

Tay Cities Region Deal: Hospitality Skills Project Launch

Tuesday 3rd February 2026
16:00 – 17:30

Agenda

Welcome and Introduction	James Thomson, Deputy Principal, Fife College
Building a Stronger Regional Hospitality Workforce and Economy	Carol Connolly, Executive Director, Place, Fife Council
Hospitality Skills Project Overview	Iain Hawker, Assistant Principal: Enterprise & Partnerships, Fife College
Career Pathway Development	Fiona McLeod, Career Pathway Development Lead, Fife College
Our Visitor Economy	Caroline Warburton, Destination Development Director, Visit Scotland
Reflections and Next Steps	James Thomson, Deputy Principal, Fife College

Join us post presentations, for an informal networking opportunity until 17:30

Hospitality is About People



Building a Stronger Regional Hospitality Workforce and Economy

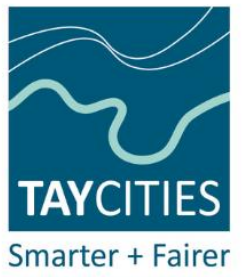
Carol Connolly
Executive Director: Place
Fife Council

Project Aim

To inspire a new generation of hospitality professionals, to strengthen career pathways, and to help the sector adapt and flourish in an increasingly competitive and fast-moving landscape.

Key outputs/targets by 2030:

- 1,200 individuals (beneficiaries) trained.
- 120 individuals supported/safeguarded into employment.
- Beneficiary profile: 50% female, 10% disabled, 4% BME, 15% from deprived areas.
- 250 businesses supported.
- 12 sustainable new job opportunities as a direct result.



Coordinated Regional Response

This project has been designed deliberately to respond to shared challenges in a coordinated, regional way.

For Councils, that means:

- A unified approach to workforce development.
- Support that reaches both cities and rural areas.
- Better links between education, employers, and local services.
- A stronger, more resilient sector overall.

Driving Regional Economic Growth

This project contributes to economic development across the region in several ways:

- Boosting employability and reducing barriers.
- Supporting business growth and productivity.
- Increasing economic participation.
- Enhancing career progression within the sector.
- Strengthening the region's brand and visitor economy.

