

HILS SOCIAL ENTERPRISE GRADUATE SCHEME

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the HILS Social Enterprise Graduate Scheme?

HILS has developed a one-year Graduate Scheme which is aimed at encouraging capable graduates into the social enterprise sector, by providing a year of intense skill development, training, and experience. We believe the social enterprise sector is a really interesting and exciting place to learn, to grow, and to work. As a business, we have many team members who have benefitted from the opportunity to develop personally and professionally in a growing social enterprise, and we would like to extend this opportunity to passionate and intelligent graduates who want a career that makes a difference.

What will Graduate Management Trainees get from HILS?

Impact:

You'll be able to go home every day knowing that your work has meaning and that you're making a difference. Your work will contribute to serving clients and supporting them to stay happy, healthy, and independent at home.

Training and development:

You'll do a mixture of formal and informal training throughout your twelve months on the scheme. You'll join other organisations for joint training sessions, do some shadowing and learning by experience, as well as attending training with other HILS team members. And if you have any specific personal development needs, we'll take those into account and try to find an opportunity that's right for you.

Variety:

HILS has project work opportunities across all areas of the business. You'll be exposed to support functions such as finance, human resources, facilities, IT, and legal, as well as our operational services supporting clients. Being successful in business means having an understanding of all of these areas – learn quickly by getting involved.

Hands-on experience:

Shadow our services to see how they work on the ground, understand what makes them tick, and work with teams to implement improvements. Work directly with operational teams and managers to take your project from idea right through to business as usual. Sort out pain points in infrastructure and processes, to improve the way the business runs.

Sector knowledge:

Attend conferences and meetings with members of the Executive Team, or as a representative of HILS. Meet key players from across the health, social care, and social enterprise sectors and get an understanding of the bigger picture. Take the opportunity to see the inner workings of local government, the NHS, other social enterprises and charities, and business.

Support:

We know that starting something new can be daunting, so you'll have support to transition into the business and into a leadership role. As well as your line manager (who will set your objectives, manage your workload, and support your development), you'll have a buddy and a mentor. Your buddy will be a member of the HILS team and will help you to navigate the business

and feel settled within the team. Your mentor will be a member of HILS' Board (or someone of equal experience and seniority) and will help you to think about your personal development and growth, and your career aspirations. HILS' Board is made up of ten impressive volunteers who have senior roles within high-profile organisations such as Clifford Chance, EY, and the London Stock Exchange Group.

What do I need to be eligible for the scheme?

You need a 2:1 degree, or equivalent qualification, in any subject. As HILS works with vulnerable adults you will also need to have a satisfactory DBS check (HILS will pay for this, and it will be processed by HILS as soon as an offer of employment is made, and the successful candidate has provided the relevant paperwork). You will need the right to work in the UK and we cannot accept applicants who do not already have this in place at the time of their application. For a full list of essential and desirable job requirements, please see the Job Description. There is no age limit for the scheme.

Why is there only one place on the scheme?

We feel that it's important to offer the right level of support and resources to the person joining us. Secondly, the scheme needs to be proportionate to the size of our business and the number of appropriate roles available in our business for Graduate Management Trainees to progress to after the scheme. Also, we aim to develop and recruit staff in a number of different ways, as this makes our business stronger. Staff will come to management positions from a number of different routes, including working their way up through the company via our internal talent pool, and moving to HILS after working elsewhere. The scheme is not intended to be the only route into management roles in the company.

What sort of people will get a place on the scheme?

We expect that all sorts of people could get a place on the scheme. What they will need to have in common are key competencies, including resilience, personal qualities, and strengths that fit with the needs of the business. Above all else our successful applicants will need to understand and empathise with the values of the business, have a desire to support the provision of excellent services to our clients, and aspire to lead.

Will I obtain any formal qualifications?

You'll do a mixture of formal and informal training throughout your twelve months on the scheme. We anticipate (subject to availability) that this may include courses in areas such as social impact, leadership, project management, time management, stress management, and chairing and facilitating meetings. Training may be self-paced or externally-paced, online or in-person.

All courses and training opportunities will be developed and shaped around the needs of the individual Graduate Management Trainee and their work with HILS.

Do I need management experience?

No, the scheme is designed to develop your leadership skills. However, if you already have significant management experience, then you may find that the scheme is not suitable for you. Please visit our website for other career opportunities.

Are current HILS employees eligible for the scheme?

If all the standard relevant eligibility criteria are met, then yes.

What happens after the 12 months are finished?

We can't guarantee you a job at the end of the 12 months, but that also means you're not tied down. As a fast-moving, growing business we're confident that there will be opportunities for you to stay with HILS in a management role after the scheme. We have run the scheme several times and all our previous Graduate Management Trainees have gone on to have a permanent role in the organisation. Over the 12 months, you've got the opportunity to prove yourself and show us that you've got what it takes to progress quickly into management.

What is the recruitment process for the scheme?

1. Application form

This will provide the recruitment team with an initial indication of your suitability for the scheme and ensure that you meet our basic criteria.

The application form deadline for the 2025 intake is Sunday 21st September at 11:59pm.

2. Short telephone interview

This will provide the recruitment team with more details about your suitability for the scheme and give you the opportunity to ask more questions about the scheme.

The telephone interviews for the 2025 intake will be conducted in the weeks commencing 22nd and 29th September.

3. Assessment day

This will be a day of activities which are designed to test your suitability for the scheme and will also give you an insight into some of the responsibilities and challenges you would face on the scheme. The day will involve: an interview with our senior managers; a presentation (which we will ask you to prepare in advance); a situational judgement test; written activities; and other activities designed to test different role requirements. There will also be an opportunity to learn more about the business, to meet the Senior Team, to speak with current team members, and to try some of our delicious 'meals on wheels' food!

The assessment day for the 2025 intake will be Wednesday 15th October.