

# GUIDELINE PERMIT HOLDERS AT WORK IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

Response plan



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO IMPROVE THE NETHERLANDS' ABILITY TO  
SUPPORT THE SET-UP AND SCALING UP OF SUSTAINABLE INCLUSION INITIATIVES  
IN THE NETHERLANDS

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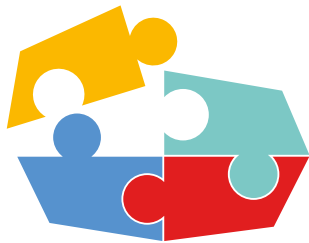
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# GUIDELINE PERMIT HOLDERS AT WORK IN THE CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

RESPONSE PLAN

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION



## LEARN

Making Labour Inclusion  
Work for All

**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO IMPROVE THE NETHERLANDS' ABILITY TO  
SUPPORT THE SET-UP AND SCALING UP OF SUSTAINABLE INCLUSION  
INITIATIVES IN THE NETHERLANDS**



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IOM  
UN MIGRATION

THE NETHERLANDS



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Before you lies the guideline “Permit holders at work in the Construction sector (construction, installation and painting branch)”, prepared within the framework of the LEARN project. Here you will find advice and tips that will be useful in shaping work-study programmes, with the ultimate goal of promoting the sustainable employment of permit holders.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) would like to express its deep appreciation to all participants of the Learning Network who have contributed to this report. It is remarkable how much time and effort all participants have invested in providing valuable information.

Additionally, IOM consulted Transitiehuis Gelderland for this guideline and would therefore like to thank them as well. Without their commitment and cooperation, this report would not have been made possible. Given that the Action is funded by the European Union via the Technical Support Instrument, acknowledgements and sincere gratitude are in place.





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# INTRODUCTION

The Construction sector faces challenging issues, including persistent staff shortages and the urgent need for sustainable solutions under the [Climate Agreement 2022](#)<sup>1</sup>. With over seven million existing houses and one million buildings that need to become more sustainable, as many as 45 different technical occupations are needed to meet the set climate goals (refer to [Annex A](#)). However, the current labour market in the Netherlands, as shown in the government's [Dashboard Indicator](#), already shows a very challenging situation for these professions, making it difficult for employers to fill vacancies, even considering the climate ambitions.

In this light, permit holders<sup>2</sup> can make a valuable contribution to solving these shortages. Harnessing this human capital is not only essential to address the demand for skilled workers in construction and installation, but also offers opportunities for the inclusion of permit holders into Dutch society through suitable work-study programmes.

In response to these challenges, as well as the need for sustainable employment and the creation of equal opportunities for permit holders, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SZW) therefore initiated the [Programme for a Further Inclusion Labour market \(VIA\)](#) in 2018. The programme included pilots focusing on crucial moments in the careers of people with a migration background, such as permit holders. These moments are often characterised by disadvantages where effective interventions can make a significant difference. The pilots tested which solutions are effective and promising approaches were scientifically researched.

The evaluations of these pilots show that work-study programmes<sup>3</sup> are an effective way to guide permit holders towards sustainable employment.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, by scaling up and broadening these programmes, a larger number of permit holders can be sustainably integrated into the labour market.<sup>5</sup> At the same time, the necessary barriers and bottlenecks still remain that hinder the full utilisation of these opportunities. To move from 'knowing what works' to 'doing what works', SZW launched the [VIA Workagenda VIA](#) in December 2021.

As part of the learning approach provided for under the [Civic Intergration Act 2021](#), SZW has set up learning networks, including the Learning Network "**Learning and Working for Permit Holders**". This network, consisting of employers, municipalities, educational institutions, expert organizations and experts by experience (former) permit holders, focuses specifically on the active elements of work-study programmes for permit holders.

SZW has set up learning networks, including the Learning Network "**Learning and Working for Permit Holders**". This network, consisting of employers, municipalities, educational institutions, expert organizations and experts by experience (former) permit holders, focuses specifically on the active elements of work-study programmes for permit holders. [Project LEARN](#) is the result of this application, after the Commission granted approval and nominated the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as technical support partner. This project is a crucial part of the Learning Network and aims to promote knowledge exchange and disseminate good practices to promote sustainable labour market inclusion of permit holders.

The next section of the document looks at the **LEARN** project in more detail.

1 Task group Labour Market and Schooling Climate Agreement 2022

2 Asylum seekers become permit holders (or recognized refugees) at the moment they are recognized as refugees and receive a residence permit. Permit holders initially receive a temporary permit for five years, which is then automatically converted into a permanent permit.

3 Work-study programmes are typically between 1 month and 1 year in duration, combine work (e.g. 4 days per week) and study (e.g. 1 day per week), and lead to a certification that enables sustainable employment.

4 Rijksoverheid. (2021, December 13). [Werkagenda VIA](https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/publicaties/2021/12/13/werkagenda-via). Retrieved from <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/publicaties/2021/12/13/werkagenda-via>

5 Sociaal-Economische Raad. (n.d.). [Handreikingen VIA](https://www.ser.nl/nl/thema/werkwijzer-vluchtelingen/integratie-op-arbeidsmarkt/handreikingen-via). Retrieved from <https://www.ser.nl/nl/thema/werkwijzer-vluchtelingen/integratie-op-arbeidsmarkt/handreikingen-via>



## THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MIGRATION

Founded in 1951, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has become the world's leading international organization in the field of migration. IOM is affiliated to the United Nations. IOM's guiding principle is that humane and orderly migration benefits both migrants and society as a whole.

In the Netherlands, IOM carries out projects that help migrants find their place in society, among other things. In addition, IOM helps their partners (governments, employers, and civil society organizations) to value and optimize migrants' positive contributions to society. The starting point of IOM's projects is to promote social cohesion and equal opportunities for migrants.

For more information about IOM, visit the [website](#).



# BACKGROUND PROJECT LEARN

While the introduction provides an overview of the broader context of the programme and the importance of inclusive labour markets, the background of Project LEARN will delve into the specific initiative aimed at providing technical assistance for the labour market integration of newcomers in the Netherlands. Project LEARN, financed by the European Union through the Technical Support Instrument and implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SZW) and the European Commission, seeks to offer technical support to establish a Learning Network and facilitate the labour market integration of newcomers in the Netherlands. This project is operational from June 2022 to July 2024 and encompasses a three-pronged approach:

## 1. LEARNING NETWORK "LEARNING AND WORKING FOR PERMIT HOLDERS":

IOM leads the Learning Network in close cooperation with SZW and the European Commission. Several meetings and workshops are organized to promote knowledge sharing among the Learning Network participants and to further develop the expertise of implementers responsible for setting up and scaling up work-study programmes for permit holders in the Netherlands. The Learning Network consists of a group of employers, educational institutions and municipalities. However, the Learning Network includes more than just this core group. During the project, IOM also consulted the 'outer shell', consisting of other experts (such as UAF (Universitair Asiel Fonds [University Asylum Fund], Refugee Council, Refugee Talent Hub, SER (Sociaal Economische Raad) [Economic and Social Council], etc., for valuable input in shaping the meetings. This group is called the Advisory Group. Work-study programmes are an integral combination of learning and working, lead to certification, have an emphasis on MBO (Middelbaar beroepsonderwijs) [Secondary vocational education] and lead to sustainable employment. This network focuses specifically on the active elements of work-study programmes for permit holders and includes three main themes:

1. Recruitment, Selection and the Preparatory Phase of work-study programmes
2. The learning component of work-study programmes
3. The work component of work-study programmes

The findings of this Learning Network form the core of Project LEARN.

## 2. MIGRANT AMBASSADOR ADVISORY BOARD:

IOM has set up a sounding board group where (former) permit holders are heard and share their experiences to promote the inclusion of permit holders on the Dutch labour market. By actively collecting input from the target group, IOM will gain a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities that permit holders face and their position in Dutch society.

## 3. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDELINE:

IOM formulates policy recommendations based on research to create favourable conditions for setting up and wider application of work-study programmes in the Netherlands. In addition, IOM has developed a guideline (this document) to make the knowledge gained on scaling up and making work-study programmes sustainable accessible to implementers.

During LEARN, SZW presented a Plan of Action 'permit holders at work' in March 2023, which identifies concrete actions and collaborations to improve the labour market opportunities and participation of permit holders. This specifically highlights the role of Learning Networks in improving labour market opportunities for permit holders.

This report deals specifically with the **guideline**. For more information on this, please refer to the next chapter.



# PURPOSE OF THE GUIDELINE

Before you is the guideline titled "Permit Holders Learning and Working in the Construction Sector (Construction, Installation, and Painting Branch)". This guideline is intended for language training providers, employers, the Employee Insurance Agency (UWV), municipalities, and all other relevant stakeholders interested or involved in establishing, expanding, and sustaining work-study programmes for permit holders in the construction industry. The primary goal of this guideline is to provide inspiration to the reader. Within these pages, you will discover valuable advice and practical tips for designing effective work-study programmes, with the ultimate objective of fostering long-term employment opportunities for permit holders.

The development of this guideline is part of the **Further Inclusion on the Labour Market** (VIA) initiative led by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SZW), in which the International Organization for Migration Netherlands (IOM) was entrusted with its creation. This programme aims to enhance the labour market participation and position of individuals with a migration background.

Previously, three guides have been released under this initiative for other sectors.

**1. Guideline for Learning and Working for Non-Dutch Speakers in Healthcare** was written by Verwey-Jonker Instituut for trainers, care organizations, UWV and municipalities interested in setting up a work-study programme that trains non-Dutch speakers (migrants or permit holders) for a job in care for the elderly or disabled. The guideline is based on an evaluation of the Preparatory phase Learning and Working in Healthcare. In this work-study programme at the Nova College in Haarlem, non-native speakers follow a 20-week preparatory course in preparation for the combined level 3 training programme Nursing in Individual Healthcare (VZ IG) and Social Care (MZ).

