

What is DFN Project SEARCH?

DFN Project SEARCH is a business-led, one-year transition to employment programme for young people with a learning disability and autism.

It provides support and structure and allows young people with a learning disability and autism spectrum conditions to learn valuable marketable skills for

employment and that organisations like yours who promote social value are also high aiming and aspirational for the people who live in the community.

With leadership and our evidence based programme we can change the lives of people who are the most marginalised in the jobs market.

At the heart of change

At DFN Project SEARCH we believe that Local Authorities are leaders in the field of social change and are high aiming and aspirational for the people who live in their communities.

- **Local Authorities** are uniquely placed to take a strategic view of the evidence-based opportunities for sustainable improvements for their residents.
- **You select pathways** for partners and residents to follow that deliver results and make a real and measurable difference.

- **You champion those in your community** who are most disadvantaged and in need of extra help to chart a new and different future for themselves.



Young People with Learning Disability and Autism

We know that Local Authorities are at the forefront of raising expectations for the best possible outcomes for young people with a learning disability and autism at the point that they transition from education to adulthood.

- You understand that for very many young people the opportunity to **move into work** at that point of transition is by far the most desirable outcome!
- Work is **good for you and Local Authority Public Health Directors** have lots of evidence that supports that assertion.
- Yet, **moving into work for people with a learning disability and autism is a tall order** with under 6% of people with these conditions who are known to Local Authorities working.
- This makes them one of the most disadvantaged groups in the labour market and so with your leadership and commitment we can work together to change that.



“ [DFN] Project SEARCH has been a big life change giving me a step up to employment. I was quiet, shy, close minded and in a dark place and I was desperate, calling for help as my hopes were coming to an end of despair. One step into [DFN] Project SEARCH revealed a new positive, open minded, proactive, confident, time keeping Tegan Mulby on the go! I am ready for the possibilities and achievements that an exceptional employee takes me... If I wasn't introduced to [DFN] Project SEARCH then I would of gone in a different direction. ”

Tegan Mulby, a graduate, is now an Administration Support at Positive Footprints and a member of the Youth Advisory Group

Outcomes that work for everyone

Local Authorities are under enormous strain with growing demand and decreasing resources to manage pressurised budgets in both Education Services and in Adult Social Care whilst remaining committed to doing the right thing.

In this case transitioning young people into work is the right thing and the smart thing to do and together we can right a wrong and ease the pressure on squeezed budgets.

- On average 60% of DFN Project SEARCH interns move into paid work of more than 16 hours per week. They have great careers with strong employers and are set for an economically active life with the natural supports that come with being employed and working as part of a team.

60%

**DFN Project SEARCH
interns move into
paid work**

- On average 19% of DFN Project SEARCH interns are aged 18, 21% are aged 19, and 17% are aged 20 when they join and will see their plans cease on completion of the programme year. Taking a range of college courses until aged 24 is not necessary as interns as young as 16 or 17 years old have the same (or slightly better) chances of finding employment.

**That means they
find a career early
and have much
better chance of
an independent
and fulfilled life!**

- In total, 70% of DFN Project SEARCH interns move into paid work with the opportunity to increase those hours over time and develop their independence skills.
- Those who do not immediately move into work will never 'fall off the cliff' when the programme year ends – our programmes include as best practice, partnership with an adult supported employment provider who will continue supporting graduates to attain employment.

- A return on investment report conducted by the Social Value Lab in Scotland based on our programme at Wishaw Hospital concluded that for every £1.00 spent on a **Project SEARCH** programme there was a social value return on investment of £3.96!
- Whilst young people leaving education may not be immediately entitled to adult social care there is no doubt that leaving college or school with a learning disability or autism and becoming NEET is likely to lead to social isolation, mental health problems and over reliance on families and carers as the only support mechanisms available. Over time there can be little doubt that these young people will need support from the NHS and Adult Social Care as they go through life.
- A Local Authority Ofsted Inspection Report of 2020 said that:

“Project SEARCH’ is an example of how the partnership is helping young people with SEND gain valuable academic and employability skills”.

