

THE TRUST TIMES

18+ Care Leavers' Newsletter

February 2023

OUR ENHANCED OFFER TO YOU

Hi everyone,

We hope you have had a truly positive start to 2023, and you are enjoying yourself at college, university, training or the world of work.

We are delighted to announce that our offer to care experienced young people has now been enhanced, meaning that we have fresh information on our website to help you in a range of different ways.

Read more on Page 2

We are also greatly looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible on Wednesday 22 February, at the Lighthouse Young People's Centre, for our next 'Care Leavers' Conference'. There will be plenty of employers, helpful services and other stalls exhibiting and ready to answer any questions you may have.

Read more on Page 9

This month we are also featuring some fantastic opportunities for you to apply for.



We love your good news If you have anything you would like to be considered for next month's edition please email it to Juliette Walton.

Remember, you can have your achievements, however big or small, shared in this newsletter.

Juliette.Walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Always remember, **you are never alone**, you are a part of the biggest family in Birmingham, and we are here for you!

If you can't get hold of your PA, please call: **0121 464 1229.**

NEED HELP ? CALL OUR DUTY LINE ON 0121 464 1229

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Our help and support offer for care experienced young people (also known as our 'local offer')

We understand leaving our care is a time of big changes in your life. You will have lots of questions about the support you can get and what services are available to help you. We want you to leave our care at a time that is right for you.

We will start to discuss this with you and other people who are important to you around your 16th birthday. It doesn't mean you're ready to leave our care just that we want to really understand your views. You may be really settled where you live and want to stay on beyond your 18th birthday. You may already be thinking about what help and support you are entitled to and want to talk about it.

Around your 16th birthday we will also start to talk to you about whether you will benefit from the support of a personal advisor (PA) as well as your social worker. Basically, they will help and support you until you are 21yrs old, and beyond that if you need it. Just because you are leaving our care, we don't stop caring about you. We want to make sure you feel safe and supported and know where to go for advice and help.

This is called our `offer' to you and sometimes also known as `the local offer'. There's loads and loads of information about our `offer' on our website.

Scan this QR code to take you directly to our website:

www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/Ouroffertocareexperiencedyoungpeople



You will find information on help with:

- Money
- Where you live
- Education, employment, training and activities
- Living healthily
- Plus other support available to you

There's always loads of helpful information and any updates in our monthly Care Leavers Newsletter too.If you're not sure about anything or want more information ask your social worker or PA. Birmingham care leavers helped us to design our offer. We will continue to listen to your views to make sure that the services we offer are what you need.



Look in at the Lighhouse



Every Wednesday afternoon, from 1.00pm – 4.30pm, we are at the:

Lighthouse Young People's Centre 100 Alma Way B19 2LN

If you come along you will get:

Hot food, company, one to one advice and guidance, pool and table-tennis, preloved clothes, books and toys, a £20 Aldi voucher and a day saver for everyone who attends.

Every week we invite partners, such as:

Umbrella sexual health service, TESS (Therapeutic Emotional Support Service) and MyBNK – financial advice service.

If you just want to chill, or catch up on college work there is plenty of space, comfy seating and tables, a friendly atmosphere, coffee tea and other refreshments and Wi-Fi.

These are the dates for your diary:

Wednesdays - 1.00pm – 4.30pm **1, 8 15, 22 and 29 March 2023**.

If you have any questions, contact Juliette on 07825 117 381.

There is no need to book, just turn up. It would be great to see you there 😊

REES FOUNDATION February 2023 UPDATE

Rees Foundation run a number of groups called '**Let's Connect**', which allow you to connect with other members of the care experienced community. Rees find that these networks can lead to lifelong and empowering friendships.

Website: www.reesfoundation.org

The groups are facilitated using a team whose members may be care experienced or individuals who are experienced by profession, with the ultimate aim of creating a safe place where care experienced people like you can meet to discuss matters of personal interest.

Featured course in March 2022



Strength and Identity - 4-week course (9, 16, 23, 30 March - 2.00pm - 3.30pm)

In this four week course, Mary-Anne explores the impact the care journey can have on developing strengths and identity, leaving us to be able to understand our own strengths with practical tips, tricks and resources for how to overcome barriers we face in everyday life.