**2. Guideline for Sustainable Training and Placement of Permit Holders** was written by Berenschot Groep B.V. for medium-sized and large employers, municipalities (municipalities, UWV, Employer Service Points (WSP) and labour market regions and trainers (public and private)) who need and/or want to train skilled and/or qualified employees. The guide is based on an evaluation of the work-study programme for permit holders at Liander and Stedin, in which permit holders are trained to become First Mechanic Low and Medium Voltage Distribution.

**3. Guideline for Learning and Working with Permit Holders – or Other Language Speakers – Continuous Programmes** was written by Significant Public for municipalities, trainers and employers. The guide is based on experiences in Utrecht with the Learning and Working initiative aimed at the gastronomy and logistics sector.<sup>6</sup>

The guidelines mentioned above each concentrate on a particular sector (Healthcare, Electrical Engineering, and Logistics and Gastronomy). However, there has been a notable absence of a guideline for the construction sector, despite the industry facing staff shortages. In the development of this guide, IOM collaborated with **Transitiehuis Gelderland**, an organization known for its successful methods in recruiting, selecting, and placing individuals with barriers to employment in the construction sector. Hence, a targeted approach for the Construction sector was adopted to complement the existing knowledge base.

Furthermore, a sector-specific approach was adopted because each sector possesses unique characteristics and distinct challenges that necessitate tailored solutions. Transitiehuis Gelderland has a proven trackrecord of effectively training individuals entering from other fields for numerous years. Presently, they are expanding their operations by disseminating their successful methodologies to other training organizations across the province of Gelderland. This is being accomplished by meticulously outlining their approach within a structured framework and subsequently adapting it for implementation by other training entities.

Leveraging the expertise and systematic approach of Transitiehuis Gelderland, this guide has been enhanced by IOM with insights from Project LEARN. These insights draw from discussions within the Learning Network 'Learning and Working for Permit Holders,' as well as interviews, literature reviews, and analyses of best practices in the Netherlands and other EU Member States. The guide is specifically designed to support permit holders, while also providing valuable insights on how employers, municipalities, educational institutions, and other stakeholders can effectively engage with and support this demographic.

Structured as a **step-by-step plan**, this guide aims to enhance the scalability and sustainability of work-study programmes for permit holders. It offers practical insights covering every stage from recruitment to the successful integration of permit holders into the workforce.

<sup>6</sup> Open Overheid. (n.d.). Municipality of Utrecht - Case Study. Retrieved from [https://open.overheid.nl/documenten/rnli-30b4314f-577e-469e-a999-f443213814ae/pdf#:~:text=De%20gemeente%20Utrecht%20is%20in,en%20werk\(ervaring\)%20gecombineerd.](https://open.overheid.nl/documenten/rnli-30b4314f-577e-469e-a999-f443213814ae/pdf#:~:text=De%20gemeente%20Utrecht%20is%20in,en%20werk(ervaring)%20gecombineerd.)



## TRANSITIEHUIS GELDERLAND

**Transitiehuis Gelderland** was set up by Bouwmensen Apeldoorn<sup>7</sup> and consists of a partnership of employers in the construction, electrical engineering and installation sectors, sector organizations, employers' and employees' organisations, knowledge institutions, education, the province and municipalities. Together, their aim is to ensure sufficient, qualitative lateral flow and to get employees in the right place for the construction, installation, electrical engineering and painting sectors.

<sup>7</sup> Bouwmensen Apeldoorn is a training company that recruits and trains job seekers facing barriers to entering the labour market (including permit holders) and closely collaborates with public and private parties in the construction sector (UWV, municipalities, employers, etc.). Bouwmensen Nederland emerged in 2012 from the Training Companies Sector Group of Bouwend Nederland (a major employers' organization in the construction sector) and has nationwide geographical coverage in the Netherlands.

## METHODOLOGY

To develop the guideline "Permit Holders Learning and Working in the Construction Sector," the International Organization for Migration (IOM) collected data on the challenges and obstacles faced by implementers in the field of labour market inclusion for permit holders when setting up and scaling up work-study programmes in the Netherlands. This data collection took place between November 2022 and April 2024 through a series of activities:

### A. LEARN KICK-OFF MEETING

On November 3, 2022, IOM, in collaboration with the Policy Implementation Department (UvB) within the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment (SZW), organized a kick-off meeting at the Jaarbeurs in Utrecht, the Netherlands. Participants from the Learning Network and the Advisory Group provided input on four different themes related to labour market inclusion of permit holders in the Netherlands:

1. Matching, recruitment, selection, and the preparatory of work-study programmes
2. LEARNING & working: the educational component in the work-study programme
3. Learning & WORKING: the work component in the work-study programme
4. Developing a national plan: coordination and scaling up of the work-study programme

The findings of this meeting were documented and incorporated into a report.

### B. 10 LEARNING NETWORK "LEARNING AND WORKING FOR PERMIT HOLDERS" MEETING

The Learning Network "Learning and Working for Permit Holders" aims to develop a sustainable approach for setting up and widely applying (scaling up) work-study programmes for permit holders. This network, led by UvB in collaboration with IOM, is coordinated and facilitated by UvB, while IOM focuses on the substantive programme. The network consists of approximately 25 participants from municipalities, educational institutions, and employers, with an additional group of involved advisors, referred to as the Advisory Group.

Across the span of 10 meetings convened for the Learning Network, IOM meticulously documented and analyzed the proceedings, integrating them into comprehensive meeting reports. These meetings have been instrumental in shaping the foundation of the guideline. Central to the network's ethos is the promotion of knowledge sharing, collective learning, and network expansion, fostering fruitful collaborations and sustaining an active community engaged in ongoing dialogue. During these sessions, which encompassed both work visits and workshops, participants engaged in robust knowledge exchange, capacity building, and network expansion. The diverse composition of participants, spanning

employers, educational institutions, municipalities, and SZW representatives, facilitated rich interactions and yielded invaluable insights. These meetings weren't mere platforms for discussing challenges; they served as dynamic arenas for collaborative problem-solving. Through collective effort, fresh perspectives emerged, and obstacles were effectively addressed. Furthermore, these gatherings facilitated the establishment of meaningful connections among participants, fostering collaborations that significantly bolster the labour market integration of permit holders.

The following themes were addressed during these meetings:

- Recruitment and selection
- Expectation management
- Preconditions
- Preparatory Phase
- Language and curriculum
- Guidance
- Workplace inclusion
- Alignment with civic integration act
- Practical learning

Cross-cutting themes such as coordination, project coordination, and policy intersect all topics and were addressed at each meeting.

### C. 40 INDIVIDUAL CONSULTATION MEETINGS

IOM organized 40 one-hour consultation meetings with stakeholders involved in the labour market inclusion of permit holders, including members of the Learning Network. The aim was to delve deeper into specific themes and obtain a comprehensive understanding of the stakeholders' landscape in this domain. IOM documented these discussions and compiled them into reports.

#### D. INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE

As part of LEARN, IOM facilitated two knowledge exchanges aimed at learning from experiences in other EU Member States. In November 2023, a three-day physical study trip to Essen, Germany, was organized. During this trip, participants not only visited various organizations but also had the opportunity to hear from speakers representing entities such as the Chamber of Commerce, Salam's Kitchen (a restaurant working with permit holders), Klinikum Vest (a hospital), the Bundesagentur für Arbeit, and the Jobcenter.

Additionally, in March 2024, a virtual study visit to Sweden took place. This virtual event featured speakers from Sweden, including representatives from the Swedish Migration Agency, the Swedish Employment Agency, and a notable project called Yrkesväg, who shared their insights.

These exchanges provided a platform for participants of the Learning Network to engage with stakeholders from the respective countries. The insights gathered from both exchanges were carefully compiled, analyzed, and integrated into the "Regional Exchange Report."

#### E. MIGRANT AMBASSADOR ADVISORY BOARD

To ensure that the perspectives of permit holders are central to project LEARN, IOM incorporates their insights throughout all project phases, aiming to grasp a comprehensive understanding of the opportunities and challenges encountered by permit holders in work-study programs. Through three rounds of consultations, each comprising three sessions lasting one and a half hours, IOM engaged with nine representatives from the target group. This engagement was facilitated through the establishment of a Migrant Ambassador Advisory Board (MAAB), where current and former permit holders shared their invaluable insights and experiences, fostering the labour market integration of permit holders in the Netherlands. The active involvement of the target group proved indispensable for both the Learning Network and LEARN, as their perspectives and experiences serve as foundational elements for informed policy-making and the methodical layout of this guideline.

Throughout these sessions, IOM meticulously documented and synthesized all insights and analyses into comprehensive reports.

#### F. LITERATURE REVIEW

Before, during, and after the above activities, IOM conducted literature research on existing policies, work-study programmes in the construction sector, and other relevant literature. The aim of the literature review was to effectively position the steps described in this document. That is, the guideline is intended to build on guidelines and research that already exist. Additionally, the literature review formed the basis for the kick-off meeting, the Learning Network meetings, and the individual consultation meetings.

## MISSION-DRIVEN APPROACH

To comprehend the guideline "Permit Holders Learning and Working in the Construction Sector," a mission-driven approach is essential. In "Making Work of Work," Utrecht University of Applied Sciences emphasizes the significance of adopting a mission-driven approach to ensure the sustainability and broader applicability of work-study programmes for permit holders<sup>8</sup>.

A mission-driven approach entails that public, private, and civil society entities collaborate toward a common, ambitious goal. By addressing the questions "what do we ultimately aim to achieve?" and "what is required to accomplish this?" a mission-driven approach ensures that parties move beyond merely addressing existing bottlenecks, fostering actual sustainability and broader application. Utrecht University of Applied Sciences identifies three crucial conditions for a successful mission-driven approach:

- A.** Clarity on a shared goal, wherein roles and common interests are transparent to all parties involved.
- B.** Collective investment in commitment, time, and resources to attain the goal, with shared risks and ultimate benefits.
- C.** A flexible and continuous learning process allowing for interim adjustments, rather than solely evaluating afterward.