Hospitality Skills Project Overview

Iain Hawker

Assistant Principal: Enterprise & Partnerships

Fife College

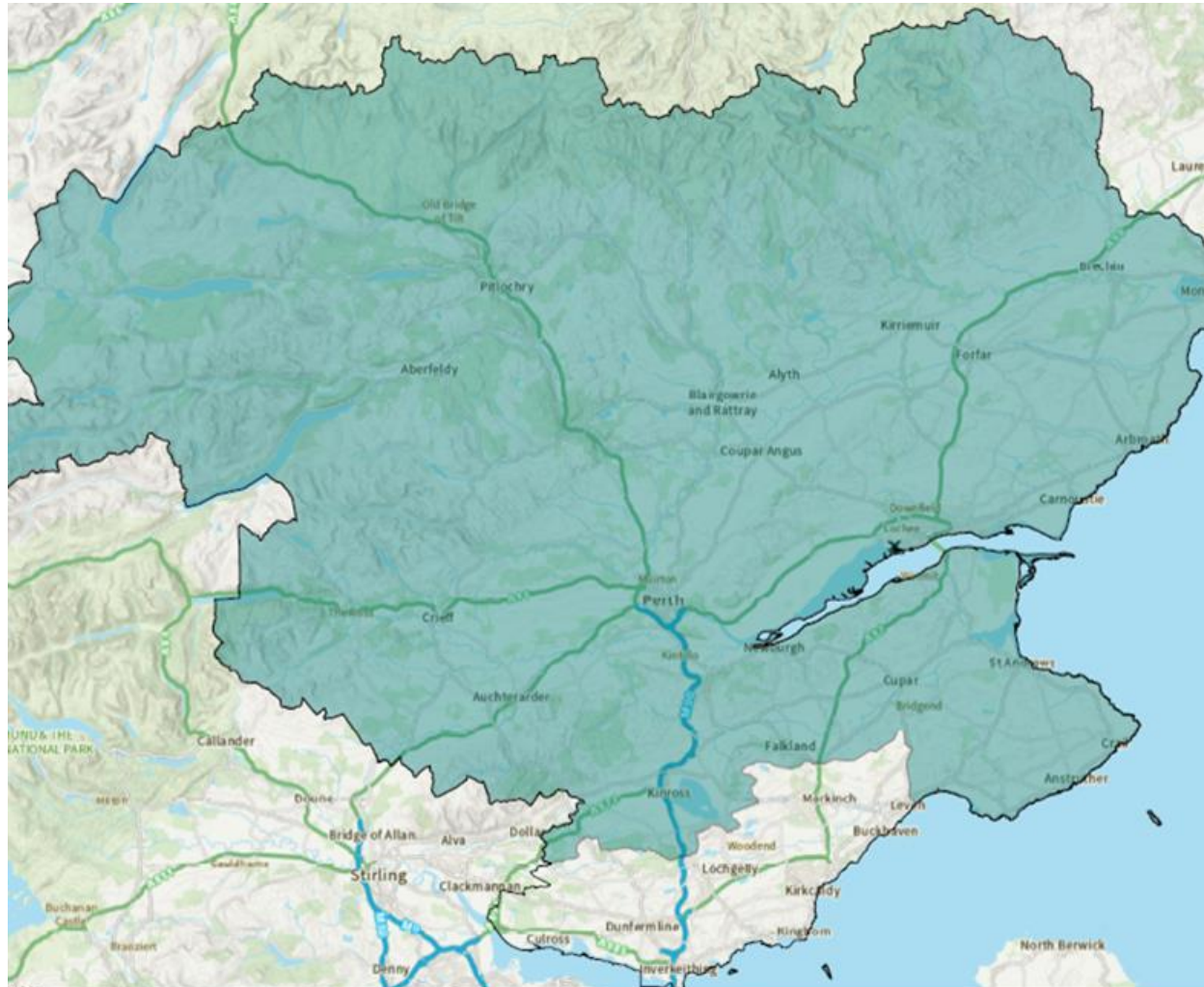
Definition of Hospitality

For the purpose of the Hospitality Skills Project:

“Businesses that are operating in the food and accommodation service industries. This means restaurants, cafes, pubs, bars, visitor attractions (with catering), hotels, campsites, and other accommodation”.

*Based on reports from the Institute of Hospitality

Tay Cities Region



Project Streams

1.Skills Training

2.Leadership Skills

3.School Intervention

4.Career Pathway Development

Project Stream 1: Skills Training

1. Skills Training

Aim:

To strengthen the hospitality sector by addressing critical skills gaps. By upskilling and reskilling existing staff while attracting new entrants into the sector, this will help build a more capable, confident, and sustainable workforce.

Project Stream 1: Skills Training

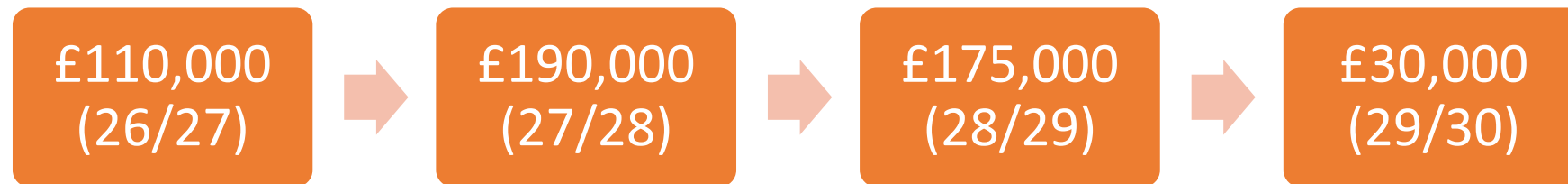
Key objectives

- ✓ Address hospitality skills shortages by delivering, targeted **training aligned with employer needs** and future industry growth.
- ✓ **Upskill and reskill the current workforce** while creating clear, structured pathways for long-term career development.
- ✓ **Attract new talent** into the hospitality sector and support industry sustainability.
- ✓ **Promote diversity and inclusion** across the workforce, ensuring equal access to opportunities at every level.



Project Stream 1: Skills Training

Funding available per year



Project Stream 1: Skills Training

Eligibility for funding

To be eligible for funding support you must be either:

- A registered self-employed or hospitality business (*as per hospitality definition) with HMRC or Companies House compliance, operating in the Tay Cities Region.
- An individual residing in the Tay Cities Region and seeking employment within the hospitality sector.

The proposed training must:

- Directly support the skills needs of the hospitality business/sector.
- Be delivered by a recognised skills training or education provider.

N.B. There is a preference for training to lead to a formal recognised outcome (certificate, qualification etc.)



Project Stream 1: Skills Training

Application information

Timeline

- Ensure you are registered on our mailing list; this can be done on our website.
- The application period will open April 2026 – exact dates will be shared on our website.

Application process

- Application packs will be available on our website.
- Each application will be reviewed through an assessment and scoring system.
- If successful in grant funding, a contractual process will follow.

