

Soft Market Test

For

23021 the provision of Business support delivery services for Cambridgeshire districts Get Set and Grow programme in partnership with the Library service
Business and Intellectual property centres

Cambridgeshire County Council

Ref: DN669798



Section 1: Introduction

1. General Requirements

The purpose of this document is to briefly explain to suppliers the business and technical requirements and the expected scope of exploring options to delivery various elements of a business support programme called 'Get set and Grow' championed by East Cambridgeshire, South Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire district Councils. The Council is inviting companies with experience in this area to provide information on your services and approach. The Council wishes to understand the marketplace and for suppliers to explain the relevance of their services and experience to this future opportunity.

We are close to publishing this opportunity, and though we believe our approach is suitable, to ensure we are pitching this right we are putting out a short soft market test to see whether we need to alter our approach.

- 1.1. Please note:** this market testing exercise is **not** an invitation to tender or a request for formal expressions of interest. This document does not form any part of an invitation to tender. The Council is issuing this request for **information only**. Any supplier invited to present to the Council is doing so to support market research only and to help make any potential procurement process more focused and efficient. No supplier selection or supplier preference is implied.
- 1.2. Please note:** if this exercise leads to a procurement being published, and you are interested in submitted a bid, please ensure you are registered with [ProContract](#) as this is the E-tendering portal the Council uses. You can search for opportunities under the Cambridgeshire Public services within ProContract.

2. Confidentiality and Freedom of Information (FOI)

- 2.1. Please note:** all information included in this Soft Market Testing is confidential and only for the recipients' knowledge. No information included in this document or in discussions connected to it may be disclosed to any other party without prior written authorisation.
- 2.2.** All responses will be treated confidentially. However, please be aware that we are subject to the disclosure requirements of the FOI Act and that potentially any information we hold is liable to disclosure under that Act. For this reason, we strongly advise that any information you consider to be confidential is labelled as such. In the event that a request is subsequently made for disclosure under FOI the request will be dealt with in accordance with the legislation.



3. Background

The Council provides county-wide services to all its citizens, has numerous statutory responsibilities, including in respect of the provision of education, and supports blue light services, the health sector, charities, and other local Authorities.

The Council's strategic objectives are to provide a good quality of life for everyone living in the county, creating thriving places for people to live and give the best start for Cambridgeshire's children.

Please see website www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough libraries and the British Library's National Network of Business & IP Centres are transforming the way ideas grow into successful businesses. We're supporting a thriving community of bright and inspiring people across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough by partnering with local libraries all over the UK.

Our Centres offer insights and access to free resources, training and events – both online and in-person– we help entrepreneurs imagine, start or develop their business. Whether they're just setting out, need advice on protecting their intellectual property, or simply have a brilliant idea they want to discuss, we're here to guide them. The specific support offered by Cambridgeshire & Peterborough includes:

1. One to one business support – Online and in-person
2. Intellectual property support and guidance
3. Access to business resources including but not limited to general business information, market research information, company information, grant searching,
4. A combined grants and support programme (BIPC Jumpstart)

4. Soft Market Test Timetable

- 4.1. Please read this document and if you feel that your organisation is able to contribute to this exercise, please complete the questionnaire at the end of this document and return, via email to ProcurementandCommercial@cambridgeshire.gov.uk by 10th May 2023.
- 4.2. Following receipt of the questionnaires, the Council will review, and where necessary ask for clarification to all or some of the respondents to aid in the development of our final procurement requirements



Stage	Date
Issue of Soft Market test	3 rd May 2023
Deadline for receipt of responses to Soft Market Test.	10 th May 2023
Planned publication of procurement (no later)	12 th May 2023

- 4.3. Potential responders will not be prejudiced in any future procurement processes by either responding or not responding to this soft market test exercise.

Section 2: Identification of Requirement

5. Our Requirements

The '*Get set and grow!*' programme will be aimed at businesses within East Cambridgeshire, South Cambridgeshire, and Huntingdonshire. A summary of the programme is shown in **Table 1** below. The key themes addressed in the workshop curriculum and 1:1s will focus on the fundamental principles to help businesses innovate and scale and will assist organisations to understand how they can refine their business models, monetise their assets and diversify their product/service offering to reach new audiences.

As we know, time is a very important asset to business owners and therefore the '*Get set and grow!*' programme module delivery requires a hands-on approach. In each workshop the business owners should begin application to their business rather than a theory heavy session.

The workshops and 1:1s will be delivered mainly by external consultants. There are six modules covering key business growth topics. The programme is not targeting a specific sector, so will need to be relevant to businesses in any sector. Each business receives two months of customised and specialised support to help them to produce a clear and tested milestone-based growth plan. Upon acceptance onto the programme, each entrepreneur first attends an Introduction Workshop. A dedicated Relationship Manager provides end-to-end support to each business during the intensive '*Get set and grow!*' journey, and helps to ensure that growth plans are implemented.

The Business Model Canvas (BMC) will be used to provide all programme participants a common framework and language to effectively understand, analyse and implement the advice that will be given in the rest of the programme's modules.

The modules which are available for tender are:

- **Module 2** - Refining your business model & growth strategy workshops & 1:1 sessions (details in Appendix 1)
- **Module 3** - Building your brand and creating a marketing strategy (workshops) + 1:1 sessions (details in Appendix 2)
- **Module 4** - Financial planning for growth (workshops) + 1:1 sessions (details in Appendix 3)



- **Module 5** - Building your team - recruiting and delegating (workshops) + 1:1 sessions (details in Appendix 4)

The assumptions of the programme:

- Each module will be delivered a total of six times. (6 cohorts)
- Each cohort will support 20 businesses (120 businesses in total)
- The first cohort delivery will commence in September 2023
- The last cohort will complete by 31st December 2024

The aim is to allow for bidders to bid to deliver one or multiple modules.

CONTRACT & CONTRACT DURATION

Contract starting 1st August and ending 31st March 2025



- Section 3: Supporting information

6. Section A: Organisation and Contact Details

Question	Response
Name of your organisation	
Trading address (if different from office)	
What if any local connections do you have with the authority?	
Name of person whom an queries relating to this questionnaire should be addressed	
Email	

7. Section B: Questions

Question	Response
Have you offer similar solution/service to other Local Authorities or other public bodies (if you have case studies please attach)	
Given the information provided, and if you where to bid, what other information would you need to be able to provide a suitable and sufficient bid?	
Given the information provided, do you believe our approach to allow for separate bids for the modules is appropriate?	
If you feel this is not appropriate way to offer this opportunity, how would you prefer this was offered?	
The use of Business Model canvas as a framework through which all modules are delivered is a key requirement to ensure consistency across the modules – is this something you have had experience in already?	
Do you think there are better options instead of BMC to achieve the same outcome?	
Do you feel the timescale for delivering the programme is suitable and reasonable?	
We are looking to have this opportunity out to tender for 2-3 weeks, do you think this is a reasonable timescale for the type of service we are looking for?	
Given what you have read, would you consider submitting a response?	
What would be the reason you would not choose to submit a bid?	
If you wish to provide other information or comments you feel would benefit our procurement please use this space.	