The determination of what parties aim to achieve ultimately and the necessary steps to achieve it varies based on the context. In the construction sector, this determination hinges on several factors, including the labour market region, involved actors, their goals and resources, as well as regional and local laws and regulations. Nonetheless, certain elements are applicable nationwide to ensure the broader application and sustainability of work-study programmes for permit holders in the construction sector. In the following sections, drawing from the aforementioned three key conditions, these elements will be explored in greater detail.

## CLEAR, SHARED GOAL

The objective is to enhance the scalability and sustainability of work-study programmes for permit holders in the construction sector, leading to increased transitions of permit holders into suitable and sustainable employment. Depending on the context, stakeholders can refine this goal by ensuring it is SMART (Specific, Measurable, Acceptable, Realistic, and Time-bound).

## DEFINITION OF ROLES

The adoption of the mission-driven approach in work-study programmes within the Construction sector necessitates the engagement of various stakeholders, each with distinct responsibilities. Nevertheless, the roles pertinent to the development and broader implementation of work-study programmes are generally applicable across different contexts. Utrecht University of Applied Sciences outlines several roles that can be assumed by other stakeholders for each aspect of a work-study programme (Table 1).

<sup>8</sup> Toward a mission-driven approach to sustain and scale work-study programs for permit holders. Retrieved from <https://www.hu.nl/onderzoek/handvatten-ontwikkeld-voor-effectieve-leerwerktrajecten-statushouders#:~:text=De%20missie%2Dgedreven%20aanpak%20voor,met%20een%20helder%2C%20gezamenlijk%20doel.>



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	TIME PERIOD	ROLE OF INVOLVED PARTY
<b>Recruitment &amp; Selection</b>	1-6 months	Intermediary Employer Director Expertise partner
<b>Preparatory phase</b>	Dependent on level of candidate: 1-12 months	(Language) Training provider Employer Director Expertise partner
<b>Learning and work component</b>	Dependent on level of candidate: 2-36 months	Training provider Employer Director
<b>(Extra) language support</b>	3-24 months	Language provider
<b>(Extra) guidance</b>	3-24 months	Mentor/Job coach Expertise Partner
<b>Matching and placement</b>	1-6 months	Intermediary Connector Employer

**Table 1 Making work work.** Towards a mission-driven approach to sustain and scale up work-study programmes for permit holders (2022), Bakker and de Bell, Utrecht University of Applied Sciences

For this guideline, the table below will define and explain what each role entails.

ROLE	DEFINITION
<b>Director</b>	The director oversees all components of the programme and ensures continuity and mutual coordination. Particularly during the preparatory phase of a work-study programme, the director plays a crucial role as they are responsible for effectively coordinating and managing expectations among various parties such as language trainers, employers, etc. It is advisable to designate one party to assume the role of director to ensure continuity. Typically, the municipality serves as the director, but the employer or trainer can also fulfill this role.
<b>Intermediary</b>	The intermediary is often the party that initiates the first conversation. The intermediary acts as the mediator between the various parties. In the preparatory phase, for example, the intermediary, together with the employer, establishes a clear profile and criteria for participation in the programme. With a view to sustainable job placement, it is important that the intermediary has a network of engaged employers in the shortage sectors who are familiar with the offerings of work-study programmes and are willing to place candidates where suitable. During the recruitment and selection process and the preparatory phase, municipalities often take on the role of intermediary. During the matching and placement phase, the <u>Employer Service Points</u> (Werkgevers-servicepunt) (WSP) or the Employee Insurance Agency (UWV) assume this role.
<b>Employer</b>	The employer is the party that provides the workplace during the work-study programme and where, ideally, candidates can transition to sustainable employment upon completion of the programme. The involvement of the employer is crucial from the outset of the programme.
<b>Expertise partner</b>	An expertise partner is a party that is not directly involved in the execution but possesses important knowledge and experience to support the implementers. Intercultural skills, finance, or research are examples of aspects where an expertise partner can provide additional support. <u>VluchtelingenWerk Nederland</u> or the <u>Samenwerkingsorganisatie Beroepsonderwijs Bedrijfsleven</u> are examples of expertise partners relevant to the permit holder target group.
<b>Connectors</b>	Connectors bridge parties and complement the role of the intermediary by linking them together. During the recruitment process, for instance, permit holders who have undergone a work-study programme themselves can serve as connectors because they have knowledge of both sides: the client managers of the municipality (intermediary) and candidates (permit holders). During the matching and placement process, industry associations and WSPs can effectively fulfill the role of connector by attracting potential employers.
<b>Permit holder</b>	Once an asylum seeker is recognized as a refugee and allowed to stay in the Netherlands, they receive a temporary residence permit for a period of five years. A refugee with a permanent residence permit is called a 'permit holder'. They start with integration, language learning, and job searching. Permit holders are a distinct group from those displaced by the war in Ukraine, who, under the EU Temporary Protection Directive, have temporary rights to reception, medical care, work, and education in all EU member states. <sup>9</sup>
<b>(Language) training provider</b>	The (language) training provider is responsible for delivering the educational component within the work-study programme. This educational aspect may include training courses, language training, or a blend of both. It is crucial for the training provider and the employer to be closely aligned to ensure that the work and educational elements complement each other. This alignment enables permit holders to apply what they learn in school directly to their practical work in the workplace, while real-life examples from the workplace enrich the educational experience. To attain widely recognized certification, it is important to closely align the target group with regular educational programmes, such as apprenticeships, partial certificates from vocational education, or practical certificates.
<b>Mentor</b>	A mentor or buddy is someone within the organization who can provide additional guidance in the workplace.
<b>Jobcoach</b>	A job coach also provides additional guidance to a candidate. Unlike a mentor, a job coach is external. A job coach can be provided by the municipality, the industry organization, or a social organization such as <u>VluchtelingenWerk Nederland</u> (Refugee Foundation Netherlands).

<sup>9</sup> Rijksoverheid. (2023, September 28). Richtlijn tijdelijke bescherming voor vluchtelingen uit Oekraïne verlengd tot 4 maart 2025. Retrieved from <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2023/09/28/richtlijn-tijdelijke-bescherming-voor-vluchtelingen-uit-oekraïne-verlengd-tot-4-maart-2025>

# GUIDE: STEP-BY-STEP PLAN

In the following chapters of the guideline, each component (step) of a work-study programme is detailed, describing the specific actions and responsibilities of each role within the programme to establish and scale up a work-study programme.

**This guideline will cover the following phases:**



Each chapter provides a step-by-step explanation, aimed at optimizing the contribution of each role to the success of the work-study programme. By clarifying the mission-driven approach and integrating these roles, this guideline aims to provide guidance for the successful implementation of sustainable work-study programmes for permit holders.





Photo: Adobe Stock

## EXPECTATION MANAGEMENT

**The key to a successful work-study programme lies in effectively managing expectations among all involved parties: permit holders, employers, (language) educators, and intermediaries, etc. This requires an open dialogue, where everyone is willing to listen to each other and set aside assumptions. Only through this approach can a fruitful collaboration be established that benefits everyone. The Hogeschool Utrecht [University of Utrecht] advises starting by gathering all parties around the table and then distributing tasks. Therefore, it is important to establish clear agreements before the programme commences.**

Setting up and scaling work-study programmes for permit holders in the construction sector requires all parties to be willing to invest and experiment.

### Four key points deserve special attention:

**Role and Expectations:** Open and clear communication is fundamental to managing expectations correctly. This includes clearly defining the objectives, possibilities, and limitations of the work-study programme for all involved parties. Understanding diverse perspectives and bringing this diversity of expectations together into a coherent whole promotes collaboration. It is important for each participant to understand their specific role within the programme and what is expected of them. Additionally, it is essential to explore the motivations behind both one's own desires and those of other involved parties. By letting go of assumptions and seeking shared interests and motivations, work-study programmes can be effectively designed to support both employers and employees in their goals and needs. It is important to discuss any concerns or risks, such as those of employers when

hiring permit holders, and to make good agreements to overcome barriers. Therefore, it is essential to ensure short communication lines to address these challenges.

Mutual Expectations Mapping provides clarity and certainty. The perspectives of both employers and participants are highlighted, as well as those of various collaborative partners. Examining from the different perspectives of all parties is therefore important. This allows mutual needs to be recognized. Regular feedback moments for continuous structured reflection to all parties are a key to successful work.

**Flexibility and Customization:** Recognizing the unique needs of each permit holder and the ability to adapt the programme accordingly is important for successful integration and collaboration. A work-study programme often lacks flexibility. For example, day-care availability and opening times may be a barrier for single parents to participate in the programme. This demonstrates the importance of adapting the programme to the individual needs of the participants. This calls for innovative solutions, such as adjusting working hours or finding childcare solutions, to provide a more inclusive and accessible programme.

**Financial Planning:** One of the most complex aspects of work-study programmes is financial management. The dilemma between the benefits of a permit holder's allowance and the benefits of participating in a work-study programme requires careful consideration and approach. The discussion about providing a wage that is competitive with the welfare level, or enabling participants to retain their allowance, underscores the need for clear policies that address both the needs of the permit holders and the financial reality of the programme. The aim is to have a regional budget, so that funding is not dependent on the candidate's place of residence. When guiding candidates, consideration should be given to the Apprenticeship Wage (BeroepsBegeleidende Leerweg) in the relevant sector. For example, in construction, the Apprenticeship Wage is currently the highest of all Apprenticeship programmes. This may result in permit holders losing part of their allowance because they then fall into a higher income bracket. This can affect their willingness to continue the work-study programme.

**Short Lines of Communication:** Many permit holders encounter unique challenges, including family issues in their country of origin or difficulties integrating into the Netherlands. To prevent these challenges from resulting in dropouts, maintaining short and efficient communication channels among all stakeholders is essential. This begins with clear and effective communication methods. By directly and promptly communicating with one another, such as through WhatsApp or phone calls instead of relying solely on email, stakeholders can address obstacles as they arise, thereby enhancing their effectiveness in working towards their shared objectives. For instance, if a candidate experiences temporary difficulties that prevent them from working, the intermediary can promptly communicate with the employer or educator to temporarily accommodate the situation. Since the permit holder may struggle to communicate this themselves, the intermediary assumes the role of guiding them through such challenges.