To sign up to any of the groups, and to find out when sessions take place, please complete the form in the link below: https://form.jotform.com/203141499622353

THERAPEUTIC EMOTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICE (TESS)

Come along and join the Trust's monthly TESS afternoon drop-in sessions for Birmingham's 18+ care-experienced young people, aimed at enhancing your emotional wellbeing.

Where will sessions take place:

TESS 67 Bournbrook Road Selly Oak B29 7BX

Phone to book: 0121 675 1781

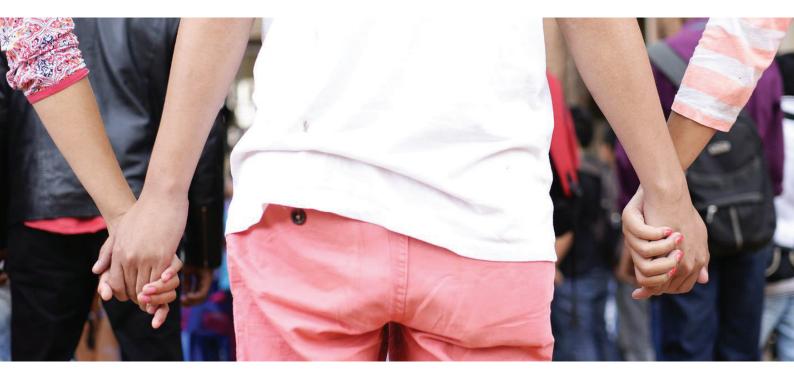
Dates: These will take place on the first Wednesday of every month. The next session will be on 1 March 2023.

What can I expect:

- A relaxing and welcoming environment with an outside garden and indoor area.
- Connection with the TESS 18+ team, which will give you the opportunity to talk and engage in activities, learn coping skills and strategies, that will help you to improve your emotional wellbeing.

Staff available on the day:

- Davinia Burrell
- Paul Campbell
- Vibha Jivan
- Sally Burgess
- Emily Kigonya



Time: 12.00pm – 4.00pm.

YOUR GOOD NEWS 2023

We are continuing to celebrate your good news in this newsletter. Congratulations to every one of you on your achievements so far in 2023.



• **JT and KB** completed a 5-day money management course with MyBnk.

They both received excellent feedback from MyBnk.

Danielle from MyBnk said: "They have both been brilliant. They have been very engaged, put a lot of effort into completing their workbooks, and participated in all activities. They have been an absolute pleasure to train."



• JP has just started a Business Admin Apprenticeship with Kier Construction. This company is a corporate parenting partner with Birmingham Children's Trust. Juliette our EET manager has been tracking JP's progress through the application process. On the day of JP's interview Juliette had a message from her contact at Kier, saying: "Ten minutes after his interview the hiring manager called me to tell me how impressed he was with (JP) and immediately offered him a role. I met him at the depot on Monday and he seems to be settling in well." • **ZS** recently received her British Citizen Award in January 2023.

This is for her tireless work in advocating for Mental Health Standards in the UK to be improved.



Through her work **ZS** has developed her own charity (Emotion Dysregulation in Autism) and has spoken widely on the subject.

She has also co-produced a campaign called 'Intensive Residential Outreach for Children in Care' with NHS England and Forward Thinking Birmingham, which is the only one of its kind in the UK.

Trust Website Care Leavers' opportunities

The Trust care leavers' opportunities page contains opportunities for you to get your hands on! It is regularly updated, so be sure to favourite the page to keep an eye out for updated opportunities.

https://www.birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk/opportunitiesCL

Give Kooth a try



Kooth offers free, safe and anonymous online counselling and support, with many different features and sections to offer you support such as:

- **Magazine** helpful articles, personal experiences and tips from young people and our Kooth team.
- **Discussion Boards** start or join a conversation with our friendly Kooth community. Lots of topics to choose from!
- Chat with the team chat to our helpful team about anything that's on your mind. Message us or have a live chat.
- **Daily Journal** write in your own daily journal to track your feelings or emotions and reflect on how you're doing.

