A new Employer Engagement Platform for Yorkshire and Humber

University of Leeds Business School, working with Migration Yorkshire and the Migrant English Support Hub (MESH), is creating a new online Employer Engagement Platform for

businesses across Yorkshire and Humber. We are inviting employers to help co-design this platform so it genuinely meets business needs and promotes an inclusive labour market.

The Platform will be a practical, easy-to-use online resource to help employers:

- Understand the UK’s changing migration and asylum system
- Understand how to recruit, train and retain workers from migrant and refugee backgrounds
- Connect with trusted organisations that can offer support and advice

Rather than just listing policies or regulations, the Platform will provide clear information, advice and guidance (IAG) that employers can use in their day-to-day workforce planning.

Why is this needed?

UK migration rules are constantly changing, and these changes often affect the labour market. Many employers face skills shortages, recruitment challenges and retention issues. At the same time, workers from migrant and refugee backgrounds often struggle to access good jobs because of barriers such as language needs, visa conditions and non-UK qualifications and

experience.

This Platform aims to bridge that gap - helping employers navigate the changing landscape and connect with organisations that can support them, while supporting fair, sustainable employment.

Who do we want to engage with?

Our primary goal is to engage with businesses based in Yorkshire and Humber to co-create this platform with us.

We will also be connecting with recruiters, employment support organisations, local authorities and people with lived experience.

What is in it for you?

- Straightforward, practical guidance on hiring and supporting migrant and refugee workers, helping you navigate changing rules without needing specialist knowledge.

- Support with real recruitment challenges, including how to reach a wider pool of candidates

- Early access to a new regional employer platform, allowing you to test tools and resources designed specifically to support businesses employing migrant and refugee workers.

- The ability to shape the platform directly, ensuring it reflects real employer needs and challenges.

- Opportunities to connect with other employers and share good practice around inclusive employment and workforce development.

- A role in strengthening the region’s labour market, contributing to a more inclusive, cohesive and economically resilient region.

- Free access to an expert training session delivered by Migration Yorkshire, giving your team up-to-date insights on policy changes affecting migrant employment.

What does participation involve?

Your involvement can be flexible and low-commitment:

- An initial conversation with the project team about your recruitment experiences and challenges.

- Chance to attend a free online training session: **“ Navigating the changing migration landscape”** 26 February 2026 (delivered by Migration Yorkshire)

- Opportunity to give feedback at a workshop in Spring 2026

- Chance to review and comment on the first version of the online Platform in Autumn 2026

Who else is involved?

Through the project, you may connect with:

- York & North Yorkshire Combined Authority

- West Yorkshire Combined Authority

- South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority

- Federation of Small Businesses

- Local authorities and colleges

- Fair and inclusive work initiatives

To express interest email: admin@migrationyorkshire.org.uk or Gabriella Alberti g.alberti@leeds.ac.uk

To book a place on our free training on 26 February 2026, register on Eventbrite.

Understanding the landscape of migrant employment

> “This is a timely and important project, well aligned with our inclusive employment priorities. The Employer Engagement Platform will be a valuable resource for employers across Yorkshire and Humber, supporting inclusive recruitment and retention practices.”
>
> West Yorkshire Combined Authority

This project is funded by the University of Leeds Impact Acceleration Account (UKRI)

Who are we?

The project lead, Gabriella Alberti, is professor of International Labour Migration at the Leeds University Business School, She has recently concluded research on migration and labour

shortages post Brexit and Covid, on which this impact fund is based (for more details see webpage).

Migration Yorkshire is a local authority-led partnership which works across the whole of the Y&H region focusing on supporting refugees and migrants including in accessing employment. They have contributed to the research project's final recommendations, e.g. promoting further collaborations between local colleges, employers and migrant support groups (Alberti et al. 2025).

Migrant English Support Hub (MESH) is a charity dedicated to supporting adult migrant language learners in the Y&H region. It has developed specific expertise and agendas around refugee employability and training.

Summary of project and outcomes.pdf

Migration
Yorkshire

MESH
Migrant English Support Hub

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