Apart from the intrinsic value of assisting someone in need, this approach also serves the collective interest: if the intermediary fails to provide intensive guidance, the permit holder may drop out, resulting in a loss of investment. It often becomes evident, as parties begin working together, that friction may arise, underscoring the importance of regular meetings to evaluate and adjust agreements. For example, variations in the pace of work on the shop floor may exist; while some may have more flexibility and time for interaction, others may contend with the demands and pace of commercial processes. Regular evaluation and adjustment of agreements help address such discrepancies and ensure smoother collaboration.

### 1. DEFINE OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTATIONS:

- The **director** organizes and facilitates a preparatory meeting between all involved parties (employer, intermediary, permit holder, and (language) training provider) to clarify mutual expectations and agreements. The coordinator clarifies the motivations behind the expectations of each party (see [Annex B: the checklist 'mutual roles, expectations, and agreements'](#)).
- The **employer** actively participates in the discussion about expectations, including the discussion of financial contributions. The employer is committed to providing not only a wage but also perspective and sustainable workplaces.
- **Permit holders** are encouraged to voice their expectations, ambitions, and any concerns, actively involving them in shaping the work-study programme. Wondering how to effectively engage the target group? Check out the [practical tips](#).

### 2. FINANCIAL STRUCTURING:

- All **involved parties**, especially the director and employers, look for opportunities for continuous funding, wage structures, and maintaining allowances to optimize permit holder participation. For reference to financial arrangements and best practices in financial engineering, we recommend contacting the local work-study centre. They can provide an overview of available financial arrangements in the region (see: [work-study centre - Financial Arrangements](#)) and apply best practices for financial engineering (see: [Together for the Client - Case Studies: - Praktijkvoorbeelden: Financial Engineering for work-study programmes](#)).

### 3. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE WORK-STUDY PROGRAMME:

- All **involved parties** critically examine how they can shape the work-study programme, for example by applying flexible intake, start times, and possible job carving (see the [preparatory phase](#) and [employer component](#) chapters).
- **The (Language) training provider** adapts the curriculum based on feedback from employers and the needs of permit holders, providing any necessary customization and language support (see the [preparatory phase](#) and [training component](#) chapters).

### 4. COMMUNICATION AND EVALUATION:

- The **director** facilitates regular feedback sessions involving all stakeholders for ongoing and structured reflection. Typically, the director takes the lead in conducting these sessions.
- All **involved parties** discuss ways of exchanging information, quick communication, and short lines of communication to tackle obstacles quickly and efficiently.

### 5. FORMALIZATION AND ENSURING COLLABORATION:

- The **director** takes responsibility and leadership for setting up the work-study programme.
- All **involved parties** formalize collaboration through covenants or pacts and ensure clear role allocation and shared objectives.



Photo: Transitiehuis Gelderland

## RECRUITMENT & SELECTION

**Recruiting and selecting suitable candidates for work-study programmes for permit holders in the construction sector is a crucial step to ensure the success of these programmes. This chapter discusses how various stakeholders such as intermediaries, employers, and other parties collaborate to find, select, and retain the right candidates for these work-study programmes.**

The recruitment and selection chapter will be divided into 3 steps:

1. Recruitment: a common challenge
2. Criteria for participation
3. Selection: discovering talents and skills

### RECRUITMENT:

#### A COMMON CHALLENGE

The success of work-study programmes for permit holders heavily depends on the effectiveness of the recruitment process. This process requires collaboration between various stakeholders.

**When recruiting, pay attention to the following three points:**

**Knowledge & the Importance of an Open Attitude and Awareness:** Breaking any biases and negative perceptions among professionals regarding jobs considered low-skilled or practical is essential. Intermediaries must actively work to change these perceptions by emphasizing the intrinsic value of these programmes and by sharing success stories of former participants. Municipal case manager managers play a crucial role at the beginning of the recruitment process for work-study programmes aimed at permit holders. They serve as the first point of contact for permit holders and are responsible for informing and encouraging participation in available programmes. However, there is often a lack of (labour market) knowledge about work-study programmes, both among permit holders and the involved professionals, such as municipal case managers. Therefore, addressing this knowledge gap is important. The attitude and perception of case managers significantly influence the motivation and willingness of permit holders to participate in these programmes. Negative perceptions about certain jobs, especially those seen as practical or low-skilled, can be demotivating. Therefore, it is essential for intermediaries to maintain a positive attitude and emphasize

the potential of practically skilled programmes as valuable steppingstones to further development and integration.

**Intermediaries and Expert Partners as Bridges** are indispensable in the structure of work-study programmes, particularly in facilitating the integration of permit holders into the labour market within the construction sector. They act as essential intermediaries between training institutions, employers, and permit holders, playing a crucial role in aligning candidates' skills and needs with the requirements of available job opportunities. Leveraging their sector-specific knowledge and extensive networks, they play a pivotal role during the preparatory phase of work-study programs, ensuring the seamless integration of candidates by identifying suitable workplaces that contribute to sustainable outcomes. Entities such as the [Work-Study Centre](#), [Employers Service Point \(WSP\)](#) or the [Employee Insurance Agency \(UWV\)](#) assume a central role in fostering collaboration among

employers, educators, and permit holders, thereby working together towards a brighter future for all parties involved.

**Employers Play a Vital Role** within the ecosystem of work-study programmes, especially in the context of the inclusion of permit holders in the labour market. As providers of workplaces during the programme and potentially also providers of sustainable employment thereafter, employers are central to the success of these initiatives. Their involvement from the outset ensures that the learning and working components of the programme seamlessly align, which is crucial for achieving the goals of both employers and participating permit holders. Additionally, there is often a lack of knowledge about permit holders among employers. Fortunately, valuable tools are already being developed to address this, such as the [Dennis & Eva](#) instrument.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN RECRUITMENT & SELECTION: RECRUITMENT

### 1. DEVELOP AN INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT STRATEGY:

- **Intermediaries** create a recruitment strategy that values diversity and promotes inclusivity, paying attention to diverse channels to reach a broad audience of potential candidates. Ensure that the strategy is culturally sensitive and takes into account any cultural differences in communication and approach.
- **Employers** specify the skills and qualities they are looking for, so the recruitment strategy is tailored to the needs of the labour market.
- **Intermediaries** and **employers** use a mix of traditional and modern recruitment channels to increase the visibility of the programme. For example, social media, online job boards, offline job advertisements, targeted meetings, and networking events.

### 2. FLEXIBILITY IN CAREER PERSPECTIVES:

- **Intermediaries** (in this case, municipal case managers) adopt an open and supportive attitude towards the ambitions and aspirations of permit holders by actively listening to their desires and needs. By focusing on long-term benefits such as language acquisition, cultural integration, and professional certification, intermediaries can avoid any biases and stigmas surrounding certain types of work.

### 3. COLLABORATION WITH PARTNER ORGANIZATION:

- **Intermediaries** and **employers** involve specialized (expertise) partners such as the [UAF](#), [VluchtelingenWerk Nederland](#), local municipalities, and the [UWV](#) in the recruitment process and the initial selection of candidates, to leverage their expertise and networks.

#### 4. NETWORKING AND OUTREACH:

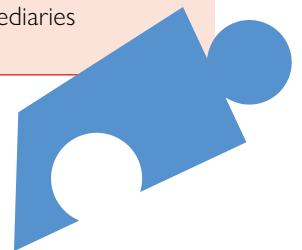
- **Intermediaries** (e.g. the municipality) build and maintain a network of engaged employers in sectors facing shortages. It is crucial to actively use alternative recruitment channels that resonate with permit holders.
- **Werkgevers** demonstrate their willingness to hire permit holders and make vacancies available to them through organizations such as the local WSPs, VluchtelingenWerk Nederland, the Refugee Talent Hub, Refugee Start Force, Refugee Company, Stichting UAF, specialized staffing agencies such as Colourful People, the municipality, and/or local initiatives. Each organization has its own approach, so it is important to collaborate with diverse parties to reach permit holders. Outreach activities, such as actively approaching permit holders and using social media, are essential to optimize recruitment.
- **Employers** participate in activities organized by relevant partners, such as WSPs and work-study centres, to reach potential candidates. This includes meetings with municipal case managers, where employers can communicate their staffing needs and establish direct connections with potential candidates who can meet specific requirements. Actively participating in partner events increases the visibility of vacancies and work-study programmes and strengthens collaboration with various stakeholders.
- The **director** makes agreements with **all involved parties** to promote the work-study programme well in advance. By starting the promotion early, suitable candidates can be recruited better and in a timely manner. This prevents the common problem of having to quickly find candidates under time pressure, which is often not feasible.

#### 5. INFORMATION PROVISION AND MOTIVATION:

- The **intermediary** (e.g. a Work-Study Centre and the Municipality) provides clear and accessible information about available work-study programmes, highlighting potential career paths, growth opportunities, and success stories of former participants. Good information about the content of the work-study programme, the requirements, and the expected outcomes is important for the success of the programme. This helps create realistic expectations among participants and reduces the likelihood of early dropout.
- The **intermediary** (e.g. the municipality) and an expertise partner (e.g. VluchtelingenWerk) provide support during the application process, including assistance with resume writing and preparation for job interviews, and communicate in an understandable manner to overcome language barriers.
- The **employer** offers information and awareness sessions for both permit holders and the broader community to increase awareness and understanding of the work-study programme.

#### 6. MATCHING FOR SELECTION:

- **Intermediaries** (e.g. the municipality or WSP) and **employers** match candidates with suitable work-study programmes and workplaces, considering the needs and skills of both parties.
- **Employers** can play a role in selecting suitable candidates by communicating their needs to intermediaries (municipality, WSP) and collaborating on an effective match.



## CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION

Establishing the right criteria for participation in work-study programmes is essential to maximize the employment opportunities for permit holders. Three core criteria deserve special attention: language proficiency, the formulation of job vacancy texts, and the requirements for VCA certification<sup>10</sup>. These elements play a crucial role in making work-study programmes accessible to permit holders and ensuring their successful participation and integration into the sector.

**Realistic Language Proficiency**, supported by language guidance, plays a pivotal role in boosting participation in work-study programmes for permit holders. Permit holders in the Z-route often demonstrate better progress compared to other routes, as distractions such as a MBO diploma (secondary vocational education)<sup>11</sup> are less relevant to them, focusing instead on practical skills and rapid integration. However, the primary challenge lies in engaging employers effectively. Trial placements, introductory activities, and preparatory programmes can significantly enhance the connection between job seekers and employers. Language proficiency is frequently cited as a challenge; nevertheless, setting language requirements higher than realistically attainable does not align with the overarching goal of securing suitable employment for permit holders. This approach risks creating unnecessary barriers to entry into the labour market, hindering the integration process. Therefore, it is preferable to invest in a permit holder's development opportunities rather than setting an unrealistic entry level. Therefore, IOM recommends maintaining language proficiency requirements for participation at the lowest feasible level, a suggestion also endorsed by Transitiehuis. Flexibility in language requirements and incorporating language development within work-study programmes are strongly advocated.

**More Inclusive Job Vacancy Texts:** The complexity of job vacancy texts may discourage interested permit holders. Therefore, simple, clear, and inclusive job vacancy texts are essential to attract a broader range of candidates. It is important not only to focus on the hard skills requirements of the position or training but also to pay attention to the soft skills that contribute to a sustainable placement within the organization. Additionally, it is crucial to ensure inclusivity in the development of promotional materials, such as banners, photos, and COA (Corporate Office Art).

**VCA Certification:** Obtaining a VCA certificate<sup>12</sup>, necessary for work in certain sectors, can be challenging for permit holders due to language barriers. Customized certification programmes focusing on the most relevant aspects for the role can reduce this bottleneck.



Photo: Transitiehuis Gelderland

<sup>10</sup> VCA diploma demonstrates that you have basic safety, health and environmental knowledge

<sup>11</sup> Rijksoverheid [government]. (2021, April 16). Diplomas, certificates, and declarations in MBO. Retrieved from <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/brochures/2021/04/16/diploma-s-certificaten-en-verklaringen-in-het-mbo#:~:text=Een%20mbo%2Ddiploma%20wordt%20verstrekt%20na%20het%20afnemen%20van%20de,met%20vermelding%20van%20alle%20examenonderdelen>.

<sup>12</sup> Refer to footnote 10

### 1. ESTABLISHING AND ADJUSTING CRITERIA AND LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENT:

- **Intermediaries**, in collaboration with **employers**, should formulate clear profiles and realistic criteria for participation in the work-study programme. These criteria should encompass the necessary skills, qualifications, and personal/professional objectives of candidates. It's essential to maintain flexibility in entry requirements, including language proficiency levels and availability. Rigidity in these requirements may result in a shortage of candidates who meet the criteria.
- **Employers** are responsible for defining the participation requirements for the work-study programme. Factors such as availability, physical and mental well-being, and language proficiency should be considered. Taking adequate time for this process is crucial, as identifying and establishing requirements and motivation requires careful consideration.
- **Employers**, in consultation with **intermediaries**, should regularly review and potentially adjust the requirements for candidates. Often, initial requirements set by employers may prove unrealistic, leading to difficulties in finding suitable candidates for the work-study programme. Language proficiency levels tend to develop over the course of the pathway; therefore, it's important to assess the potential for growth among permit holders and provide additional language support accordingly.

### 2. VACANCY TEXTS OPTIMISATION:

- **Employers** and **intermediaries** develop clear, simple and inclusive vacancy texts and promotional materials. Avoid jargon and ensure clarity on roles and expectations.

### 3. SIMPLIFY VCA CERTIFICATION:

- **Employers** critically consider VCA certification requirements and adapt them to increase accessibility. Work with expertise partners to develop adapted certification programmes.
- **Expertise partners** support employers in creating accessible certification programmes, such as the initiative of [VluchtelingenWerk Nederland en Bouwend Nederland Vakgroep GLAS](#).

## THE INITIATIVE OF VLUCHTELINGENWERK NEDERLAND AND BOUWEND NEDERLAND VAKGROEP GLAS

The joint initiative between Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland and Bouwend Nederland Vakgroep GLAS involves a pioneering living lab project focused on enhancing employment opportunities for permit holders within the glass industry. This initiative assists employers in developing conducive work environments for permit holders, prioritizing practical integration methods, and offering training programmes that address language barriers. Collaboration across sectors, customization of certification programmes for inclusivity, and provision of comprehensive support to both employers and permit holders to foster successful working partnerships are highlighted as key components of the initiative. For further information, please refer to the document titled: [VluchtelingenWerk Nederland en Bouwend Nederland Vakgroep GLAS](#).





## SELECTION: DISCOVERING

### TALENTS AND SKILLS

Selecting suitable candidates for work-study programmes goes beyond the conventional evaluation of resumes and documents. Adopting a dynamic, life-stage-conscious intake process can significantly enhance this selection process by revealing candidates' hidden talents and motivations. Recognizing that a traditional approach is no longer sufficient, we advocate for Transitiehuis's philosophy, which emphasizes Life-Stage-Aware Intake. Unlike the superficial scrutiny of CVs, this intake method delves deeper into understanding the individual as a whole, considering their motivations, abilities, and unique personal circumstances.

#### Key areas of focus in selection:

**Introduction and Life-Stage Conscious Intake** are crucial for gaining a realistic understanding of both the candidate and the program. Through in-depth conversations and targeted questions, it is possible to illuminate not just skills and work experience, but also personal motivations, interests, and life goals. This approach often unveils surprising insights and strengthens the connection between the candidate and supervisors. An essential aspect of the intake process is the ability to understand what is not explicitly stated, a skill vital for grasping the hidden needs and aspirations of the candidate. Traditional HR and recruitment departments often seek employees who fit a predefined mold, based on conventional perceptions and beliefs about job suitability. However, permit holders bring diverse backgrounds and rich experiences that may not be immediately apparent. It requires bravery to look beyond language barriers and uncover hidden talent. Thus, it's crucial for Dutch individuals to dare to hire individuals from diverse backgrounds like themselves. Through Life-Stage Conscious Intake, the goal is to develop a holistic understanding of the candidate, including insight into their current life stage, the goals they pursue, and the obstacles they may encounter on their journey to employment. This approach not only facilitates successful placements but also fosters long-term sustainable integration into the labor market. See the Life-phase-aware intake checklist in [Annex C](#) for further details.

#### **Approachable Trial Placements and Introduction**

**Activities:** By introducing candidates and employers in a low-pressure, no-commitment setting, everyone gains a clear understanding of the candidate, the programme, and the employer. Organizing activities such as workplace visits or open-house events provides a genuine glimpse into the work environment and fosters personal connections. One effective way to uncover hidden talents is to allow candidates to demonstrate their skills as part of the selection process. Ultimately, successful recruitment and selection hinge on placing the right candidate on the right track at the right time. Aligning mutual expectations regarding the programme also reduces dropouts and enables early termination of the preparatory phase of the work-study programme. The Significance of a 'Kick-Start': A hands-on orientation, such as trying out various roles like bricklaying or carpentry, provides valuable insight. For instance, a prospective employee who initially expresses interest in carpentry may discover through practical experience that bricklaying is a better fit.

**Preconditions:** Before embarking on a programme, it is crucial to ensure that all preconditions are met. These can encompass practical considerations such as digital literacy, reimbursement of travel expenses (including familiarity with and confidence in using public transportation), access to transportation like bicycles, home arrangements, and childcare arrangements. Addressing all preconditions can be challenging, especially those that may seem obvious to the interviewer and most Dutch citizens but not to a permit holder. A trilateral meeting involving the employer, permit holder, and intermediary (e.g. the municipality's client manager) can help ensure that these conditions are fulfilled.

### 1. CONDUCT AN INTRODUCTORY INTERVIEW AND LIFE-STAGE CONSCIOUS INTAKE:

- Both the **intermediary** and the **employer** schedule an intake interview with the candidate, emphasizing a Life-Stage-Conscious approach checklist (refer to [Annex C](#) for this checklist). This involves looking beyond traditional CVs to assess the candidate's motivations, talents, and potential. During the selection process, it is essential to consider not only the hard requirements of the position or education but also the soft skills that contribute to a sustainable placement within the organization. Factors such as the motivation of the permit holder and their developed knowledge and skills from extracurricular or personal activities should be considered. In addition to language proficiency, learnability and motivation can be crucial criteria. A learnability assessment and a motivational interview can help determine whether a candidate is suitable for a work-study programme.
- Both the **intermediary** and the **employer** should consider the utilization of a 'connector'. This professional, preferably with a refugee background, can serve as a bridge between the municipality, the employer, and the permit holders. The liaison officer facilitates clear communication and serves as a point of contact for both the permit holders and the organizations involved in the work-study programme.

### 2. LOW-THRESHOLD TRIAL PLACEMENTS AND ACQUAINTANCE ACTIVITIES:

- The **intermediary** and/or **employer** arrange low-threshold introductory activities, such as workplace visits or job shadowing days, to assess the compatibility between the candidate, employer, and the work-study programme. Incorporating opportunities for candidates to showcase their hidden talents into the selection process is recommended. This approach allows both the candidate and the employer to gain a better understanding of each other and the programme, enhancing the likelihood of a successful match.
- The **employer** provides the candidate with a clear explanation of the process and the employer's expectations, fostering a relaxed atmosphere to help the candidate feel at ease.