Visit the **Kooth** website to see the features listed above and much more!

www.kooth.com

THE TRUST TIMES

Back issues of the 18+ newsletter

You can find the last two years worth of 18+ newsletters on the Birmingham Children's Trust website. Many of the feature articles, including those providing information and guidance are still valid.

Visit: https://bit.ly/3yliug3

CARE LEAVER COVENANT

In the last few weeks there has been a lot of preparation around the promotion of the Care Leaver Covenant app and website and how to navigate around it.

The Care Leaver Covenant app and website is a gateway into so many opportunities, offers, discounts and information for care leavers.

By accessing the Care Leaver Covenant, you will find tailored opportunities and offers for you.

You will also find offers/opportunities that is not advertised anywhere else.

It is very easy and simple to use, and I recommend you take full advantage of the app and website and use it as much as you can.

Some of the things they offer on there are job opportunities in various sectors, apprenticeships, higher education, discounts, and many other things.

Below is a link to the website which you can have a look around. You can also scan the barcode. It will take you to the sign-up page.

If you would like to download this as an app all you have to do is go to App Store and type in 'Care leaver covenant' and it should pop up for you to download.

https://mycovenant.org.uk/







LOOK-IN AT THE



Come and join us for free home cooked food, pool and table tennis, board games, books, cards – or just to chill-out, or catch up on college work.

Free WiFi Day-Savers & Shopping Vouchers available if needed Children are welcome

Starting From Wednesday 23 November 2022 1.00pm - 5.00pm

Lighthouse Young People's Centre B19 2LN No need to book, just turn up on the day. If you have any questions, contact Juliette Walton 07825 117 381

Juliette.Walton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk



The Rees Foundation is proud to collaborate with a number of cafés across the country, offering a safe social space for care experienced people in the heart of the community.

The cafés offer affordable, high quality food and drinks and supportive staff who are mental health first aiders.



The Rees Guest Card is exclusively available to care experienced people and allows you discounted food and drink at any of our cafés. Please click here to apply for a Rees Café Guest Card

You'll find a full list of where you can use your card below. Rees Foundation website has a huge amount of information, resources and projects that you can get your teeth into.

https://www.reesfoundation.org/rees-cafes.html

Evolve Café in Birmingham

Evolve Café is based in Birmingham.

Evolve Café 201 Bradford Street Birmingham, B12 0JD

evolve@aquarius.org.uk

01212 6228181



Suicide and self-harm prevention

If you, or anyone you know, is feeling suicidal, or wanting to harm themselves, there is always help available.

However bad you are feeling right now, there is help that you can get.

Lots of people have felt like this and - with help – managed to get through it.

Here are some numbers and links to supportive professionals and organisations who offer help to those feeling suicidal.

These links will be included in all future newsletters so they will always be here for you to access



• Papyrus has a lot of useful advice and also a suicide prevention helpline.

https://papyrus-uk.org/

- Samaritans helpline **116 123**
- SANE helpline 0300 304 7000

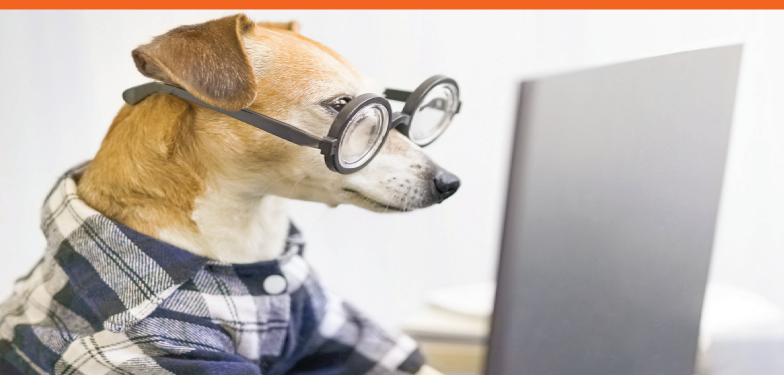


- Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) (for men) **0800 58 58 58**
- Help Guide suicide prevention

www.helpguide.org/home-pages/suicide-prevention.htmt

Also please see the TESS offer on **page 4**.

