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**SPECIFICATION**

**INVITATION TO TENDER – ITT 30038**

**Employees Support in Skills – 31-001-P1P2**

**South East Midlands**

**DATE: May 2016**

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| **SPECIFICATION: Employees Support in Skills** |
| BACKGROUND |
| **General**  The contracting authority is the Secretary of State for Business Innovation and Skills acting through the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), an executive agency of the Department for Business Innovation and Skills exercising functions to fund adult education and skills.  The SFA, acting as an Opt-In Organisation for the European Social Fund (ESF), is procuring education and training services to meet priorities identified by Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area European Structural and Investment Funds Sub–Committees. As an Opt-In Organisation the SFA provides match funding at Priority Axis level utilising sources of public funding as match for ESF funded activity.  This Invitation to Tender (ITT) is for Priority Axis 2 and for Investment Priority (IP) 2.1, enhancing equal access to lifelong learning. Where the need has been identified both in the LEP area and European Structural and Investment Fund Strategies.  The IP 2.1 supports equal access to lifelong learning for all age groups in formal, non-formal and informal settings, upgrading knowledge, skills and competences of the workforce, and promoting flexible learning pathways including through career guidance and validation of acquired competences. Resources are being focused through this IP on people in the workforce who lack basic skills or qualifications needed for their career progression and for business growth and innovation in the knowledge economy.  The strands in 2.1 are:   * Apprenticeship Services * Skills Support for Redundancy * Skills Support for the Workforce, Intermediate/Higher Skills Provision * Skills Support for the Workforce, Basic skills provision   The SFA is looking to procure an organisation to deliver education and training that best support the needs of local employers and employees in the LEP area set out below.  **South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership Background**  The focus of SEMLEP strategic direction is on supporting business investment and private sector jobs growth to drive economic success, including through the acceleration of employment, raising productivity, supporting growth in existing and new markets, raise workforce skill levels and targeted infrastructure investment.  Taking into account the cross boundary LEP opportunities and UK national growth plan, the ESIF seeks to:   * deliver a step change in economic growth across the SEM. The programme aims to support business investment and private sector jobs growth to drive economic success and create inclusive opportunities for all; * realise the economic and employment role of all the centres by supporting businesses, attracting knowledge–based industries and stimulating entrepreneurship and innovation; * improve skills levels and educational attainments   The development of skills in the workforce is vital to improve productivity, competitiveness and economic prosperity across the South East Midlands.  Upgrading the skills of the current workforce and increasing access to the workplace will maximise the value contributed by the working population and provide ways to build on the relatively strong skills base. In particular, there are well documented and persistent skills gaps and difficulties in recruiting which are barriers to growth. The strategic imperative is therefore to develop the skills of the workforce in the South East Midlands as this is critical to economic, business and community development. Businesses need a skilled workforce to improve productivity and contribute to innovation and competitiveness. The economy requires an available and skilled workforce to thrive and grow. Communities benefit from individuals who are confident and competent, gainfully employed and contributing to families and society overall.  SEMLEP Priority 5 aims to deliver targeted interventions to develop a skilled and adaptable workforce by helping people improve their skills, secure good jobs and then progress within them.  By working closely with our businesses we aim to unlock the potential of the existing and future workforce of the South East Midlands through the provision of a demand-driven approach to skills and employment initiatives that will help address current and future labour market challenges and opportunities**.**  Although over half of the working age population (both residents and workers) are employed in higher skilled occupations, some areas’ employment is strongly concentrated in lower skilled occupations. This, coupled with 33% of businesses reporting skill shortages within the workforce (2015 SEMLEP Business Survey) and businesses reporting difficulty recruiting (particularly to skilled trades and professional/technical professions), reinforces the need to up skill..  This will be key to meeting current and future skills demands of employers as these sectors grow and in order to attract businesses to locate in the South East Midlands as more of the working age population gain the necessary skills to meet future demand. The area also faces high levels of out commuting across significant parts of the South East Midlands and will have an impact on jobs available (jobs density) for local residents.  **Apprenticeship Services**  The development of skills in the workforce is vital to improve productivity, competitiveness and economic prosperity across the South East Midlands. Upgrading the skills of the current workforce and increasing access to the workplace will maximise the value contributed by the working population and provide ways to build on the relatively strong skills base.  