### 3. PRECONDITIONS & FLEXIBILITY TRILATERAL INTERVIEW:

- The **intermediary** or the **employer** schedules a trilateral interview with the permit holder together with the intermediary/ employer to ensure that all preconditions (see [Annex D](#)) are met before the start of the programme. Talking together is an essential step to remove practical barriers to participation.



Photo: Adobe Stock

## PREPARATORY PHASE

**Close collaboration among municipalities, educational institutions, employers, and civil society organizations is pivotal for the success of the preparatory phase of a work-study programme. Through collaborative development and implementation of programmes, the needs of permit holders and the labour market can be more effectively addressed.**

Preparatory programmes play a vital role in readying permit holders for work-study programmes by focusing on language proficiency, professional language skills, and integration with civic integration programmes. Programme flexibility and intensive guidance are crucial to prevent dropout rates and optimize participation.

Here are four key focal points:

**Language Level and Educational Adaptation:** Adapting to various language proficiency levels is critical for the success of preparatory programmes. Implementing specialized programmes focusing on enhancing Dutch language skills, professional terminology, and utilizing visual aids can engage permit holders irrespective of their language proficiency. Additionally, adjusting educational materials to cater to lower language proficiency levels, including bilingual education, fosters a more inclusive learning environment.

**Flexibility in Work-study Programmes** is key to accommodating the diverse needs and schedules of permit holders. Offering part-time work-study programmes and flexible learning hours, such as evening classes, is essential.

This flexibility enables permit holders to continue their civic integration course while participating in work-study programmes, thereby facilitating labour market integration. Emphasizing the importance of flexible working hours is crucial to enable permit holders' participation in such programmes.

**Alignment and Integration with Civic Integration Programme:** Integrating the civic integration courses with work-study programmes increases the effectiveness of both. Striving for seamless integration of language lessons and vocational training increases accessibility for permit holders who want to work and learn. Making language lessons directly applicable within the work setting not only accelerates language acquisition but also increases the chances for permit holders to enter full-time employment. A workplace-based approach to language education can ease the transition from learning to working and optimize the employability of employees.

**Support and Cultural Sensitivity** are pivotal in preparatory programmes for permit holders. Clear and concrete communication about expectations among the training, employer/trainer, and permit holders themselves is paramount.

This includes providing dedicated points of contact for candidates and offering intensive guidance and job coaching from the outset of the programme. Such an approach facilitates early identification of potential mismatches, ensuring efficient utilization of time and resources. Moreover, integrating cultural sensitivity into preparatory programmes acknowledges permit holders' cultural backgrounds and addresses potential barriers they may encounter in the learning and working environment. For detailed guidance on implementing culturally sensitive approaches, refer to relevant sections on [education-](#) and [employer](#) considerations.

**Monitoring and Evaluation** are essential for assessing the effectiveness of preparatory programmes and understanding their impact on participants' labour market inclusion. Systematically collecting feedback and continuously adapting programmes to evolving needs ensure ongoing improvement and relevance. Despite efforts to adequately prepare participants, managing expectations remains a challenge. Some may be surprised by the programme's duration or intensity at its outset, despite attending informative sessions. Hence, maintaining continuous and transparent communication is crucial to mitigate surprises and misunderstandings throughout the programme.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN PREPARATORY PHASE

### 1. DEVELOPMENT OF PREPARATORY PHASE:

- **The employer, director, language training provider, and expertise partners** collaboratively develop a preparatory phase that caters to the varying language proficiencies of permit holders and seamlessly integrates with civic integration programmes. The emphasis lies in crafting customized programmes that encompass specialized vocabulary and hands-on learning experiences.

### 2. FLEXIBLE LEARNING AND WORKING HOURS:

- **Employer, director, and (language) trainer provider** offer flexible working and learning hours, including and if necessary, evening classes or part-time options to enable permit holders to combine their civic integration courses with work-study programmes.

### 3. ALIGNMENT INTEGRATION AND WORK:

- All **involved parties** collaborate to synchronize language instruction with work-study programmes. This involves designing integrated curricula that intertwine Dutch language instruction with subject-specific theory and practical training, emphasizing directly applicable skills in the workplace. Consideration should be given to providing exemptions within civic integration requirements, where feasible, to facilitate permit holders' transition from learning to working. Though labour-intensive, this approach ensures sustainability.
- **Employers** ensure a seamless alignment between the educational and occupational components of the programme by: (a) Identifying skill sets and competencies conducive to development during the work-study programme, directly relevant to the work environment, and (b) Offering experiential learning opportunities that reinforce theoretical understanding and vice versa.

### 4. DEPLOYMENT OF JOB COACHES & MENTOR:

- **Employers** assign a buddy (mentor), while intermediaries provide an external job coach from the outset of the preparatory phase to offer personalized guidance, support with challenges, and post-programme aftercare. Even if the buddy shares the same ethnic background as the participant, this arrangement fosters a supportive environment and aids gradual improvement in Dutch language skills. This proactive approach mitigates dropouts and ensures successful integration into the work-study programme.

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## 5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION:

- **All parties involved** conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of the preparatory programmes to gauge effectiveness and solicit feedback for continuous enhancement. Emphasis should be placed on participants' labour market integration and the advancement of their language proficiency and vocational knowledge.

## 6. COOPERATION AND COMMUNICATION:

- **All involved parties** foster active collaboration and communication among stakeholders, including permit holders, throughout the process. This cultivates a shared understanding of goals, expectations, and participants' progress.
- **Employers** designate a *dedicated* project leader fully committed to overseeing the programme. This individual serves as the central point of contact for all involved parties, ensuring seamless coordination and implementation of all programme aspects. It's crucial to acknowledge that managing such a programme requires dedicated time and attention.
- **Directors** strive to reduce reliance on individual project leaders, whose departure may jeopardize the programme. Developing strategies to minimize dependency on individuals is imperative, and proactive measures should be explored in advance to safeguard programme continuity.

## 7. CREATING SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYMENT:

- **Employers** contemplate offering sustainable employment opportunities to participating permit holders upon programme completion by adopting a long-term perspective on their integration within the organization. Mapping out career prospects and pathways available to permit holders post successful work-study programme completion is essential for fostering sustainable employment.



Photo: Adobe Stock

## EDUCATIONAL COMPONENT

The core principle underpinning the establishment of a work-study programme is the seamless integration of language acquisition, education, and practical work experience into a unified framework, where these elements complement and reinforce each other rather than existing in isolation. To achieve this, it's imperative that all facets of the programme are intricately interconnected. Thus, if feasible, it is recommended to centralize all programme components in the same physical location. This fosters clarity for participants and facilitates collaboration and coordination among instructors and trainers. Furthermore, close collaboration with employers is paramount for programmes success. Upholding integrity necessitates ongoing reflection and learning opportunities throughout the programme's implementation.

### TRANSITIEHUIS: **RECRUITMENT, EDUCATION, AND EMPLOYMENT UNDER ONE ROOF**

At Transitiehuis recruitment, education, and employment all take place under one roof. This model emphasizes the importance of an integrated approach, where language acquisition, education, and work experience seamlessly come together. By organizing all aspects of the programme at the same location, a solid foundation is created for participants. This not only promotes collaboration and coordination between teachers and trainers but also ensures closer involvement of employers, which is essential for the success of the programme. By guaranteeing integrity, continuous learning moments and opportunities for reflection arise throughout the execution of the programme.

For the educational component, Transitiehuis assists candidates with their school assignments, ensuring seamless alignment between theoretical coursework and practical application. This synergy is enhanced by the consolidated setting where both learning and working occur under one roof.

### Here are some **key highlights**:

**Personal Guidance:** Individualized attention and support are pivotal for fostering a sense of belonging and bolstering participants' self-assurance. Small group sizes facilitate this personalized approach and cultivate a climate of trust where participants feel comfortable discussing various aspects of their lives and receiving comprehensive support. Encouraging the provision of a language buddy for candidates embarking on the work-study programme is highly recommended. This additional support not only aids in language acquisition but also promotes the integration of language skills into daily workplace interactions.

**Development of Professional Language:** Crafting professional language skills necessitates a sector-specific approach tailored to the demands of the construction sector, where participants will be employed. Integrating professional language training into both language and practical lessons enhances its relevance, thereby facilitating effective learning and application in real-world scenarios. However, initiating programmes with groups smaller than 10 individuals can pose logistical and regulatory challenges, particularly for municipalities. Addressing the diverse needs of participants presents a significant hurdle, particularly for educators and Dutch as a Second Language (NT2) instructors. Hence, it is essential to maintain realistic expectations when evaluating programme outcomes, recognizing that individual achievements may vary.

**Alignment between Language, Theory and Practice:** Integrating professional language and employability skills into language and practical lessons promotes the effectiveness of the learning process. By discussing vocational topics in language classes and then practicing them in real-life situations during work-study programmes or work experience placements, professional language becomes better anchored. Aligning integration obligations with work-study programmes is an additional strategy that emphasizes the integrity of the programme. It is important to ensure a seamless connection between theoretical education and practical experiences, specifically focusing on the tasks that permit holders will ultimately perform. This increases the relevance and effectiveness of the training programme.

**Cultural Orientation and Work Culture:** In work-study programmes, the focus should not only be on improving language proficiency but also on understanding and appreciating cultural differences and Dutch work culture. A language training provider or expertise partner organization

such as Language Partners/BBi Communication can support candidates with specific teaching methods and materials to understand and apply professional language, sector-specific cultural norms, and work culture. By using practical examples and audio-visual materials, participants can be trained in effective workplace communication, including bridging cultural differences. Integration of a module for cultural orientation and work culture is crucial for permit holders not only to acquire language and professional skills but also to navigate effectively within the Dutch work culture, thereby increasing their chances of success in the job market.

**Available Budget and Language Training:** Adequate budget is an essential success factor for work-study programmes. Specific attention should be paid to financing language training, as language proficiency plays a significant role in successful integration in the workplace.