Care Leavers' Conference - 22 Feb



Time and date: 11.00am - 4.00pm, Wednesday 22 February 2023 **Venue:** The Lighthouse, 100 Alma Way B19 2LN

- As always it is going to be a busy and fun day with loads of opportunities for you to network and get involved.
- We will have presentations from employers Ernst and Young and the Belfry Hotel.
- In the marketplace you can talk to: The Royal Navy, British Academy of Jewellery, Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospital – also Lifelong Links, Rees Foundation, Breaking the Cycle, MyBNK – and loads more !!
- Workshops will be hosted by Balfour Beatty Vinci Construction, and EPIC Youth, who will talk about 'Starting a Business'.
- As always there will be Kirstie's cracking quiz, with lots of great prizes and giveaways for everyone.
- We have listened to young peoples' feedback from previous conferences requesting a quiet area, and we will be using the IT room for this purpose.
- There will be a lovely free lunch and free refreshments available throughout the day.
- Children are welcome, as are family, friends and carers.
- There is no need to book just turn up. We can't wait to see you at The Lighthouse!



jobcentreplus

Department for Work and Pensions

SWAPS with BMet

Horticulture at the Botanical Gardens for Bennett Landscapes opportunities!

BMet are working in conjunction with Bennett Landscapes to offer a brand new Horticulture Operative SWAP, based at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens. Bennett Landscapes is one of The Midlands' leading grounds maintenance companies, offering comprehensive grounds maintenance expertise. If you have a keen interest for working outdoors whilst learning practical skills, this is a fantastic opportunity to gain an accredited qualification in an engaging environment with a guaranteed job interview upon course completion!

Induction session and course start - Monday 27th February 2023 at 9am (includes introduction and tour of the gardens)

Course schedule - Two days per week for 5 weeks (Monday & Wednesday, 9am-3.30pm)

Course location - Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Westbourne Road, Birmingham, B15 3TR

Course includes -

- Accredited L1 Certificate in Practical Horticulture Skills!
- Access to BMet's Botanical Gardens Study Centre!
- Theoretical and practical activities, both indoors and outdoors!
- An opportunity to secure a guaranteed job interview with Bennett Landscapes for a Horticulture Operative role!

Job requirements -

- A keen interest in horticulture & landscaping
- A willingness to learn & develop new skills
- Proactive attitude & natural problem solving abilities
- Physical ability to carry out the demands of the role

Candidates must -

- Be unemployed and in receipt of a benefit such as JSA or UC
- Be 19+ as of 31st August 2022 and have lived in the UK/EU for the past three years
- Provide appropriate photographic ID such as passport or driving license for enrolment purposes and proof of right to work

To secure a place on the course -Call <u>0121 362 1174</u> OR email <u>Adultskills@bmet.ac.uk</u>

Child Trust Funds



If you were born in the UK and turned 18 after 1 September 2020 and don't have details of your Child Trust Fund (CTF), please use the online form below to find your details and take control of your CTF (usually worth £250 or more): https://findctf.sharefound.org

Junior Individual Savings Accounts

If you turned 18 before 1 September 2020 (born since 3rd January 1994) you may have a Junior Individual Savings Account (JISA) set up with £200. To be eligible you must have been in care in the UK, continuously for 12 months or more, since 2 January 2012. Please use the online form below to find your detailsso you can take control of your JISA:

https://myjisa.sharefound.org

If you need to contact the Share Foundation regarding the online forms please email:

info@sharefound.org

Or call

01296 310400

For further enquiries please contact: Tracey.Britton@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

ADVOCACY SERVICE

The aim of **Rights and Participation (RAP) Advocacy** service is to ensure that Birmingham children in care, care leavers and children on child protection plans (wherever they may live), are provided an advocacy service. You are entitled to have the support of an advocate and access to children's rights.

RAP Advocacy is the representation of your wishes and feelings, your views, and your voice, to professionals and services. This could be at meetings, through the complaints process, or wherever you wish us to do so.

RAP Advocacy is **ALWAYS** led by you the young person - our **BOSS**. Your advocate will work on your instructions alone.

RAP Advocacy is issue based, so it is provided for a particular purpose, and is there until there is an outcome for the complaint, or concern.

Advocacy referrals are normally allocated to an advocate within three working days of receipt. The advocate will then contact you and support you with your issue/s.

You can make a referral for yourself or anyone else can make a referral on your behalf.

