

# Centre for Local Economies (CLES) - Community wealth building summer project 2026

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## PROJECT OVERVIEW

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The successful applicant will undertake a fellowship that offers insight into the operations of an independent think and do tank specialising in policy, insight, transformation, and strategy. This will involve addressing issues of national, regional, and local importance. The fellow will contribute to a project aimed at generating tangible outcomes.

The specific project will be tailored to the fellow's skills and interests. General tasks may include:

- Formulating a precise research question with accessible data.
- Collaborating with the CLES team to pinpoint pertinent data sources and enhance existing literature reviews.
- Conducting primary and secondary research to compile relevant datasets.
- Analysing collected data to derive insights and conclusions.

Types of data analysis at CLES:

- Descriptive statistics (e.g. wealth and income inequalities).
- Mapping the economy (e.g. regional GVA, employment) .
- Spend analysis (e.g. local authority procurement spend).
- Dashboards (e.g. showing wealth inequality by region).

Data sources:

- Anchor data (e.g. NHS Trusts, local/combined authorities).
- Firm level data (e.g. SMEs, social enterprises).
- ONS – e.g., employment statistics.

Note: Although this is a quantitative role, there are mixed method elements, and it is expected that there will be some qualitative work involved too.

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## PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

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### Organisation and Team

Research and Analysis



### Working Arrangement

Hybrid



### Selection Method

Interviews will be held online  
(via Microsoft Teams)

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## SUPPORT AND TRAINING

- The fellow will be allocated a dedicated line manager or mentor who will provide ongoing guidance, support, and feedback throughout their fellowship. This individual will serve as a reliable point of contact for addressing questions, concerns, and professional development needs.
- CLES will ensure the fellow's full integration into the team dynamics by including them in relevant meetings, discussions, and events.
- The fellow will be actively encouraged to participate in both internal and external events relevant to their role and interests. Additionally, they will have continued access to CLES training sessions conducted throughout the fellowship period.
- CLES offers additional financial assistance in the form of in-kind support, primarily focusing on IT equipment provision. This ensures that fellows have access to necessary tools and resources to effectively carry out their duties.

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## APPLICATION CRITERIA

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### ESSENTIAL

- Proficiency in the analysis of quantitative data arising from multiple sources of insight.
- Advanced Microsoft Excel skills.

### DESIRABLE

- An interest in putting theory into practice, and applying learning to a real-world problem.
- An interest in regional and local governance and policy-making.
- Knowledge of data analytics and visualization tools such as SQL, R, Python, Power BI.

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## MORE ABOUT CLES

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CLES is the organisation for local economies. Established in 1986, we are a Manchester-based think-tank, with charitable status. Our work focuses on inclusive local economic development and includes events, workshops, training, research and economic analysis. We work with people across the UK, Ireland and beyond, including national governments, councils, the third sector, health organisations and many other partners. We have an international reputation for our pioneering work on community wealth building and are the lead organisation for the movement in the UK. We act as a critical friend to local economies, by working with the economic actors in places to bring them together, connect them to progressive agendas, devise solutions and deliver change. This practice-based research also enables us to advocate for change to national debates.

We do this by: building progressive coalitions; amplifying innovative local economic approaches; and stimulating governments of all scales to enable local economies to reach their full potential.

Find out more about CLES's mission, values, aims and objectives at <http://www.cles.org.uk>.

In order for applicants to familiarise themselves with CLES, we recommend reviewing the following publications. While comprehensive reading is not required, we encourage applicants to peruse the list ahead of the interview:

On community wealth building:

- [The story in Preston](#)
- [The history of CWB more generally](#)
- [Impact](#)
- [CWB in Scotland](#)

For some short snappy opinion pieces:

- [Economic growth](#)
- [Local economic change](#)
- [Levelling-up](#)
- [Community power](#)

Longer pieces:

- [A light in the dark](#)
- [Healthy places](#)
- [A roadmap to decarbonisation](#)