**Flexible Learning Programmes and Certification:** Developing flexible learning programmes leading to certifications or partial certificates is important, allowing permit holders to gradually build their qualifications while also entering the job market. Many candidates focus on obtaining a diploma, but this can sometimes overshadow the ultimate goal. For example, some candidates may neglect practical components because they are focused on studying for their theoretical exams. Therefore, many prefer a practical learning route. This is particularly relevant given the challenge many permit holders face: they may excel in the practical part of a MBO 2 (Intermediate Vocational Education) but struggle with the theoretical part. Ultimately, candidates place great value on obtaining a certificate, both for their self-esteem and to demonstrate their skills. The market does not demand a full diploma, and this is not expected in the future.

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN EDUCATIONAL COMPONENT

### 1. DEVELOP AND FLEXIBLE TRAINING METHODS:

- **Training providers** and **language training providers** offer flexible training models, such as, for example, 'pressure cooker'<sup>13</sup> programmes that provide quick and targeted training to the required skills, which can be particularly effective for permit holders. An example of such a 'pressure cooker' route is the "Fast Track to Construction" programme offered by Building Pathways, which trains permit holders to become construction professionals in a short period of time. This approach not only provides faster access to the labour market but also meets the need for quick job and income prospects.
- The **training provider** supports permit holders in obtaining practical certificates that recognize the skills they have acquired during the work-study programme and are valuable to potential employers.

<sup>13</sup> An example of a pressure cooker programme relevant to the construction sector could be an intensive training programme focused on teaching specific skills needed in construction. This programme could, for instance, include: (a) Intensive training sessions where refugees are quickly and efficiently trained in basic construction skills such as carpentry, masonry, electrical work, or plumbing, (b) Practical workshops where participants gain hands-on experience with tools and techniques commonly used in the construction industry, (c) Guidance by experienced professionals who support refugees in acquiring the skills and prepare them for working in construction.

## 2. PERSONAL GUIDANCE AND A BUDDY:

- The **(language) training provider** works with small groups to create a safe environment and facilitate a bond of trust.
- The **training provider** pairs the permit holder with a buddy/mentor, who provides support in integrating language skills into daily practice in the workplace.

## 3. ALIGNMENT BETWEEN LANGUAGE, THEORY AND PRACTICE:

- The **language training provider, training provider** and **employer** ensure regular coordination between language, theory and practice lessons to ensure that the subject language and learning is effectively integrated and applied in practice. This includes considering possible exemptions in language during integration. With a view to certification being widely recognized, it is important to link the target group as much as possible to regular education, such as BBL courses<sup>14</sup>, partial certificates from the MBO (Vocational Education) or practical certificates.
- The **training provider** creates a hands-on learning environment, including simulations and practical assignments that closely match real-world working conditions. This helps bridge the gap between theory and practice and ensures better preparation for the workplace.
- The **director** facilitates regular evaluation sessions where permit holders can give feedback on how well they understand and apply the professional language in practice, and where any adjustments to the learning programme can be discussed.

## 4. DEVELOPING VOCATIONAL LANGUAGE:

- The **language training provider** provides the permit holder with vocational language, covering specific concepts, abbreviations and words relevant to the relevant sector or company.
- The **director** and the **language trainer** organize regular interactive sessions in which participants practice using vocabulary in various practical situations, such as having conversations with colleagues and clients.

## 5. INSTRUCTION AND (INTER)CULTURAL DIFFERENCES:

- The **(language) training provider** and an **expertise partner** offer specific training to help permit holders understand work instructions, including how to respond to questions and ask for help, and learn intercultural skills.

## 6. AVAILABLE BUDGET AND LANGUAGE TRAINING:

- The **director, employer** and **language training provider** work together to secure sufficient resources for language training, as language skills are crucial for success in the workplace.
- The **language training provider** prepares a detailed training plan that fits within the available budget and meets the specific needs of the participants, such as additional language lessons or individual coaching.

### PRACTICAL WORKBOOK: LANGUAGE FOR CONSTRUCTION

Non-native speakers encounter additional challenges: they frequently lack proficiency in the language and are unfamiliar with the names of tools and materials in Dutch. Misunderstandings arising from this can lead to inconvenient and, at times, hazardous situations. To address this, we offer the practical workbook "Language for Construction", designed to help employees swiftly and effectively overcome these hurdles. The workbook focuses on acquiring the extensive vocabulary necessary for daily work tasks.

<https://bouwmensen.nl/praktijkwerkboek/>



<sup>14</sup> An apprenticeship (BBL) is different from a regular school-based vocational education (BOL). In an apprenticeship, you spend a lot of time working and occasionally attend school. This means you learn even more from practical experience, which you gain at an accredited training company.





Photo: Transitiehuis Gelderland

## EMPLOYER COMPONENT

This section of the guideline, focuses on the pivotal role of employers within work-study programmes. Employers are instrumental in providing opportunities to permit holders and fostering an inclusive and supportive work environment. By partnering with work-study programmes, employers not only facilitate the labour market integration of permit holders but also tap into a diverse and motivated talent pool.

Below are **key strategies** to help employers effectively leverage work-study programmes for permit holders.

**Commitment from Company Top:** Strong commitment from top management is crucial for the success of a work-study programme. This support ensures widespread acceptance of the programme within the organization and provides necessary resources for its success. Convincing managers of the programme's benefits and involving them in its implementation can increase their engagement and contribute to its success.

**Specialized Language on the Work Floor:** Language proficiency, especially in specialized terms, is essential for effective communication in the workplace. Employers can support the language development of permit holders by integrating language lessons into the work environment. Learning the language in a work context accelerates language acquisition and increases the likelihood of full-time employment. Additionally,

mastering specialized language enhances communication and collaboration among employees. Integrating language lessons into daily work activities makes learning practical and enjoyable, boosting employee motivation and engagement.

**Job Carving:** Implementing job carving enables employers to focus on candidates' abilities and potentials rather than rigid job profiles. Job carving involves increasing the flexibility of positions and deploying employees based on their available skills and resources. For instance, restructuring tasks within a team allows permit holders with diverse backgrounds and skills to be assigned to suitable positions. By tailoring positions to employees' talents, employers can foster an inclusive and adaptable work environment where everyone can maximize their potential.

**Workplace Guidance (mentor/buddy):** Employers should provide adequate support and guidance to permit holders throughout and after the work-study programme. Establishing a mentorship or buddy system can facilitate permit holders' smooth integration into the workplace and enhance the program's success rate. Involving experienced employees as mentors or buddies creates a supportive atmosphere where permit holders feel valued and empowered. For example, assigning senior employees or colleagues with similar backgrounds as mentors offers practical assistance and guidance to permit holders. By investing in guidance and support, employers enhance the well-being and performance of permit holders, contributing to their success in the labour market.

**Inclusive Learning Culture and Cultural Diversity in the Workplace:** Awareness of cultural diversity is crucial in fostering an inclusive workplace environment conducive to the successful integration of permit holders. Employers must acknowledge and accommodate the diverse backgrounds of permit holders in their workplace guidance and integration efforts. Providing intercultural training and workshops, such as those offered by expertise organizations such as [Language Partners/BBi Communication](#), equips employees with the skills to communicate effectively and embrace cultural diversity. By embracing cultural insights, employers cultivate a respectful and inclusive workplace environment where diversity is celebrated and leveraged.

**External Job Coach:** There are different perspectives on supervisors in the Netherlands, which are seen as superiors in hierarchical cultures. This can be problematic for permit holders from hierarchical cultures, as they are not used to speaking directly with their supervisor, but rather receiving orders from them. Engaging an external job coach is important for the personal guidance of permit holders in the workplace. An external coach provides a safe environment for permit holders to discuss their experiences and any issues they may encounter and can help bridge cultural differences between employees. By listening to the needs and challenges of permit holders, coaches can provide customized support that contributes to successful integration in the workplace. For example, employers can collaborate with expertise partners that provide external job coaches for permit holders, giving them access to professional guidance and support for their employees. The external coach also provides a safe space for permit holders to discuss issues that may be uncomfortable or involve cultural differences. This is crucial because permit holders are in a dependent position. Addressing these issues is crucial for a successful work-study programme. The external coach can ask questions that permit holders may not directly ask their colleagues or buddy/mentor within the company, such as: which colleagues are nice and which are not, and why? Which tasks do you like, and which do you not, and why? These small details can make the difference between success and failure in a permit holder's programme journey.

### 1. COMMITMENT FROM COMPANY TOP:

- The **employer** and initiator discuss the benefits of work-study programmes with the company top and obtain their strong commitment. The company top commits to creating broad support within the organization and sufficient support and resources for the pathway. Sharing success stories of similar programmes can help.
- The **employer** involves managers in the implementation and shows concrete results to increase their commitment.

### 2. PROFESSIONAL LANGUAGE IN THE WORKPLACE:

- The **employer** offers integrated workplace language lessons to promote language development of permit holders.
- The **employer** and the **language training provider** together integrate language lessons into the daily work process to create a practical and motivating learning experience.

### 3. JOB CARVING:

- The **employer** identifies the capabilities and potential of permit holders and restructures tasks within teams to assign permit holders with different backgrounds and skills to appropriate positions. The employer adapts jobs and entry levels based on employees' talents for an inclusive and flexible work environment.

### 4. WORKPLACE GUIDANCE (BUDDY):

- The **employer** implements a buddy system where preferably experienced employees or colleagues with similar backgrounds are assigned as **permit holders' buddies** to guide and support them in their inclusion in the workplace.

### 5. INCLUSIVE LEARNING CULTURE AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE:

- The **employer** raises awareness within the team and organization about cultural diversity and the differences between permit holders and other employees.
- **Employers** invest in intercultural training and workshops to enable employees to effectively communicate and deal with cultural diversity in the workplace. Employers are considering engaging expertise partners such as [Language Partners/BBi Communication](#) to provide intercultural training for managers and buddies for this purpose.
- Managers and **buddies** attend intercultural training and apply the insights from the training in their daily interactions with permit holders, in order to create an inclusive and harmonious working environment where diversity is valued and utilized.