To make a referral or if you have any questions about RAP Advocacy service please email **advocacy@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk**

Testimonials about the RAP Advocacy service

"Thanks so much my advocate - everything went the way I wanted."

"Thank you for helping me learn and grow as a young mum you stood up for me and believed in me. It's all paid off, you're truly amazing and I hope we can always stay in contact."

"My advocate helped me to have housing officials listen to my housing needs. Without her they would not have listened to me and fobbed me off."

HELP WITH THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS



Birmingham City Council and partners are working hard to support and guide residents through the cost-of-living crisis.

A great, comprehensive, new Help in Brum leaflet, is just out that covers everything from warm welcome spaces, to benefits and money advice, energy efficiency and food. http://bit.ly/3EE1H0v

Hours are also being extended at two council Neighbourhood Advice and Information Centres, in Erdington and Northfield, to help support people.

http://bit.ly/3XcKpik

Find out about goods and services to help you in Birmingham by visiting: **https://birmingham.connecttosupport.org**

Birmingham Warm Welcome Spaces

The city council is working with the local community and a partnership of voluntary and community sector organisations to expand a network of warm spaces.

These spaces will be available for people to use and visit during the winter period and beyond.

Find out more: http://bit.ly/3EjpbGO

FOOD VOUCHERS GOING UNCLAIMED

Healthy Start Food Vouchers for families are going unclaimed, according to Birmingham City Council's Public Health Team.

To qualify for Healthy Start vouchers, applicants must be 10+ weeks pregnant and/or have at least one child under four, and be in receipt of benefits such as Child Tax Credit or Universal Credit.

Healthy Start food vouchers can be exchanged for milk, infant formula, fruit, vegetables, and pulses.

For more information - Healthy Start Website **https://www.healthystart.nhs.uk**

To find your local Healthy Start Vitamin collection site please use the postcode finder: http://bit.ly/3EEzZkj

If you have any questions, please contact Kathy Lee in the Public Health team. **Kathy.Lee@birmingham.gov.uk**



Care leavers can sign up to **Connects**, managed by the **Care Leaver Covenant**.

Connects in an online service that will keep you up to date with relevant work, education and recreational opportunities, as well as information about the support that care leavers may be able to access.

In addition to this, care leavers will be automatically entered into their giveaways, including draws for £50.00 Amazon vouchers.

Sign up here: https://bit.ly/39SFgVl

Creative Mentorship Scheme with Women & Theatre

This year, Women & Theatre is running its first ever Creative Mentorship Scheme for care experienced young people. We will work with a small group to develop theatre making skills, and build connections with Birmingham's creative community.

We will meet with you regularly, and in ways that suit you. This could include meeting 1-to-1 with us, group sessions with other mentees and attending performances and events around Birmingham.

This is for you if:

- You're a care leaver
- You love theatre and performance and want to develop your creative skills
- You have loads of ideas but find it hard to make sense of them
- You want to connect more with Birmingham's creative community
- You're considering a career in the theatre

This scheme is open to anyone of any gender, not just women. Generously supported by Arts Council England.

Scan the QR code to go to the website:





CHILDREN'S COMMISSIONER

CARE EXPERIENCED ADVISORY BOARD

Applications for the Children's Commissioner's Care Experienced Advisory Board have been launched. Applications are via this survey and the deadline is Sunday 19 February at midnight.

Below is more information from the Children's Commissioner, Dame Rachel de Souza about the opportunity:

"I am excited to launch applications for my first Care Experienced Advisory Board. The Board will amplify the voices of young care experienced people in my work and the work of my office.

A key part of my role is to hear directly from children in care and care leavers, as well as children living away from home, and amplify their voices. By speaking to decision makers across Government and Parliament I work to ensure your needs are met."

The Advisory Board is an exciting, voluntary opportunity for care experienced young people aged 18-25, to give you the chance to have your voice heard and share your thoughts on the current and future work of the Children's Commissioner's office.

As well as this you will be involved in developing useful and relevant resources for children and care experienced young people.

Apply via this survey link:

https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/CEAB_application_form/

Deadline: Sunday 19 February at midnight.