66%



of our interns are 16 to 20 years old



Local Authority Partnerships in the UK

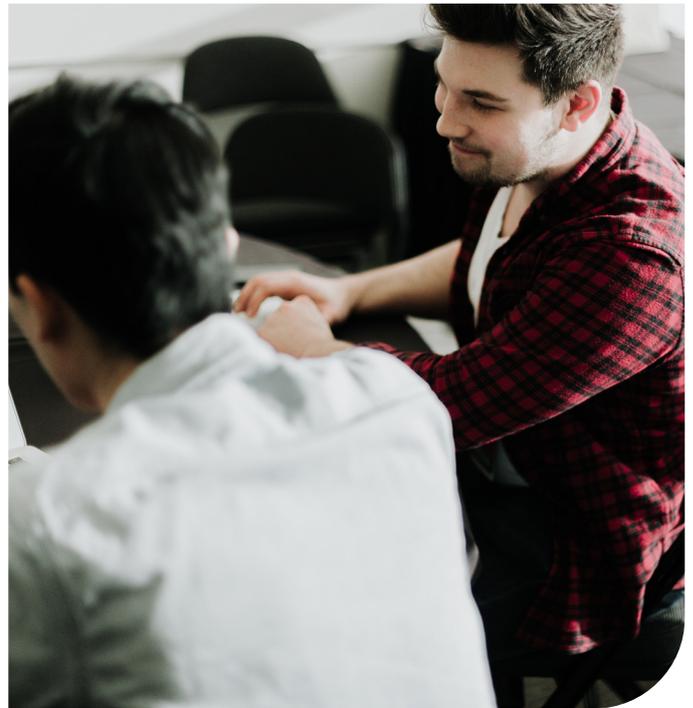
1900+

Interns moved into jobs over 16 hours a week since programme establishment



Why choose DFN Project SEARCH as your Supported Internship Partner

With your drive to achieve great outcomes in your community matching ours we will work side-by-side with you to form one or more local strategic partnerships with a common purpose. These partnerships will include a prestigious host business, a lead educator and an adult supported employment agency and together we will make real and sustainable change.



As the largest and most prestigious supported internship programme in the United Kingdom **DFN Project SEARCH** are:

- Experienced at fostering the mindset, skills, confidence, and tenacity that a partnership needs to make sure there is a tangible impact on the lives of young people that continue year after year.
- Able to bring you a model that is tried, tested, operates at scale, and has a strong evidence base developed over more than 25 years.
- Able to provide you with an international employment curriculum and best practice job coaching standards that have been developed and honed across over 700 programmes worldwide.
- Able to deliver training and development activity that is second to none, both online and in person to all the partners involved in your programme.
- Able to give you tools, techniques and plans that will build the best onsite team and local partnership possible and one that has a shared high aiming goal for the interns.
- Constantly monitoring our outcomes, collecting, and sharing data with you from more than 700 sites (more than 110 in the UK) from which we can all learn, grow, and improve.
- Able to bring you rigour through our high aiming focus on full time paid work outcomes, audit, peer review and commitment to continuous improvement processes.

Our Local Authority Partners

“ [DFN] Project SEARCH is as ambitious as we are for our young people and has clear outcomes which keep everyone focused on ensuring people attain full time paid employment. We want to change the life chances for people with learning disabilities and as a [DFN] Project SEARCH license holder we know that we will. ”

Julie Killey,
Service Manager, Inclusion and Assessment

“ So, for me, the local authorities that are not involved in schemes like DFN Project SEARCH, are missing out on a huge opportunity to take some of those young people out in society who need our help most and get behind them and allow them to come forward and flourish. ”

Des Murray,
Chief Executive of North
Lanarkshire Council



To find out more or to partner with DFN Project SEARCH, please get in touch.

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 [dfnprojectsearch.org](https://www.dfnprojectsearch.org)

 [@dfnsearch](https://twitter.com/dfnsearch)