In particular, there are well documented and persistent skills gaps and difficulties in recruiting which are barriers to growth. The strategic imperative is therefore to develop the skills of the workforce in the South East Midlands as this is critical to economic, business and community development. Businesses need a skilled workforce to improve productivity and contribute to innovation and competitiveness.  **Skills Support for the Workforce – Intermediate and Higher Level Skills**  The SEMLEP area has almost 75,000 businesses with nearly 97% of these employing fewer than 50 people; around 10% of the working age population is self-employed. The population is the SEMLEP area is around 1,735,100 which is projected to increase by 13% between 2011 and 2021.This is significantly faster than the national projected rate of growth of 8.6%.  In spite of the excellent progress of local universities and colleges, skills levels across the South East Midlands are lower than is needed to support an aspirant and growing knowledge economy. Upgrading the skills of the current workforce and increasing access to the workplace offer the opportunity to maximise the value contributed by the working population and provide ways to build on the relatively strong skills base.  Given the value our four Showcase Sectors offer to the South East Midlands economy in terms of Gross Value Added a key challenge is to ensure that the current skills shortages and gaps facing these sectors are addressed and future skills requirements are met. Sector based research and full Business Survey 2015 results, outlining specific skills gaps, can be found at http://www.semlep.com/.  **Skills Support for the Workforce – Basic Skills**  The SEMLEP 2015 Business Survey reported that a third of businesses have skill gaps within their existing workforce (33%; 38% in 2014). This increases to 39% within the district of Luton and is highest within manufacturing (43%) and the transport, information and communications sector (42%).  Skills lacking within existing workforces are most likely to be advanced IT skills and sales and marketing skills (both cited by 11% of all businesses) and/or job-specific skills and technical or practical skills (both cited by 10% of all businesses).  A survey of employers commissioned by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) in 2016, shows that skills shortages nationally overall have risen by 130% over the past four years.  The need to up skill those, particularly working in lower skilled/unskilled jobs will be key to meeting current and future skills demands of employers as these sectors grow and in order to attract businesses to locate in the South East Midlands as more of the working age population gain the necessary skills to meet future demand.,  As a national comparison, the UK Commission for Employment and Skills Employer Skills Survey provides a breakdown by LEP area. For the South East Midlands it showed that the top skills shortages cited by local employers were: Job specific (78%), Problem solving skills (52%), Planning and organisational skills (51%), Technical and practical skills (52%), Customer (46%) and Communication Skills (45%).  In regard to numeracy, within the SEMLEP area, it is estimated that between 72% and 81% of working age adults are functioning at a level of numeracy below Level 2 (A\*-C GCSE equivalent) according to the most recent BIS-commissioned Skills for Life survey. In addition, a recent report by the OECD (January 2016) reviewing skills suggests that England is ‘well below average’ for numeracy citing a national figure of 9 million people in England lacking basic maths skills needed for everyday life and work. |
| **DEFINITION OF TERMS** |
| **At risk of Redundancy:** means Employees identified by the employer as at risk or redundancy and/or commenced formal consultation with staff representatives on the need to make redundancies  **Candidate:** means an organisation who has been invited to take part in this restricted procurement procedure  **Disability**: A person who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on the ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.  **Eligibility:** Only people who are eligible to work in UK are eligible for this EU programme.  **Employed**: People are employees if they perform work for pay, profit or family gain. People are self-employed if they work in his/her own business for the purpose of earning a profit, even if they are not making a profit or are just setting up.  **Micro Businesses:** This relates to organisations employing less than 10 Employees  **Qualifications:** Qualification means a formal outcome assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards. Regulated qualifications/aims are those listed in the Learning Aims Reference Service as being regulated. Non-regulated aims are those listed in the Learning Aims Reference Service as being non-regulated.  Regulated and non-regulated aims must be planned to be delivered within budget.  Qualification rates are based on the published LARS rates at the start of the contract.  **Services:** The provision of education, training or support delivered to individuals.  **Small and Medium sized Enterprises**: This applies to organisations employing less than 250 employees.    **Start Date:** Employment status and age are determined on the date of starting on the Services.  **Survey**: Where applicable, long term sustained outcomes over 6 months will be monitored separately. Some ESF indicators will be collected by survey by the ESF Managing Authority directly from the participants.  **Unemployed:** Unemployed are persons usually without work, available for work and actively seeking work. Persons considered registered unemployed would be included. Full time students are considered as inactive but not eligible for this provision as they are not available for work. Long term unemployment is greater than 6 months for under 25 years old and greater than 12 months for 25 years old or more. |