If you have any questions please contact Scout Davies, Advisory Board Lead, via email at:

advisory.board@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk





SUPPORTING FAMILIES BY PROVIDING £49 ENERGY VOUCHERS

A ONE-OFF ENERGY VOUCHER WILL BE AVAILABLE TO BIRMINGHAM FAMILIES ON PRE-PAYMENT METERS PROVIDING ELECTRICITY OR GAS TO HOMES

POP UP ENERGY VOUCHERS STANDS WILL BE RUNNING FROM 21 FEBRUARY 2023 AT:

ERDINGTON TRUSSEL TRUST FOODBANK TUE – GEORGE ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH, B23 7RZ THU – SIX WAYS BAPTIST CHURCH, B24 8AD TIME : 12:00 – 14:00

This scheme will continue on a first come first serve basis until all 1,000 vouchers are allocated

CRITERIA (PLEASE BRING):

- INFO ON PREPAYMENT PROVIDER & ACCOUNT
- PROOF OF BIRMINGHAM ADDRESS
- PROOF OF CHILD BENEFIT
- PROOF OF UNIVERSAL CREDIT OR LOW INCOME (PAYSLIPS SHOWING LESS THAN £1,423.20 A MONTH AFTER TAX)



For more information please email: peddimore@winvic.co.uk



NOW SERVING BREAKFAST

TUESDAYS | 10.45AM-12.30PM

FREE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGES 16 TO 25

ER MASON YOUTH CENTRE, 40 IRVING ST, BI 1DH

CESTUS

Eventcover Ltd

Assessment: Wed 1 March (West Brom) & Thurs 2 March (NEC/Cov)

Course dates: Mon 6 March – Fri 31 March

Email all referrals (name/mobile) direct to: luke.mason@eventcover.co.uk



During the 4 weeks learners achieve 5 qualifications, their FREE SIA licence, and multiple guaranteed job interviews.

We have 3 training venues:

NEC training centre (2 min from Birmingham International bus/train station, or free parking). **WEST BROM LIBRARY** High Street, West Brom, B70 8DZ (opposite West Brom Job Centre) **COVENTRY** Hertford place, CV1 3JZ. (1 min walk from Cov training station & free parking on site)

5 QUALIFICATIONS	<u>REQUIREMENTS</u>
Level 2 Violence & Harassment	CRIMINAL RECORD: Someone with a criminal record <u>CAN</u> attend the training and possibly get their SIA licence, go to gov.uk and search "SIA criminal record indicator" to check whether you can get your SIA licence.
Level 2 Safeguarding & Anti-terrorism	
Level 2 Health & Safety	No-one else can give an official answer on this.
Level 3 Emergency First Aid at Work	 ENGLISH minimum Level 1 Functional Skills or equivalent. ID: 1 from this list plus 2 proof of address: Valid passport Valid driving licence including provisional Birth Certificate dated within 12 months of birth Biometric residence permit
Level 2 SIA Door Supervisor (Including SIA Licence) OR Level 2 SIA Top-up training	

ELIGIBILITY FOR COURSE FUNDING:

Aged 19+ (age on 31 August 2022) & earning less than £19,350 We will need information on your age, postcode, current work status & earnings, current education status We can then advise on funding.

Email all referrals (name/mobile) direct to: luke.mason@eventcover.co.uk





Set Started with Animal Care



An exciting opportunity for Birmingham young people to gain experience and knowledge in animal care !

On this 1 week in-person course you'll:

- Gain experience of animal handling, exotic/zoo animal health checks, Husbandry tasks & more
- Discover top tips and tricks for successful animal care
- Work in a fun environment, meet new people and learn new skills.
- Learn about career advice and tips for getting into animal care
- Have lunch and travel expenses provided.

For more information or to sign up

Jordan Carless Jordan.carless@princes-trust.org.uk Or text your name & ANIMAL CARE to 07944 518575 PLUS up to 3 months personal mentoring to help you achieve your goals!

DATES & DEADLINES:

Application Deadline: 10th March Taster Day: 15th March

Course Dates: 20-24th March, 10am-3pm

Available free of charge to young people aged 16-30 not in full-time work, training or education within travel distance of Birmingham City Centre.

This youth employment initiative is funded through the European Union Social Fund.



European Union European Social Fund

