

Information for Potential Trustees



About SUSE

The Scottish Union of Supported Employment (SUSE) is the national representative body for supported employment providers and anyone interested in ensuring that disadvantaged people across our country have the opportunity of a working life. We bring organisations together to campaign, network, improve how we work and share our experiences. Our aim is to support people with disadvantages to find and retain paid work by increasing the availability, quality and impact of supported employment services in Scotland.

This is a critical time for our sector during a time of significant economic uncertainty. The action plan to tackle the Disability Employment Gap in Scotland (at present only 49% of disabled people are working, compared to 82% of their non-disabled peers) was launched by the Scottish Government in December 2018. This is now being updated with a new plan expected later in 2022, to build on what has been achieved and set new goals and targets. There is also the ongoing roll out of the No One Left Behind agenda and we expect the Scottish Government's review of Supported Employment to be published soon. These developments will have a great influence on our activities in the coming years and the work we prioritise with our members and stakeholders.

A brief history

SUSE started in 1995 and has played a leading role in the employability sector in Scotland most notably by working with the government to develop a Supported Employment Framework for Scotland (2010), intended to ensure that providers are working to a consistent model and clients have a guarantee of a quality service.

In 2017 significant changes took place at SUSE. A new Chairperson took up post and the board decided to create a CEO role to take the organisation forward. Since then we have improved the governance of our organisation by developing a new mission statement and vision, recruited new trustees, revised our Articles of Association, developed a comprehensive Strategy and Business Plan and launched a new membership offer. We have also reinvigorated SUSE as a campaigning and lobbying organisation and we have hosted a number of successful members' events and conferences. We are a credible voice with the Scottish Government, local authorities and funders and have played a leading role in the Scottish Government's Expert Advisory Group on the Disability Employment Gap. Since August 2020 SUSE has been the lead partner in the Apt Public Social Partnership.

Our Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

A Scotland where people with disadvantages have access to supported employment to find and retain paid work.

Mission

To increase the availability, quality and impact of supported employment services in Scotland.

Values

- We are led by our members.
- We are inclusive.
- We are a learning organisation.
- We are committed to excellence.
- We maintain the fidelity of the supported employment model.

Current Priorities & Activities

Our Priorities

We bring disabled jobseekers, providers and employers together to promote equality and diversity, network, pilot new services and move disabled people into work.

- Making sure every jobseeker has a quality service that meets their needs and our members have the tools and resources they need to be successful.
- Hosting an annual conference and regular events that create opportunities for disabled jobseekers, our members and employers.
- Providing information and guidance for jobseekers and employers.
- Providing expert advice for members and an opportunity to lobby and have their voices heard.
- Sharing best practice, learning and the latest research.
- Developing the skilled workforce our sector needs.
- Hosting an online community and information service at www.suse.org.uk including a searchable database of current services.

Why our work is needed

There are over 100,000 people in Scotland who have a disability or long term condition who want to work. Our members are working with thousands of jobseekers and employers across Scotland to improve this situation.

Latest figures show the employment rate of disabled people is only 49% compared to 82% for their non-disabled peers – this is the Disability Employment Gap. The difficulties for disabled jobseekers are long standing and enduring:

- Less than 10% of people who have learning disabilities are in work, with almost no improvement seen in the past decade.
- Only 20% of people who experience mental ill health have the opportunity of paid work.
- Less than 25% of people with a visual disability or significant hearing loss are in paid employment.
- Disabled people typically earn 8% less than their non-disabled peers.

SUSE Membership

SUSE is a membership organisation with a small annual subscription. We have 2 types of membership:

Full Membership for supported employment and employability providers.

Associate Membership for organisations who do not deliver employment services (e.g. disabled person's organisations, housing associations and community organisations).

Our Membership Offer

SUSE brings organisations together we are the national representative body for supported employment providers and anyone interested in ensuring that disadvantaged people across our country have the opportunity of a working life. SUSE is where we come together to campaign, network, improve how we work and share our experiences.

SUSE champions supported employment we aim to ensure that supported employment is always part of the conversation when new strategies are developed and the needs of the people we support are central to plans of decision makers. SUSE played a leading role in the development of the Fair Start Scotland programme and is supporting its implementation. We can promote our members' individual campaigns and we work with partners to campaign on the issues our members care about.

SUSE markets and promotes supported employment we highlight the achievements of our members and the impact of supported employment in our communities by moving people who are disadvantaged into meaningful employment. This includes annual events like DuoDay and our national conference and regular activity on social media as well as a Monthly Bulletin. Our website allows members to promote their services, advertise jobs and market training opportunities and events.