| **SERVICE REQUIREMENTS** |
| **General Service Requirements**  All activities must complement and avoid duplication with other provision, thereby adding value to Department for Work and Pensions/Big Lottery, Education Funding Agency, Skills Funding Agency, local authority, National Careers Service and the new Careers Enterprise Company funded provision. Successful candidates will be required to ensure that ESF provision will clearly add value and not duplicate any provision that can be arranged locally through existing mainstream institutions.  ***Capacity and readiness to deliver***  Candidates must have:   * The resources to offer locally tailored solutions and flexible delivery to meet the skills and Apprenticeship priorities of employers and employees in the defined geographical area of delivery. If the LEP area also has a ‘transitional’ area defined in addition to the ‘more developed’ area, delivery locations will have to be available *in each locality* * The capacity to deliver provision immediately upon commencement of the contract and that delivery should not be delayed in any way by any recruitment processes or other processes or relationships that need to be established. * Candidates must be able to demonstrate the ability to undertake robust initial assessment of eligible individuals. Vocational training delivered must be regulated units and qualifications on the Qualifications and Curriculum Framework and be able to support individuals into higher levels of training and workplace progression   ***Track record***  The ability to deliver the required activity, based on a track record in the successful delivery and management of this type and size of programme  ***Information, Advice and Guidance***  Where the activity requires effective Information, Advice and Guidance successful  applicants and/or subcontractors delivering this element will either hold or be working towards the Matrix standard.  ***Management and quality assurance***  Candidates will need to have effective management arrangements in place to ensure all of the requirements of this specification are fulfilled. The Services must be delivered to a high quality and successful tenderers will need to have in place quality assurance and improvement processes.  The Service needs to be flexible and responsive to the changing economic and political landscape and take into consideration that the approach and associated processes may change during the life of this contract. Therefore Candidates will be expected to be able to change the delivery of the Services accordingly.  ***Partnership working***  Candidates will be required to work in partnership with other organisations delivering education and training in the area to ensure the Service is complementary to and not in competition with other funded provision.  The Service must be able to respond to changing local needs and opportunities, as well as policy changes.  Candidates will be required to establish linkages with and have an understanding of, local stakeholder needs and develop strong links with the key stakeholders.  Candidates will be required to work with employers to identify the skills gaps and needs to drive employer growth.  Where the Service works with Jobcentre Plus clients the Candidates will be required to co-operate effectively with Jobcentre Plus making them aware of candidates who fail to attend training and notifying them of any instances where individuals leave training due to starting work. Candidates will be required to establish links with Jobcentre Plus and visits to public or private sector employers should be made in conjunction with Jobcentre Plus and National Careers Service wherever possible to ensure a smooth, efficient, and joined up approach to arranging benefit claims, offering new employment opportunities and training for all eligible individuals.  ***Market intelligence and local knowledge***  The delivery of the Services must take into account the current and future social and economic indicators including labour market intelligence. Candidates must be able to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the current employment market and the current and future social and economic indicators including labour market intelligence for the geographical area being supported. Candidates must also have an understanding of local skills shortages and gaps and any existing skills support structures within the LEP area.  ***Management information and reporting***  Candidates will develop management information systems to enable it to submit data to the Skills Funding Agency via the Individual Learner Record (ILR) and put in place robust arrangements for ensuring that the evidence required to support payments is collected and retained.  Candidates will be required to share with LEPs and the Skills Funding Agency ongoing performance management data as well as additional intelligence to improve the effectiveness of Skills Support projects in the LEP area in the future.  **Specific Service Requirements**  **Apprenticeship Services (Lot 1)**  The aim of the Services is to increase the number of people, both unemployed individuals requiring advanced and higher level skills and those in employment requiring significant new knowledge and skills, to enter apprenticeships at all levels across the SEMLEP area and increase employer participation in apprenticeships by raising awareness and providing support to employers.  