

# Expression of interest

# Title: Pre-Employment Programmes (PEP)

**Project reference: DFERPPU/2019/017**

**Deadline for expressions of interest: 23.59 on Wednesday, 23rd October 2019**

## Summary

Expressions of interest are sought to conduct the Pre-Employment Programmes study.

Consortium interests / bids that combine experience and expertise in different elements and requirements of the work, e.g. understanding of the policy area and evidence base, experience of undertaking qualitative research and working with employers and providers, are welcomed.

## Background

A considerable number of non-government organisations and charities look to develop skills, offer work experience, training and advice to all ages, with some specialising in those aged 16-24. Existing evidence suggests a significant proportion of employers offer work experience and/or recruit disadvantaged young people, combining recruitment and corporate responsibility strategies. However, there is little evidence on what strategies and programmes are used, how these are received and the extent that government funding streams are used in combination.

Interventions fall into 3 broad categories: engagement (e.g. job fairs or taster days); work experience; and training. This research will provide valuable insight on how employers are using these types of schemes, their motivations and barriers to participation. Findings will provide a better understanding of how employers choose to help and recruit those further from the labour market, separately from government funding and requirements.

## Project aims

The aim of this research is to gain a detailed understanding of how and why employers use non-government-funded pre-employment recruitment and training schemes, to outline what factors are important in encouraging employers to engage with and/or recruit disadvantaged young people and what levers are available to policy-makers to influence them.

Specifically, the study should answer the following research questions:

1. Outside of programmes involving government funding, how do employers recruit, train and support disadvantaged young people?
2. Why do employers use their own pre-employment training schemes, and/or work with providers outside of government funding streams to train and recruit young people?
3. How do providers work with employers to develop and deliver pre-employment schemes?
4. What are young people’s views and experiences of pre-employment schemes they have been on?

## Methodology

Qualitative – we expect the majority of interviews being with employers who engage in some sort of programme. From our initial scoping, organisations run a variety of programmes which can fall into three (overlapping) categories: engagement (e.g. job fairs or taster days); work experience; and training.

Further interviews will be required with providers used by employers and potentially paired interviews or focus groups with recent young participants in the intervention schemes.

### Project coverage and sampling

This project will focus on three groups: employers, providers and recent young participants in the intervention schemes. Employers can be sourced through DfE links with organisations.

The achieved sample of employers will cover a range of sectors, business types and intervention type (as mentioned in the methodology section). These employers should be looking to engage with and/or recruit young people (aged 16-24) considered further from the labour market.

Providers should be varied, including those offering different types of intervention and ideally of different sizes. Providers can be sourced through participating employers or DfE.

**An additional element would include looking to understand why employers use government funded pre-employment schemes, such as traineeships, and their experiences.**

### Fieldwork

It is expected that a mix of telephone and face-to-face modes of in-depth semi structured 1-to-1 interviews will be used with employers and providers. Focus groups or paired interviews may potentially be used with young people.

### Analysis and reporting

Qualitative data will be analysed using a recognised thematic framework. A full research report for publication will be expected. In addition, emerging findings will be made available at an earlier stage (format to be discussed).

Deliverables are required by **30th March 2020**.

## Timing

* Deadline for EOIs – 23rd October 2019
* Invitation for tender issued – 29th October 2019
* Deadline for tenders – 18th November 2019
* Interviews with shortlisted bidders (if needed)- 21st November 2019
* Contract issued to successful bidder – 26th November 2019
* Inception meeting - 28th November 2019
* Final report – 30th March 2020

## Assessment criteria

Expressions of interest will be assessed against the following criteria:

* Expertise in sampling and recruitment of employers, FE providers and young people for qualitative studies
* Expertise in conducting qualitative research, including developing topic guides and conducting in-depth interviews
* Expertise in analysis and reporting of qualitative data
* Understanding the policy environment

Each of these criteria shall have equal weighting.

Expressions of interests submitted must be no more than 1,000 words overall; this includes any website links. Anything longer will be disregarded.

| **Closing date for EOIs: 23.59 on Wednesday 23rd October 2019**  **Send your EOI form to: Eliz-Leyla.MANI@education.gov.uk** |
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## How to submit an expression of interest

You must submit an expression of interest (EOI) in order to be considered to be invited to tender. To do so, please complete the NEW EOI Form which can be found under attachments. A submission of an EOI does not guarantee an invitation to tender and the Department does not routinely advise organisations that they have not been successful in being invited to tender. Feedback is however available on request.

All contracts are let on the basis of the Department’s Terms and Conditions, included with this EOI. You are encouraged to check these before submitting your expression of interest, as these form part of your contractual obligations.

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