Project Stream 2: Leadership Skills

2.Leadership Skills

Aim:

To strengthen leadership capacity, improve recruitment and retention, and support inclusive growth across the hospitality sector.

Project Stream 2: Leadership Skills

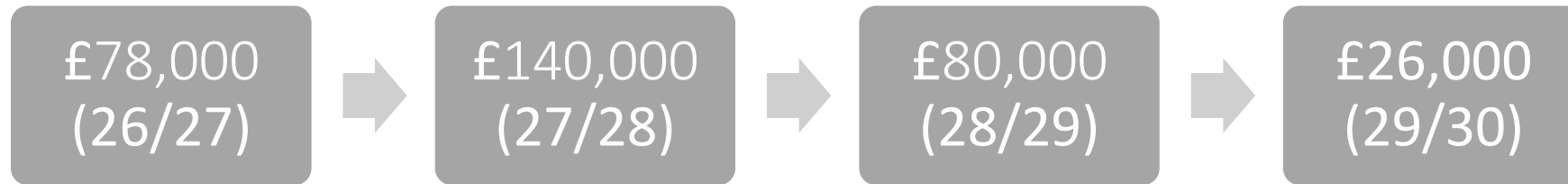
Key objectives

- ✓ **Develop leadership and mentoring** capabilities to improve workforce stability and progression.
- ✓ **Support recruitment and retention** by creating positive, inclusive culture in hospitality businesses.
- ✓ **Support future leaders** and strengthen wellbeing and workplace culture.



Project Stream 2: Leadership Skills

Funding available per year



Project Stream 2: Leadership Skills

Eligibility for funding

To be eligible for funding support you must be either:

- A registered self-employed or hospitality business (*as per hospitality definition) with HMRC or Companies House compliance.
- Employed in the Tay Cities Region.

The proposed training must:

- Directly support the Leadership needs of the hospitality business/sector.
- Be delivered by a recognised skills training or education provider.

N.B. There is a preference for training to lead to a formal recognised outcome (certificate, qualification etc.)



Project Stream 2: Leadership Skills

Application information

Timeline

- Ensure you are registered on our mailing list; this can be done on our website.
- The application period will open April 2026 – exact dates will be shared on our website.

Application process

- Application packs will be available on our website.
- Each application will be reviewed through an assessment and scoring system.
- If successful in grant funding, a contractual process will follow.

Project Stream 3: School Intervention

3.School Intervention

Aim:

To inspire young people to pursue fulfilling careers in hospitality by embedding industry-relevant skills within school education and establishing clear, supportive pathways that guide pupils from the classroom into meaningful employment opportunities.

Project Stream 3: School Intervention

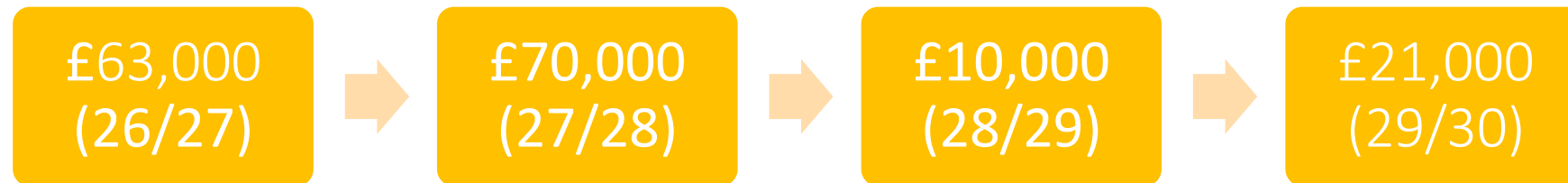
Key objectives

- ✓ **Inspire young people** to consider hospitality as a viable, sustainable & rewarding career.
- ✓ **Embed hospitality skills** in the school curriculum and career guidance.
- ✓ Support the Tay Cities Region goal of **filling the hospitality skills gap** and widening the talent pool.



Project Stream 3: School Intervention

Funding available per year



Project Stream 3: School Intervention

Eligibility to apply

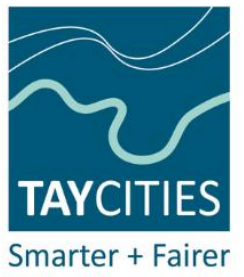
Applications can be received from the following:

- A single secondary school within the Tay Cities Region.
- A group of secondary schools within the Tay Cities Region.
- DYW Tay Cities or DYW Fife on behalf of a group of schools within the Tay Cities Region.