SUSE is here to help we support our members on a daily basis and are always available to offer advice on a free and impartial basis. If we can't help we will help you find the people who can. As part of our plans going forward we will be offering training programmes with a supported employment focus, consultancy and regular capacity building events. The cost of these are discounted for Full Members.

Examples of member benefits

- Lobbying and advocacy on behalf of our members and the Supported Employment approach.
- Full access for 5 registered users to the SUSE website including best practice information, latest research and consultations; free posting of jobs, events and training on the SUSE Hub.
- Regular SUSE bulletins and updates.
- Annual Conference (20% discount) and regular learning events for practitioners
- Participation in research and learning activities.
- Introductions to employers through the SUSE Inclusive Workplace Award.
- Voting rights at the SUSE AGM.

Examples of Current Members:



Our Plans for 2022

- **Regular events for jobseekers, providers and employers.** We'll be bringing our people together and ensuring the voices of disabled people and our members are heard.
 - Working with a Scottish local authority to **design a new supported employment offer** that brings local providers together to significantly improve services for young disabled people.
 - **Piloting a new project** with Glasgow City Council to provide training and consultancy for local employers to improve how they attract, recruit and retain disabled people.
 - **Continue to deliver a successful Public Social Partnership** with 49 partners
 - **A major refresh of the SUSE website**, improving its contents and accessibility.
- Providing advice and guidance to disabled people, their families and employers. Our website (www.suse.org.uk) has the only **searchable database of disability employment services** in Scotland.
 - In May 2022 we hosted a **national conference** for jobseekers, employability professionals and employers. Our focus was on economic recovery, employer engagement and expanding supported employment provision.
 - We will roll out our **Inclusive Workplace Award** which allows employers to gain accreditation for developing policies and practices that enable them to recruit and retain more disabled employees. Recent achievers include Holiday Inn Express, the University of Edinburgh and Balfour Beatty.
 - **Pilot a Quality Standard for Supported Employment** to improve current services and help our members to develop and grow.

SUSE Projects

An important element in our offer to members (and funding strategy for the charity) is the delivery of regular learning and development projects which try out new approaches to improve services for disabled people.

These are delivered in partnership with member organisations who typically carry out the face to face activities with employers and jobseekers with SUSE taking a co-ordinating, management and reporting role. Recent examples include:

Fair Chance - a review of employer's digital recruitment processes and how these effect disabled jobseekers (funded by the Workplace Equality Fund)

Early Action to Sustain Employment – a project which piloted a self-management tool for disabled workers that promotes sustained employment and career development (funded by the Health & Social Care Alliance)

Access to Employment - which promoted the use of personal budgets for employment (funded by the Scottish Government)

The Apt Disability Employment Gap Public Social Partnership

SUSE is the lead partner in the Apt Disability Employment Gap Public Social Partnership (PSP) which has been commissioned by the Scottish Government. A PSP is a strategic partnering arrangement which gives the third sector the opportunity to design future public services by trying and piloting new ideas and approaches.

Aim of the Public Social Partnership

The Apt Disability Employment Gap PSP is focused on working with Scotland's employers to develop and deliver a range of innovative projects which enable employers to address the gaps in their knowledge and expertise and improve the employment prospects of disabled people. We hope to achieve a lasting culture change in our workplaces by addressing employer concerns regarding their legal responsibilities, embedding equality and diversity in workplace cultures and sharing our knowledge of reasonable adjustments and available support – to enable disabled people to take up and sustain paid employment. The PSP was launched in August 2020 and is funded through to March 2023.

How Will We Do This

We are:

- Managing and organising the PSP effectively, reporting to our public sector partner, the Scottish Government, and ensuring the project grant is used efficiently.
- Building a knowledgeable, experienced consortium of organisations who work together to deliver the PSP – there are 49 partners in total.
- Putting people with lived experience at the forefront of delivery within the PSP by creating opportunities for individuals to become trainers and consultants.
- Implementing a robust project plan with clear deliverables, timescales and KPIs.
- Leading an effective Steering Group to manage the PSP, with input from employers and people with lived experience.
- Carry out extensive research into the issues that are preventing disabled people gaining and sustaining employment.
- Developing a range of tools and resources which will be available for employers, including a number of commercial offers to make the PSP sustainable.
- Implementing a comprehensive programme of evidence and impact assessment to prove the worth of the PSP and build the case for future funding, sponsorship and support from employers.
- Promoting the PSP's learning, progression and successes, both internally and externally.
- Sourcing new funding opportunities with local authorities, sponsors and grant makers.
- Working with partners to develop a Centre of Excellence to follow the PSP, a social enterprise that is financially sustainable by working with employers on a long term commercial basis.