

Invitation to Tender

Liverpool City Region Local Growth Hub Broker Partners

Growth Platform

Growth Platform is Liverpool City Region's economic enabler, designed to support people and businesses to realise their potential and generate growth. Our role is to strengthen and simplify our regional ecosystem, creating a sustainable economy that reflects the needs of all our business community across Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral. We exist to enable change and growth that makes our economy work for everyone; to provide guidance, inspiration and support for businesses, create opportunities for growth and foster resilience. www.growthplatform.org

Local Growth Hub

Through Growth Platform, we deliver a business support service known locally as 'Local Growth Hub'. The Local Growth Hub service, funded by The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) was established in 2016. Its aim is to unlock barriers to business support and guidance across the Liverpool City Region by increasing the awareness of the public and private sector support available to entrepreneurs, SMEs and scale up companies.

The Local Growth Hub Service is managed by Growth Platform and delivered through a network of area-based brokerage partners. Through these partners, businesses have access to face to face business diagnostic, brokerage and advice and mentoring, making access to support simpler and more joined up.

Requirement

Growth Platform wishes to engage Brokerage Partners covering each of the 6 Local Authority areas of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral. In addition, we are seeking a specialist broker to engage harder to reach groups including women, BAME groups and social economy businesses across the City Region. Therefore, there are a total of 7 'Lots' that suppliers can bid for;

- Lot 1 Halton
- Lot 2 Knowsley
- Lot 3 Liverpool
- Lot 4 Sefton
- Lot 5 St Helens
- Lot 6 Wirral
- Lot 7 Harder to Reach Groups

Local Growth Hub Brokerage Partners have become the primary access point for signposting and brokerage to a wide range of local and national business support services & programmes. The Growth Platform [website](#) is kept up to date with these service & programmes and should be used as a resource by Local Growth Hub Broker Partners.

The focus for the Local Growth Hub Partner delivery for 2022 – 23 is to provide the offer below to ensure network consistency and maintain the Growth Hub guiding principles:

- Provide all businesses across the LCR with access to advice and support via a free, impartial single point of contact
- Offer a [light touch](#) triage, [medium intensity](#) diagnostic and signposting service to ensure that all businesses, no matter their size or sector, can discover what support is available to them
- Refer into Growth Platform Programmes such as the High Growth ERDF Programme, New Markets 2, Gather provision, Finance Hub etc.
- Link to and promote Growth Platform, local and national business support provision, from the public, private and third sector
- Collaboration with local delivery and brokerage partners
- Marketing of the Local Growth Hub and its services
- Maintain accurate and comprehensive records on the Growth Platform CRM Portal in 'real time'
- Provide Growth Platform with ad hoc intelligence on new and emerging economic opportunities and shocks (see also below on Regional Intelligence Gathering)

The above will be delivered under 2 levels of interventions, detailed below.

Light touch (< 1 hour)– transactional interactions with Local Growth Hub Brokerage Partners which do not consume significant dedicated resource. Examples:

- telephone enquiries and basic signposting
- face-to-face appointments (involving very light-touch diagnostics and/or triage)
- web-based interactions (e.g. contact form, user registration to members area, use of live chat, online diagnostic tools, message through social media) Only interactive actions should be counted – not passive actions like web page views
- Attendance at Growth Platform organised events, festivals, conferences or pop-ups etc. (NB these are large events that deliver high-level information around business support/advice options. They are not more intensive workshops.)
- Other contact medium not listed above

Medium intensity – interactions which use moderate resource (approximately 1-hour plus) and which broadly aligns with the point in the customer journey at which Growth Platform start collecting basic firm-level data. Examples:

- business diagnostic with a broker; business attendance at a support workshop (diagnostic will be provided by Growth Platform. Suppliers wishing to use their own will need prior authorisation from Growth Platform)
- referral to business support schemes and programmes (local and national). This should be an informed brokerage and introduction to the appropriate business support service

The supplier will be expected to perform a light touch diagnostic with companies which will then allow them to effectively signpost and broker and introduce the businesses into the most appropriate support available. It is the responsibility of the supplier to ensure they have sufficient knowledge of the business support landscape.

A Business Satisfaction Survey will be sent out after each business interaction to enable Growth Platform to assess and ensure the quality of the support being offered through our Local Growth Hub Brokerage Partners.

The supplier is required to use the Growth Platform CRM Portal to record all business interactions and engagements. This must be done in real time, as the numeric data is regularly used to report to BEIS to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Local Growth Hub Service and utilised by Growth Platform, Local Authority partners, and Liverpool City Region Combined Authority to monitor performance, impact and to inform future funding priorities.