The Services must respond to the needs analysis and proposed response as described in section 3.6 of the SEMLEP ESIF Strategy, in particular section 4.6.6. SEMLEP’s apprenticeships target is for additional starts to grow by 5% per annum. Implementing the SEMLEP apprenticeship plan, in particular increasing the availability of opportunities in priority sectors is critical.  The Services must be responsive to enable provision to be tailored to meet the needs as identified in the SEMLEP 2015 Business Survey and other local and national evidence. http://www.semlep.com/resource-hub/  The Services must aim to increase the volume of apprenticeships primarily within the showcase growth sectors working with small and medium sized businesses as a priority in order to address the gaps.  SEMLEP showcase growth sectors include:   * Manufacturing and Advanced Technology, including Food and Drink * High performance technology, including Aerospace and Motorsport. * Arts, Heritage, Sports, Visitor Economy, Cultural and Creative * Logistics and its supply chain   The Services must promote and support the take-up of apprenticeships at all levels, by individuals of all ages and particularly within SEMLEP’s Showcase Growth Sectors. The delivery of the Services should lead to an increase in apprenticeships at all levels, particularly focusing on those employers that have not offered apprenticeship previously.  The Services must focus on two key activities:   * Impartial Support for SMEs (including the voluntary sector) to increase apprenticeships at all levels. Support will include expanding the local capacity of providers and impartial support for employers to create additional opportunities, as well as coaching individuals to apply and successfully access an apprenticeship * Higher Level Apprenticeships programme including the promotional activities to students and employers; employers’ engagement to facilitate higher level skills brokerage; increase piloting new models of STEM activity and apprenticeships delivery for employers who wish to develop more bespoke programmes offering progression routes to degree-equivalent qualifications; supporting graduates and undergraduates placements and work tasters to gain high quality work experience with local organisations   The successful Candidate must work with other training providers to help expand the provision of higher level apprenticeships and source specialist provision where required.  The Services must operate as part of the Velocity Growth Hub, offering employers a single point of contact providing impartial advice on apprenticeships including apprenticeship reforms and changes to funding.  The Services must provide an enhanced impartial brokerage service to businesses to enable employers to simplify recruitment of apprentices.  The Services must provide apprenticeship advisers to provide one-to-one support to employers and who will work with local apprenticeship ambassadors and the National Apprenticeship Service.  The Services must provide business engagement support which includes identifying employers who can offer apprenticeship vacancies and brokerage support to ensure a successful recruitment outcome for those unemployed individuals who require advanced or higher level skills. This support may also extend to helping employers to progress existing apprentices/employees onto new Higher and Degree Apprenticeships.  The Services must offer a central co-ordinated training delivery matching service that will identify employer training needs and will match apprenticeship training opportunities to business needs.  The Services must raise the profile of employer vacancies and provide employer recruitment support including application screening, short-listing and brokering the employer and training provider relationship.  There must be an individual learner assessment and make use of context-specific screener tools to ensure any individual barriers are identified and supported where possible, for example, in regard to literacy, numeracy and digital ICT skills  The Services must deliver additional training to complement existing Apprenticeship Frameworks and develop effective progression routes for Apprenticeships, in particular from Level 2 to Level 3. The Services must support vocational progression routes to Higher Education and increase the numbers of Higher and Degree apprentices in the area, highlighting the career opportunities available including progression to Higher and Degree apprenticeships  The Services must provide intensive application support to individuals to increase the number of quality applications submitted to employers. The Services must support individuals to complete high quality and robust applications for apprenticeship opportunities and provide interview and recruitment coaching as required.  The Services must be delivered as part of the SEMLEP Velocity Growth Hub, in conjunction with employers and key education and training stakeholders to design and deliver innovative mechanisms and interventions that will lift barriers to individuals and employers participating in apprenticeships.  The successful Candidate must work with organisations undertaking similar and complementary support and delivery activities, including the National Apprenticeship Service within the Skills Funding Agency and National Careers Service providers to reduce duplication, share good practice, ensure added value and contribute to a seamless and integrated delivery infrastructure.  **Skills Support for Redundancy (Lot 2)**  The Service must provide bespoke support to businesses which are undergoing industrial restructuring by providing skills and employability support for their employees at risk of redundancy  The Services must be responsive to enable provision to be tailored to meet the needs as identified in the SMELEP 2015 Business Survey and other local and national evidence. http://www.semlep.com/resource-hub/  The Services must support newly unemployed individuals where initial contact through previous employers has not been possible.  The Services should support the retention and retraining of skills workers within the locality particularly within the SEMLEP’s priority sectors.  The Services must support Employees facing redundancy to remain in the labour market by providing them with the enhanced skills to make them competitive.  The Services must provide a flexible approach to those individuals at risk of redundancy or recently (0-3 months) made redundant. It will focus on information, advice and guidance, employment and careers coaching, job-brokerage and targeted skills-based interventions.  The Services must be able to respond quickly to announcements of redundancies. The successful Candidate will be required to attend meetings, including any arranged by BIS Local, with the relevant employers and/or trade unions to respond to major redundancies. Where required the Services will be expected to support a ‘task force’ to address the major redundancy and define and subsequently support those being made redundant.  Redundancy support will be responsive, flexible and able to respond quickly to employers as and when required. This may include drawing on good practice examples of delivery models being implemented in other areas of the UK  There must be an assessment of the generic employability skills which Employees will require to successfully obtain alternative employment within the local labour market.  There must be an individual learner assessment and make use of context-specific screener tools to ensure any individual barriers are identified and supported where possible, for example, in regard to literacy, numeracy and digital ICT skills  The Services must provide targeted information advice and guidance (IAG) to ensure that the training opportunities are targeted at up-skilling or re-skilling individuals to improve their employment opportunities.  The Services must provide employment and careers coaching, mentoring, job brokerage along with re-skilling and up-skilling training support. The Services should also provide self-employment support that reflects the needs of the employees being supported.  The Services must provide high quality bespoke training opportunities and skills interventions to employees at risk of redundancy to meet the needs of employers offering recruitment opportunities. Training should be provided which updates skills needed for a specific employment sector, including pre-employment training to provide skills to enter a different occupation or sector where required.  The Services must be delivered in conjunction with Jobcentre Plus, employment agencies and other local partners, ensuring that activities are closely aligned with other public and private sector investment programmes to optimise growth opportunities wherever possible.  The Services must support the retention of skills within the SEMLEP area, particularly specialist and high level skills, by providing a skills and vacancy matching facility that matches the transferable skills of at risk workers to vacancies in other companies or industries within the locality. The vacancy matching facility will assess and diagnose employees existing skills and skills gaps in relation to employer requirements and/or opportunities for self-employment. Individuals supported by the Services must be encouraged to engage with the vacancy matching facility.  The Services must be provided within the pre-redundancy or closure period, where the employer is willing to allow Employees at risk of redundancy to access to this support to help them re-enter employment quickly.  The Services must be provided flexibly to support individual employability and social mobility including roll on, roll off, year round responsive delivery which accommodates current benefit restrictions/rules where participants are also claimants.  The Services must deliver support on employer’s sites at times which suit shift patterns as well as at central locations across the SEMLEP area and by phone / web.  The Services must be provided so as to ensure, wherever possible, that any support and training activity is successfully completed before employees at risk of redundancy leave employment. Where this is not possible individuals must be supported to complete any outstanding activity after leaving employment where necessary. Where an individual finds work part way through their training the Services should promote continued skills development to the new employer.  The Services must deliver solutions to meet the identified skills gaps/needs, and will focus on the provision of basic skills to allow career progression, and to drive employer growth. The Services must work with employers to develop opportunities for individuals to include a core set of employability skills, knowledge of how business works and acquire more vocationally specific work experience and qualifications alongside core qualifications.  **Skills Support for the Workforce - intermediate and higher level skills provision (Lot 3)**  The aim of the Services is to provide individuals with the opportunities to develop the skills that will enable them to progress in employment. The Services will provide support to employers to develop individuals to fill intermediate, technical and higher level skills gaps and shortages and take on unemployed individuals who require advanced or higher level skills.  