**Appendix 1 Specification**

1. **Introduction**

GBSLEP is a limited company and a partnership of business, public sector, and further and higher education leaders. GBSLEP has a mission to grow the economy of Greater Birmingham and Solihull and was constituted as a company limited by guarantee in May 2011. The LEP covers the geographical boundaries of the Districts of Birmingham, Solihull, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Tamworth, Cannock Chase, Bromsgrove, Redditch, and Wyre Forest.

GBSLEP’s mission is to drive the economic growth of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull area, creating jobs and increasing the quality of life for all our residents. GBSLEP is the lead for the West Midlands for Modern Services and the BPFS sector, on behalf of the three LEP geography including Black Country LEP and Coventry & Warwickshire LEP and the West Midlands Combined Authority.

In the context of the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) for the West Midlands and specifically the Modern Services Major Market Opportunity, leveraging the regional strengths in the Business Professional & Financial Services Sector (BPFS), the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP), has enabled the creation of SuperTech, the market facing cluster organisation for West Midlands ProfTech (see www.supertechwm.com). ProfTech is the umbrella term for the supercluster including fintech, insurtech, lawtech, proptech and other sub-sectors of professional services sector undergoing technology led disruption.

As the cluster organisation matures to support the WM ProfTech ecosystem and realise the West Midlands opportunity on the national and international stage, GBSLEP – as the accountable body for SuperTech - is seeking to commission the services of a suitably qualified person to be embedded within the SuperTech team and pursue strategic goals relating to innovation and place proposition, in line with the emerging ProfTech Strategy.

1. **Requirements/Specification**

**Context**

Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) works to promote economic development across our area.  It does this by working closely in partnership with a wide range of public, private and educational partners.  Given its business-led nature, the added value of the LEP is a focus on tackling supply-side constraints to the sustainable growth of the industries that maximise the economic growth potential of our city-region.  As outlined in the LEP Strategic Economic Plan (SEP), in alignment with the West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy, the LEP aims to achieve this by developing and realising the potential of our strengths and assets in key sectors and technologies. To maximise its value in driving forward growth potential for its key sectors and technologies, GBSLEP has developed delivery plans to focus on those sectors and technologies identified as most likely to offer opportunities for job creation and economic growth:

* advanced manufacturing
* life sciences and healthcare
* business, professional and financial services
* creative industries
* low carbon
* energy technologies and services
* digital technologies
* emerging and disruptive technologies

GBSLEP has identified specific sub-sectors within Business, Financial & Professional Services (BPFS) as key for growth and specifically within this, innovation as key productivity driver as a focus for intervention. Hence GBSLEP has been investing to support the creation of a ‘ProfTech’ cluster (technology-led innovation relevant to BPFS sector) with the express purposes of both accelerating the innovation capacity within the West Midlands business base and also enhancing the place proposition such that the region is also strongly associated with innovative BPFS, with an emphasis on technology-led innovation through the cluster.

SuperTech – the new ProfTech cluster identity – was released in late 2020, with new cluster activities going live from January 2021. Specifically, the cluster industry leadership group represents the initial priority sub-sectors of FinTech, LawTech and PropTech. For more information on SuperTech cluster, see [www.supertechwm.com](http://www.supertechwm.com).

GBSLEP – on behalf of SuperTech – is seeking to commission the services of a person to embed and work within the SuperTech team to advance the cluster offering in respect of place proposition and innovation. In line with the emerging regional ProfTech strategy, the initial priority is fintech, although proptech is anticipated to be a higher priority too during the contract period. Lawtech is anticipated to feature, although at lower intensity. Significantly, the ability to connect across, see and leverage the intersectionality of these sub-sectors is important to the overall strategy.

**Purpose, Focus and Scope**

SuperTech has reached a stage in its evolution where it requires expertise relevant to the ProfTech subsectors to create and drive meaningful activity that creates value for businesses seeking to engage with a West Midlands cluster organisation. This tender is to invite such expertise to co-design a programme of activity and work within the cluster to deliver the programme accordingly. Through this programme, the intention is to test, learn and refine the future direction of SuperTech activity to realise the overarching economic development ambitions for the West Midlands.

Primary objective and key outputs/ measures:

#1: Engagement of firms in B2B cluster activity that advances the connectivity and growth of the WM proftech business base.

Indicative outputs: design and delivery of cluster activity programme; industry participation in activities (from within and outside of region) and qualitative feedback from participants; additional enquiries generated and meaningful engagements in broader cluster activity.

Secondary objectives:

#2 Investor enquiries and overseas relationships stimulated through priority #1 activities into SuperTech.

#3 Generation of referrals from SuperTech to regional partners in line with ProfTech Strategy resulting from activities delivered under priority #1 e.g. inward investment enquiries; trade support.

#4 Understand the activities that bring most value to inform sustainability plans for the cluster organisation. (e.g. what has commercial value long-term what investment is required to continue long-term etc. )

GBSLEP is open to a wide range of different approaches for this commission, e.g. secondment.

The tender is intentionally not prescriptive in order to be open to the widest variety of approaches to meet the sought outcomes. However, the following activities are not desirable:

* + a strategy of what should be done. The focus is on ‘doing’ and resourcing the cluster to implement.
	+ a ‘mapping’ exercise of support on offer in the region. This is understood.
	+ a signposting service. The programme of activities has to create new value that is not happening; not simply another entry point to help navigate the ecosystem.

The key outcome is to leverage external industry expertise in these frontier sectors and bring that within the cluster to accelerate activity that is relevant and accessible to industry to overall advance the effectiveness of the West Midlands proftech ecosystem and enhance the place proposition/ overall attractiveness of the region.

A copy of the draft emerging ProfTech Strategy referred to herein is available on request on a confidential basis.

**Timeframe**

The timeframe for activity is from as soon as is practicable Summer 2021 for a period of 12months from start date. All work must be complete by September 2022.

**Budget**

The total maximum budget is £25,000 (exc VAT) for the 12-month period.  There is a guaranteed 6 month contract with intention to extend based on performance.