### 6. EXTERNAL JOB COACH:

- The **employer** deploys an external job coach for personal guidance of permit holders. Because the job coach is external, the permit holder can also go to the job coach for matters that the employer does not have enough knowledge of and matters that are too confidential for the employer.
- The **employer** works with **expert organizations** to access professional guidance (external job coach) and support for employees.



Photo: Adobe Stock

## PLACEMENT & AFTERCARE

In this section of the guideline, the focus is on the placement and aftercare of permit holders after completing the work-study programme. Aftercare is crucial for ensuring sustainable employability and promoting long-term stability. Below are **key points** that contribute to successful placement and aftercare of permit holders.

**Aftercare aimed at Sustainable outflow:** Transitiehuis maintains strong ties with regional employers and remains in contact with candidates for several months following their employment commencement. Even if, upon assessment, a candidate is deemed unsuitable for the construction sector, Transitiehuis leverages its network to explore alternative opportunities outside the sector. Prioritizing long-term stability, Transitiehuis recognizes the limitations of short-term solutions like temporary agencies, which may result in candidates returning to Transitiehuis or relying on social assistance in the future. This approach emphasizes the significance of sustainable, enduring solutions over transient alternatives.

**Continued Support and Follow-Up:** After placement, Transitiehuis offers continuous support, emphasizing the significance of long-term stability over short-term solutions such as temporary employment. Following up with candidates for six months after their placement is crucial. It is recommended to have two contact moments during this period, where job coaches support permit holders and inform employers about their skills and needs.

### IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

#### PLACEMENT AND AFTERCARE

##### 1. MEDIATION TO WORK:

- The **intermediary** and/or **training provider** facilitates active mediation to suitable workplaces for permit holders who have completed the work-study programme. This includes providing employers with information on the permit holder's skills and qualifications, as well as supporting permit holders with job applications and integration at the new workplace.

##### 2. AFTERCARE AIMED AT SUSTAINABLE OUTFLOW:

- After completion of the work-study programme, the **intermediary** and/or **training provider** maintains contact with the permit holder for a period of at least several months, ideally six months. This contact includes job retention support and resolution of any problems that arise.



# ANNEXES

## ANNEX A.

### PROFESSIONS

#### **In traditional construction and renovation**

Insulators/Insulation installers (especially for retrofitting)

Carpenters

Floor layers

Roofers

Bricklayers

Glaziers

Air handling system/ventilation system installers

#### **In industrial/conceptual construction**

Operators, assembly workers

Carpenters in the factory

Carpenters, prefab assemblers on-site

#### **Installation and connection of solar panels on houses and buildings**

Solar panel installers (specific role)

Electricians/Electrical installers (broader role)

Electrical grid installers

Scaffolders

#### **Thermal energy storage**

Drillmasters

Source developers

#### **Installation of district heating networks/gas network modifications**

Gas pipeline installers/pipeline layers

District heating network installers

#### **In general infrastructure:**

Earthmoving machine operators/ground workers

Assistant workers in ground, road, and water construction

Pavers

#### **District heating networks**

Plumbers, installation/maintenance technicians for heating/cooling systems

#### **Heat pumps**

Underfloor heating installers (specific role)

Gas/water installers/pipeline layers

HVAC installers and refrigeration technicians

#### **Electric cooking**

Electricians/electrical installers

Kitchen installers

## CHECKLIST - MUTUAL ROLES, EXPECTATIONS, AND AGREEMENTS

The goal is to apply and sustain work-study programmes for permit holders in the construction sector to lead more permit holders to sustainable and suitable employment. How can this be formulated SMART (Specific, Measurable, Acceptable, Realistic, and Time-bound)?

### Objective

- ▶ **Is the goal formulated SMART (Specific, Measurable, Acceptable, Realistic, and Time-bound)?**
  - **Specific:** Is the goal clearly defined and understandable for all parties involved?
  - **Measurable:** Are there measurable indicators to determine the success of the goal?
  - **Acceptable:** Is the goal feasible and acceptable for all involved parties?
  - **Realistic:** Is the goal realistic within the given time and resources?
  - **Time-bound:** Is there a clear timeline set for achieving the goal?

### Parties and Responsibilities

- ▶ **Have the requirements and responsibilities of each involved party been established?**
  - Which parties are necessary to achieve the goal?
  - What roles do permit holders, employers, and training providers etc. have in the programme?
  - What is expected from each party in terms of expertise, time, and budget?

### Program Duration and Costs

- ▶ **Is the duration of the program determined?**
  - How long does each phase of the program last (in months)?
- ▶ **Have the estimated costs of the program been determined?**
  - What are the expected costs for the employer and other involved parties? Analyse the costs and benefits for employers participating in the work-study program, including investments, potential benefits, and return on investments.
  - What are the potential returns and benefits of the program?

### Canvas Roles

- ▶ **For topics 1-6, have all three questions been answered?**
  - Which parties are needed for this?
  - How long does this take (months)?
  - How much does this cost?

## TOPICS

1. **(Language) Support:**
  - a. What does the permit holder expect and is this realistic?
  - b. Is there a language barrier and if so, how can it be overcome?
2. **Additional Support:**
  - a. How is adequate support ensured throughout the entire programme? Setting up a safety net is crucial to support and guide candidates throughout the entire programme.
  - b. Is a buddy assigned to the candidates?
3. **Recruitment & Selection:**
  - a. Are the criteria for participation in the programme clearly defined?
  - b. How is the awareness of the programme increased to promote enrolment? For example, making the programme known to municipalities and work-study centres? As long as it is unclear to job matchers what the initiative entails, it is difficult for them to place candidates. Easy access to programmes, such as through community centres and language cafes, is important.
  - c. Is there an opportunity for job carving of a position?
4. **Preparatory phase work-study programmes:**
  - a. How is the work-study programme combined with the civic integration? See for this the chapter on the preparatory phase work-study programmes
5. **Learning and working component:**
  - a. What are the potential benefits for the candidate, such as practical certificates or certifications?
  - b. What are the options for a language coach and an external coach?
  - c. Who is appointed as a dedicated project manager who fully commits to the programme? This person serves as the point of contact for all involved parties and ensures that all aspects of the programme are well-coordinated and executed. A project manager cannot simply do such a programme alongside their regular duties. It really requires time and attention.
6. **Matching and Placement**
  - a. How is the right match between candidates and employers made?

Refer to the pecially developed canvas, for a clear overview of the key components to set up a work-study programme for permit holders.



**CHECKLIST LIFE-STAGE-CONSCIOUS INTAKE:****Ask open-ended questions to explore the following aspects:**

- **Identity:** Who is the candidate and what are his/her background and interests?
- **Motivation:** 'What do I want?' What drives the candidate and what goals does he/she have?
- **Capabilities:** 'What can I do?' What are the skills and strengths of the candidate?
- **Work Experience:** What experience does the candidate have and how can it be utilized?
- **Talents and Competencies:** What are the unique talents and skills of the candidate? Especially for the target group of permit holders, such a dynamic intake is important because it is extra difficult for them to identify their talents and motives. This is mainly due to language barriers but also due to cultural differences, lower confidence, and the fact that permit holders have had to flee.
- **Education:** What diplomas has the candidate obtained and what skills have been acquired with them? Keep in mind that emphasizing certified skills ignores valuable work experiences. Not valuing previous work experiences hinders permit holders' access to the job market. Employers should not focus on minimal certification requirements but should focus on developing and guiding permit holders and helping them towards certification.
- **Learning and Working Style:** How does the candidate prefer to learn and work?
- **Social Network:** What contacts and support networks does the candidate have?
- **Home Situation:** What are the circumstances and any obligations of the candidate outside of work? Furthermore, the underlying theory about life phases enables the interviewer to better understand the permit holder. The theory is that job seekers are in different life phases, and each life phase brings different needs to work. A permit holder often shifts life phases due to having to flee. For example, someone may have built a successful career in their country of origin, but then they will have to start over in the Netherlands. Permit holders often find this difficult. By addressing their learning and work needs and by offering them perspective, this can relieve them.
- **Income:** What are the financial needs and expectations of the candidate?

**► Cultural Sensitivity and Language Barriers:**

- Show understanding for any language and cultural differences and provide support if necessary, such as interpreters or informational material in different languages.
- Take the time to help clarify and understand any uncertainties the candidate may have.
- For permit holders, it is important to consider cultural differences and language barriers during the selection process. By using interpreters and providing information in different languages, these obstacles can be reduced, promoting an inclusive selection process.

**► Providing Perspective:**

- Discuss the opportunities for growth and development within the program and offer long-term perspective.
- Emphasize how the program can help achieve the candidate's goals and aspirations.

**► Flexibility and Empathy:**

- Be flexible in adapting the program to the needs and circumstances of the candidate. This also includes combining the work-study program with integration classes.
- Show empathy and understanding for any challenges the candidate may face.

### PRECONDITIONS

#### Preconditions

The following conditions that have been established are considered necessary for the approach of Transitiehuis Gelderland to succeed.

#### Keep the goal in mind

The goal is to let the participant discover for themselves what direction their career is heading and to shape it accordingly. Providing guidance, clarity, honesty, sincerity, and time are decisive factors.

#### Non-judgmental listening

The quality of the approach depends on these listening skills. The success of the approach hinges on them and they are therefore crucial. Mastering these skills is a requirement.

#### Structure is being able to let go of structure

Each participant has a unique story which also results in diversity in the approach. Being flexible with the structure of the approach is therefore important. This means that the components and tools of the approach should be available when they can be effectively utilized. Recognizing when this is possible is therefore an important skill.

#### **The structure that is always present is as follows:**

- Current situation
- Desired situation
- Obstacles
- Resources

#### **Conditions that are not normally considered, but should be discussed:**

- Access to a driver's license
- Access to a bicycle
- Transportation
- Childcare or babysitting services available
- Digital skills
- Any other conditions necessary for the specific work-study program