The proposed training must:

- Directly support the skills needs of the hospitality sector or encourage engagement and support towards career opportunities within the hospitality sector.
- Be delivered by a recognised skills training or education provider.

N.B. There is a preference for training to lead to a formal recognised outcome (certificate, qualification etc.)



Project Stream 3: School Intervention

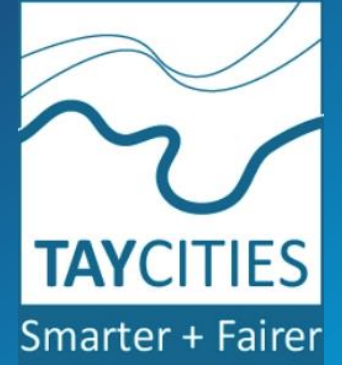
Application information

Timeline

- Ensure you are registered on our mailing list; this can be done on our website.
- The first application period will open April 2026 for 4 weeks.
- The second application period will open in August 2026 for 4 weeks (subject to fund availability following April 2026 grants).
- Applications will be reviewed following the closing date of each opening period.

Application process

- Application packs will be available on our website.
- Each application will be reviewed through an assessment and scoring system.
- If successful in grant funding, a contractual process will follow.



Career Pathway Development

Fiona McLeod
Career Pathway Development
Fife College

Project Stream 4: Career Pathway Development

4. Career Pathway Development

Aim:

This research will develop a clear and concise career pathway for the hospitality industry. By discussing and looking at different perspectives, it will create a pathway of clear routes that will inspire a new generation of professionals.

Project Stream 4: Career Pathway Development

Research project

- What is the current training offer?
- What is working well?
- What is not working well?
- What can we improve?




"A focus on diversifying the workforce and encouraging those facing barriers and challenges to enter the sector"

Role and remit

- Acts as a strategic and operational advisory body to ensure the project is demand-led and aligned with industry needs.
- Provides direction and priorities for hospitality skills development across the Tay Cities Region.
- Serves as a platform for collaboration between employers, education providers, and public sector partners.

To be set up in due course.

A scenic landscape photograph of a mountain valley. In the foreground, three hikers are seen from behind, standing on a dirt path and looking out over a vast, sunlit valley. The hiker on the left wears a blue jacket and a white helmet. The middle hiker is a woman in a grey top and dark pants. The hiker on the right wears a green jacket and a blue cap. The valley floor is covered in golden-brown grass and shrubs, with rolling hills in the distance. The mountainsides are steep and rocky, with patches of green vegetation. The sun is high in the sky, creating a bright lens flare and casting long shadows of the hikers onto the path. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds.

Our Visitor Economy

The Cornerstone of Scotland's Economy

Caroline Warburton
Destination Development Director
VisitScotland

A scenic photograph of three hikers standing on a dirt path in a mountainous landscape. The hikers are seen from behind, looking out over a valley. The sun is high in the sky, creating a bright glow and casting long shadows. The mountains are rugged and covered in green vegetation.

£11.4 billion

visitor spend (2024)

c. £5.5 billion

economic return of events (2024)

+8% value

all visitor spend (2024 vs 2023)

-9% volume

all visits (2024 vs 2023)

7.6% of Scotland's GDP

value generated by visitor spend alone (2024)

