



West Midlands Combined Authority Scheme

“Regional authority and gravitas driving local skills and employment”

PROBLEM STATEMENT: The West Midlands has a **youth employment challenge** which the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) is driven to resolve, alongside addressing a potentially **grave shortage of key skills** in the region, both in traditional roles and those now needed for the Information Age.

THE GRAVITY SOLUTION: Our approach is to build on the core purpose of The 5% Club – inspiring positive employer action – by working with the WMCA to drive increased investment in inclusive and accessible workplace skills development and youth employment within Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Employers in the region. We will deploy our Employer Audit scheme to baseline performance, which we will follow-up with specialist consultancy services to drive insights, action and ultimately increase youth employment in targeted areas. These services will be provided free to participating SME Employers.

BENEFITS: This programme will be bespoke to the West Midlands, building on our broader regional and large employer Gravity Scheme which has been developed in association with Grant Thornton People Advisory Services and using grant-funding from the ERA Foundation. The benefits from participation will include:

- **Accredited membership of The 5% Club** awarded through a bespoke version of our Employer Audit programme to measure SME investment in “earn & learn” schemes. Awarded membership will be uniquely badged with the WMCA and will comprise Bronze, Silver and Gold Memberships; Platinum membership will be available on qualification in year 3.
- **Employer Research and Benchmarking Report** that will compare and contrast the performance of all participants, using the Employer Audit benchmarking approach, with the detail captured in a bespoke 30+ page report for each participant.
- **A symposium and celebration event** hosted by the WMCA that will be facilitated by experts to explore, compare and contrast the overall findings of the research in a plenary forum, to be followed by a celebration event exclusively for participants.

- **Targeted consultancy support** will be provided to assist participants in drawing insights from the process, develop action plans and to target improvement, with a focus on increasing employment and workplace learning opportunities for young people (aged 18 – 25).

OUR APPROACH: It will be collaborative and bespoke. We will work with participant SMEs and which will:

- **Deliver** an Employer Audit to the selected/targeted employers. This will take 2-3 months to complete most likely by November 2024. Reports will be available and accredited membership will be awarded at this stage.
- **Bring** this curated SME Employer community together to explore the findings of the Audit and to celebrate their success in achieving accredited membership of The 5% Club. This will most likely be in January 2025.
- **Deliver** targeted support to inspire further action to enhance the workplace learning (earn & learn scheme) offering and its delivery. This will be delivered in January-April 2025.

COST: This scheme is funded fully by the WMCA and there is no cost for any of the participating employers.

TIME COMMITMENT: The Employer Audit has been running successfully since 2021, and is designed to deliver maximum benefit for minimal employer input. Data collation and input will take on average 3-hours, and the comprehensive action planning consultancy will only require a further 3-6 hours.

FIND OUT MORE – register for interest using the online registration form. There will also be a number of briefing events during which you will be able to explore the scheme further with the WMCA and The 5% Club Team.