If suppliers directly deliver services to businesses, they must ensure that these services have been considered equally alongside other support services on offer. Business must always be signposted and brokered into the most appropriate service for their needs. This is crucial to the continued success of the Local Growth Hub Service.

Suppliers are required to comply with the Local Growth Hub Broker Partner Handbook. The Handbook will specify standards required of the supplier, operating protocols, use of diagnostic tools and marketing requirements, including the use of Growth Platform, Local Growth Hub Service and ESIF branding, websites and communications and information uploads to Growth Platform and Local Growth Hub Service website.

Growth Platform CRM Portal

Growth Platforms CRM system is utilised by almost 200 users across the LCR. The system is used to record all business interactions and activity to help delivery organisations to better tailor business support and furnishes Growth Platform with greater intelligence to aid the development of future support programmes. This data will be key to evidencing impact when applying for funds post ERDF to ensure we can continue to offer LCR businesses with effective support.

The CRM portal sits outside of the main CRM system and enables partners to add information to the CRM without having full access to the system and its data. The Portal is a secure web-based system that can be accessed remotely. The portal will enable a search of business data in the system and the facility to add information and run reports to aid delivery.

There are minimum company and contact information requirements, and these will be mandatory within the system. Such as; contact details, company name, company registration number, company VAT number, number of employees, company turnover.

Full training and support will be given to partners.

Diagnostics will be paper based but will need to be uploaded to the portal to count towards deliverable targets. We are currently looking into the possibility of moving to an online diagnostic tool in the future.

Deliverables

The following deliverables are required from each lot between 16th May 2022 and 31st March 2023. These will be profiled across 4 periods as set out below.

Outputs

Output		P1 16/05/22 – 30/06/22	P2 01/07/22 – 30/09/22	P3 01/10/22 – 31/12/22	P4 01/01/23 – 31/03/23	Total
1	Number of unique businesses receiving light touch intervention	40	70	70	70	250
2	Number of unique businesses receiving medium intensity intervention	15	25	25	25	90
3	Number of unique businesses referred into Growth Platform Programmes	2	6	6	6	20

Numeric deliverables will be monitored purely through the CRM system and will be used to report to BEIS, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, Local Government, Local Authorities, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and Growth Platform.

Performance Management

Outputs will be monitored solely through suppliers' comprehensive input to the CRM portal. Suppliers are expected to attend monthly Partner meetings with Growth Platform and other partners to discuss progress, issues and share best practice.

Should recorded performance be lower than set out in Section 5 (Deliverables) we will work with the supplier to put remedial actions in place. Should these be unsuccessful we would then look to escalate the issues to the suppliers Strategic Lead through Growth Platforms Managing Director.

We reserve the right to withhold payment or terminate contract early in the event that underperformance continues longer than 3 months after commencement remedial intervention.

Project Lead

Suppliers must nominate a Project Lead for the contract. This person will be responsible for the day-to-day delivery of the contract, the delivery of outputs and Data Protection compliance relating to their delivery. All Growth Platform contact, and correspondence will be directed through the Project Lead, and it will be their responsibility to ensure the dissemination of any information throughout their organisation and any sub-contractors.

Strategic Lead

Suppliers will need to nominate a Strategic Lead. This person will have overall responsibility for the delivery of the contract. Should underperformance be a concern Growth Platform will escalate any issues to the Strategic Lead.

Timescales

The contract is runs from 16th May 2023 to 31st March 2023. There is a possibility that this may be extended at Growth Platform’s absolute discretion, subject to BEIS and/or ERDF funding, performance, and strategic alignment.

Published	25 th April 2022
Deadline for supplier questions	29 th April 2022
Deadline for Growth Platform response to supplier questions	29 th April 2022
Deadline for tenders to lisa.duddridge@growthplatform.org	6th May 2022
Clarification interviews (if required)	w/c 9 th May 2022
Supplier notified of award of contract	w/c 9 th May 2022
Contracts issued	w/c 9 th May 2022
Contract start date	16 th May 2022
Contract end date	31 st March 2023

Supplier Questions

Any questions should be directed to Growth Platform’s Point of Contact Lisa Duddridge, via email lisa.duddridge@growthplatform.org, on or before the ‘deadline for suppliers questions’ date stated in the above timeline.

All questions and answers will be made anonymous and disseminated to all potential suppliers on Growth Platform’s tender page;

<https://www.growthplatform.org/tenders/>

It will be the responsibility of suppliers to monitor the site for latest activity.

Budget

There is a flat payment for each lot of £20,000.

