placement brief – outlining the role, duties and timescales
    - Circulate this around the student body – where this is sector specific, target these by reaching out to faculty directly
    - Where this might be a longer term and general opportunity, these are advertised on our moodle platform.
    - We also work alongside other stakeholdes including, DYW, SDS, Council and more…..
    - College staff support on many volunteer forums to work in collaboration and stay abreast of needs.
  + A pilot phase is proposed to start September 2021 and run to end of January 2022. We will be looking for several TSSG members to participate in this phase.
  + Phase 1 is expected end of January 2022 to June 2022 – offer to other TSSG members to join in the programme.
    - Phased approach to support and evaluate the programme using an agile approach – this will consider manual, and automated processes, with contingency planning in place

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