#1 employer

largest employment sector

1 in 11 jobs and businesses

in Scotland are in tourism

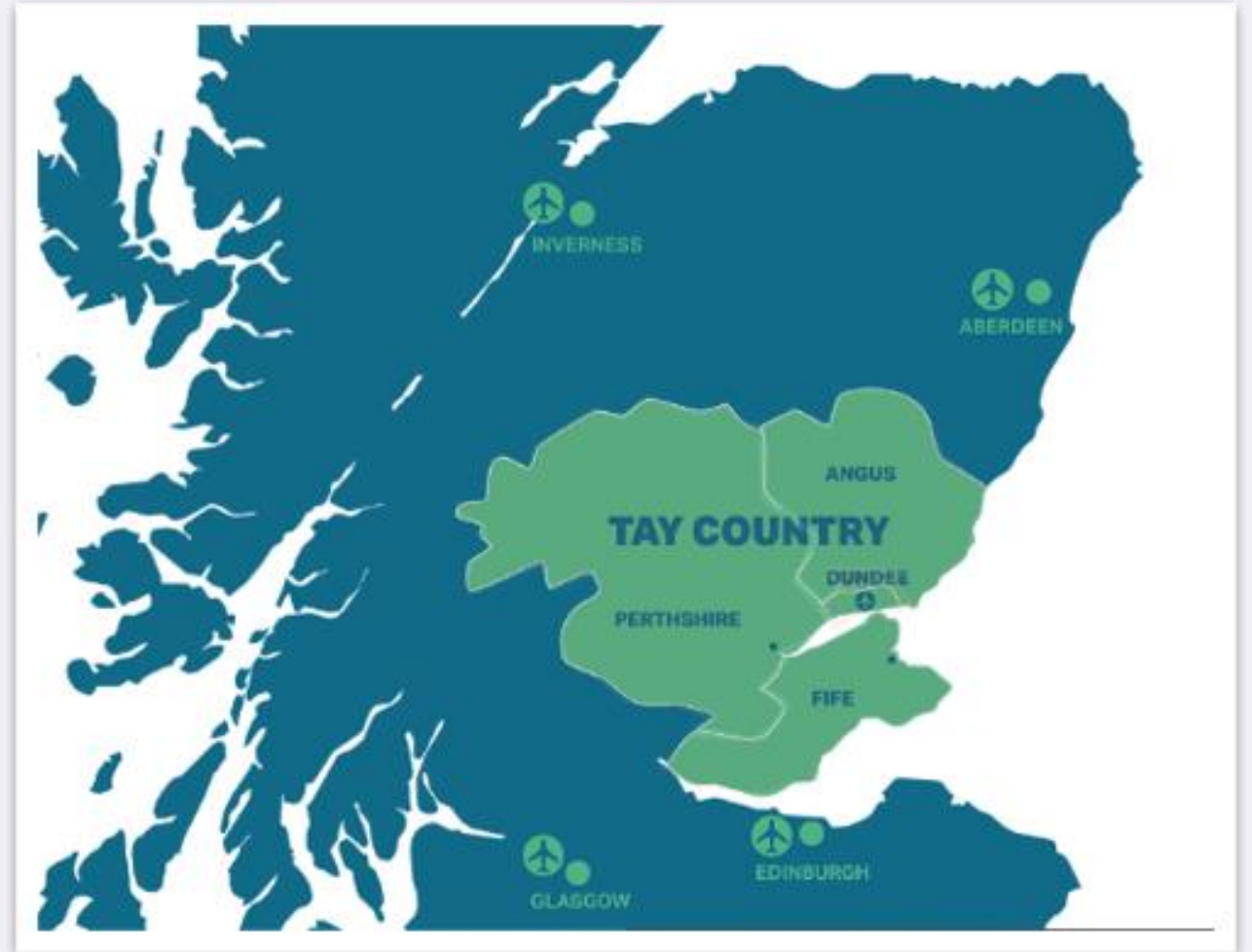
Visitor Economy: Tay Cities Region

Strong business base: 15% of Scotland's tourism businesses located in the region (n= 2,305).

Major employer: 9.5% of all jobs in the Tayside & Fife region (n = 33,000).

Region-wide impact:

- Rural – urban
- Full time – part-time
- Employment open to all ages and all abilities.



Tourism & Hospitality Skills



Proud & Valued People





Get Involved

Local Tourism Network: keep up to date with your local tourism partnership.

- Angus Tourism Cooperative
- Dundee Tourism Partnership
- Perthshire Tourism Partnership
- Welcome to Fife for Industry

VisitScotland Business Support: sign up for the Business Support monthly newsletter.

<https://support.visitscotland.org/newsletter>

Tay Country Tourism Conference: come along on 3rd March, Apex Hotel, Dundee

<https://www.meetdundeecityregion.co.uk/attending/conferences/tay-country-tourism-conference>





Thank you for your attendance, we look forward to connecting with you.

How to connect with the team

Email: HospitalityTCRD@fife.ac.uk

Website: <https://www.fife.ac.uk/more/tay-cities-region-deal-hospitality-skills-project/>

Further Information About the Tay Cities Regional Deal

The Tay Cities Region Deal is a partnership between local, Scottish and UK governments and the private, academic, and voluntary sectors which seeks to create a smarter and fairer Angus, Dundee, Fife and Perth & Kinross under the headings Inclusive Tay; Innovative Tay; International Tay; Connected Tay and An Empowered Tay. The Scottish Government and UK Government will each invest up to £150 million in the Tay Cities Region Deal over 10 years, subject to final approval of robust business cases. As of 30th September 2024, over £116m of Government investment has been released and just over 2,400 jobs have been created. This central investment from both Governments has the potential to lever in £400m of investment over 15 years, of which more than £180m has been secured by Projects. Full and further information on the progress the Deal has made to date on securing investment and jobs, can be found within the Annual Performance Report located on the Tay Cities Region Deal website - <https://www.taycities.co.uk/publications>