Suppliers will invoice for the funding via 4 payments, as set out below. Invoices must be submitted by these dates to avoid termination of the contract –

P	Amount	Date Invoice Due
P1	£3,200	15 th June 2022
P2	£5,600	15 th September 2022
P3	£5,600	5 th December 2022
P4	£5,600	15 th March 2023

Should any further funding be available we may look to extend this contract. Any extension will be based on the same terms as this one and deliverables will be reduced in line with contract values should there be a change of funding.

Conformation of acceptance will be sort from partners once budgets and deliverables have been agreed.

Any contract extensions will be at Growth Platform’s absolute discretion, subject to funding and performance and strategic alignment.

Award Criteria

In the interests of an open, fair and transparent assessment, this document sets out how the tender responses will be evaluated. It outlines the evaluation criteria and respective weightings, as well as the evaluation methodology to be applied.

Contracts will be awarded on the basis of the overall Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) submitted in each Lot.

The contract will be awarded to the highest scoring bidder in each Lot.

In the instance that there is only one submission in any lot a minimum overall score of 65 will need to be achieved in order for the contract to be awarded.

Once the contract is awarded, the Supplier will be sent a Service Level Agreement for signing. This SLA will need to be signed by the **31st May 2022** to accept the offer. Should this not be signed by this date Growth Platform reserves the right to retender that element of support.

Quality 100% made up of;		Weightings
1.	Please give details how you will ensure you will meet the light touch and medium intensity targets. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please demonstrate what methodology you will use to reach these targets 	25%
2.	How will you deliver the Local Growth Hub services listed in the requirements. Please give details of how you intend to resource the successful delivery of this contract. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please describe the resources you will utilise in Please indicate how you will ensure companies will be informed of all available support services and not just those of your own organisation 	25%
3.	What internal processes will you put in place to ensure successful delivery of the outputs?	25%
4.	It is essential that the Local Growth Hub CRM Portal is utilised in ‘real time’. Can you explain how you will ensure the Portal will be used on a day to day basis and how you propose to record interactions in real time.	25%

	Please indicate how many users you anticipate will use this portal from your team.	
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Quality Scoring Methodology

Score	Meaning
0	Unacceptable response. Requirement level is not met. Many important issues are completely un-addressed or response wholly inadequate or inappropriate. Concerns are serious and risk levels unacceptable for many areas.
2	Poor response. Requirement levels are adequate for only some important issues. Some important issues are largely incomplete. Concerns are serious and risk levels unacceptable for some areas.
4	Adequate response. Requirement level is partially met. Overall the proposals are satisfactory, but some issues are weak. Risk levels apply but Bidder has demonstrated understanding of how they will meet all minimum requirements.
6	Good response. Requirement level is partially met, competence is demonstrated in all areas but there is scope for more detail and more depth in some areas.
8	Very good response. Requirement level is met with only a few minor weaknesses or queries. Competent bid demonstrating overall understanding of requirements and experience in all areas.
10	Excellent response. Requirement level fully met. All key issues addressed. Range of examples of good practice and understanding of requirements.

Proposal Format

Proposals should –

- confirm of which [Lot\(s\)](#) the submission relates to
- names and job titles of both the Strategic Lead and Project Lead
- address the [quality](#) criteria above, it would be best to answer each point separately
- be no longer than 3 sides of A4 in typed size 11 font with a legible layout i.e., not a continuous block of text.

Conditions of Tender

- Please be aware that due to the relatively low indicative budget for this work (i.e. less than the current OJEU limits) there is no regulatory obligation for us to provide feedback if you are unsuccessful.
- We reserve the right to discontinue this tender process at any time and not award a contract.
- You will not be entitled to claim from us any costs or expenses which you may incur in preparing and/or submitting your Tender at any stage of this exercise. This applies whether or not your organisations is successful.

This work is part funded through the European Regional Development Fund.

The Liverpool City Region Integrated Business Support Programme is receiving up to £5,504,829 of funding from the England European Regional Development Fund as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. The Department



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund



of Levelling up Housing and Communities (and in London the intermediate body Greater London Authority) is the Managing Authority for European Regional Development Fund. Established by the European Union, the European Regional Development Fund helps local areas stimulate their economic development by investing in projects which will support innovation, businesses, create jobs and local community regenerations. For more information visit <https://www.gov.uk/european-growth-funding>.

The Northern Powerhouse is a key aspect of this Government's approach to addressing the productivity gap in the North and ensuring a stronger, more sustainable economy for all parts of the UK. Alongside over €1.5 billion of European Regional Development Fund support for businesses and communities across the North, the government has awarded £3.4 billion in three rounds of Growth Deals across the Northern Powerhouse