***How did you find out about the funding?***

We’re really interested in finding ways where we can create transformational impact. We picked up on some of the regional communication around this Fund and saw it as a good opportunity to propose a programme that aligned with the Regional Skills Investment Plan and which we felt would be of value to participants.

Our strength exists in connecting a challenge or a need with a solution and saw a good opportunity here to do just that! We are interesting in making a real, tangible and positive impact within our local communities and making a transformational impact.

***How did you advertise your course?***

We promoted this Programme in a number of ways in order to create awareness and encourage participation within a short period of time. We recognised the need to dedicate marketing resource and so appointed our Intern who reported to our Head of Marketing and Communications. As a team, they developed a brand and digital portfolio of materials that would enable us to promote the various activities. We maintained regular contact with the Programme Management Office to ensure that we were meeting brand / use of logo compliance. The use of Business Gateway in the Tay Cities region was an important avenue for us and we made sure that the team were aware of the programme. We specifically advertised through our website and through social media including x (formally known as Twitter), Facebook, Instagram and Linkedin. We also used Digital flyers and posters were created by the Intern.

***Who did you work in partnership with on the course?***

W worked in partnership with the University of Dundee, through the Centre for Excellence and Calley Russell for the workshop on Entrepreneurship. We worked in partnership with all of the Business Gateway teams in the Tay Cities region. We worked in partnership with local consultants such as DLR Media, Limetree and Extra Pair of Hands as part of our community wealth building approach. We also worked in partnership with Dundee and Angus College, the Federation of Small Businesses and the Chambers of Commerce.

***What have been the successes of the project?***

The 12-week Empower Digital programme was a success and we received positive feedback regarding the digital skills aspect and how businesses would expand what they have learnt and incorporate this into their work. Another success was working with SMEs within the region to support businesses. Increasing and incorporating digital skills in staff teams. A third success would be having the chance to appoint a student internship for marketing and communications as this was good partnership working and a valuable work experience opportunity.

***What have you learnt from the project?***

We have learnt that there is a real need for digital upskilling. People benefit from getting together with other people to share their experiences and to be able to network. The participants on the 12-week programme showed a real commitment which was challenging for them to balance studies or work commitments. We learnt from the 1 to 1 programme that people benefited from having individual support from advisors.

***If you were to do the project again, what would you change?***

Upon reflection and feedback, we would change the 12-week programme to possibly 1 day a week with online learning and homework rather than a 2-day programme.

***What did you learn from the group that stands out?***

One thing that stood out was seeing the participants learning from each other and combining theory and practical tasks such as learning how to do tic-toc videos, as having a tutorial is one thing but actually doing it for real is another.