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# Improving the employment prospects of blind and partially sighted people

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supporting blind and  
partially sighted people

# Workshop overview

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## **This workshop will:**

- **Summarise the current employment picture for blind and partially sighted people**
- **Lead an interactive session on the key factors that consider the barriers to employment facing blind and partially sighted people**
- **Present RNIB Group's latest attempt to improve this situation, through the ENABLER project.**
- **Lead a Q&A discussion with a blind and partially sighted job seeker, and an RNIB employment advisor**

# ENABLER Project: Collaboration and aim

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- **A three-year research project funded by Big Lottery (BIG) which seeks to improve the employment opportunities of blind and partially sighted job seekers.**
- **Carried out by RNIB, Action for Blind People (Action) and the Visual Impairment Centre for Teaching and Research (VICTAR) at the University of Birmingham.**
- **To draw on the experience and expertise of Action for Blind People and RNIB employment co-ordinators (ECs) and clients to develop a means of ‘classifying’ blind and partially sighted job seekers according to their distance from the job market.**

# ENABLER Project: Research questions

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- 1. Is there a segmentation model to support the understanding of the needs and barriers of blind and partially sighted people?**
- 2. How can we assess unemployed blind and partially sighted people in a way that identifies individual barriers and highlights potential support needs that will move people closer to their employment potential?**
- 3. What are the most appropriate interventions that can support this journey?**
- 4. Will this wider understanding and the development of targeted interventions enable us to support more blind and partially sighted people move closer or into the open labour market?**

# ENABLER Project: Methods and activities

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- **Phase One: Development of a screening tool and trial involving 60 participants and their employment coordinators, drawing on a range of methods including focus group, discussions and telephone interviews.**
- **Phase Two: Refining of assessment toolkit and testing a variety of innovative support options through case study work with 14 clients furthest from the labour market over 8 months in England and Scotland**
  - **To capture experiences of interventions with clients to validate the segmentation model and screen tool**
  - **To find out how the interventions tell us about the enablers and barriers to moving these clients closer to the labour market**

# ENABLER Project: Assessment toolkit model

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- **Time bound**
- **Initial interview**
- **Quick snapshot**
- **Questions framed to give 1-6 answer**
- **Score, which could be translated**
- **'Action research' - a toolkit the ECs could use**
- **Still in development**
- **Now in 2nd major research cycle**
- **Testing innovative support options for people a long way from employment**
- **Ruth and Glenn...**