The Services must focus on SMEs in order to address the current skills shortages and gaps and meeting future demands in the South East Midland’s key economic sectors. This will include targeted sector based skills initiatives; high level skills provision and apprenticeships; leadership and management development training; actions promoting careers opportunities; employment search support for professional and executives.  The Services must develop high-level and intermediate technical skills to fulfil future needs of key sector SMEs and drive employment and productivity in these priority growth sectors. In supporting individuals to prepare for and take up Apprenticeship opportunities.  There must be an individual learner assessment and make use of context-specific screener tools to ensure any individual barriers are identified and supported where possible, for example, in regard to literacy, numeracy and digital ICT skills.  The Services must deliver a responsive skills programme that is tailored to the needs of the SEMLEP area as identified in the SEMLEP 2015 Business Survey and other local and national evidence in order to stimulate a growth in the skills base for businesses that will give the best opportunity to grow the economy and create more and better jobs.  The Services must deliver highly responsive skills provision to meet business and industry needs. Employers must be engaged to shape and direct the Services.  The Services must support individuals to start on higher level skills and apprenticeships by providing taster units of relevant vocational training; work-based access training and work shadowing opportunities related to higher skills/paid jobs.  The Services must drive up skills levels, focusing on the skills being sought by employers and supporting SEMLEP’s Showcase Growth sectors. The Services must result in an increase the number of businesses who are actively planning to address skills issues as a part of their growth. The Services must encourage employers and/or employees to participate in an apprenticeship.  There must be an assessment of the current skills profile of the individual and how it relates to the sector in which they are Employed and the employer’s needs and to develop the appropriate training option or provide access to it.  The Services must provide advice and guidance, personal development planning, skills development and learning and mentoring on an individual basis.  The Services must deliver skills provision which offers both accredited and non-accredited skills training which is innovative, responsive to local skills needs and increases participation by employed adults in education or training (including Apprenticeships) Provision will normally be accredited but where suitable accredited provision does not exist, bespoke packages may be delivered.  The skills provision must reflect the needs of the business and should be tailored to fit working practices and demands. It must be delivered on business premises and other appropriate venues.  Where demand requires, the Services should develop and support the delivery of new advanced vocational provision where mainstream provision is not available (not including tuition fees) and where a gap can be demonstrated.  Accredited units of learning at Level 3 and above in subject areas may also be funded where these do not lead to a full qualification. The Candidate must ensure that the activity does not duplicate or undermine national policy, including policy on grants and loans.  As well as intermediate, technical skills and higher level skills provision the Services should also support individuals to take up Apprenticeships in the key sectors listed below, including Higher Apprenticeships.  The Services must develop and deliver bridging programmes to enable individuals to progress from Further or Higher Education to Higher Level Apprenticeships.  The successful Candidate must conduct exit interviews with employers to assess the impact of the activity.  **Skills Support for Workforce - basic skills provision (Lot 4)**  The aim of the Services is to support sustainable employment and promote the in-work progression of employed individuals through the delivery of work-related skills training focused on functional literacy, numeracy, digital skills and any other basic skill intervention required, tailored to the needs of the employee.,  The Services should raise the level of attainment achieved by individuals, enabling them to improve their employment status and to move them on to undertake higher levels of training, removing any barriers potentially caused by skills gaps in the areas of literacy, numeracy and digital and ICT skills.  The Services must be tailored to meet the needs as identified in the LEP’s 2015 Business Survey and other local and national evidence.  The Services must be available to any employee, particularly those on low pay to help them progress and increase their pay and working hours or obtain better quality higher paid jobs. This must include support for part-time workers who wish to upskill to work longer hours and/or progress within work. The Services must be tailored and sensitive to the needs of learners who might reluctantly engage in basic skills training.  The Services must provide locally tailored interventions and innovative approaches to meet the skills and Apprenticeship priorities of employers and Employees within the SEMLEP area. The Services must deliver skills provision which leads to the onward progression of the individual to a full Apprenticeship or other in-work training.  There must be innovative approaches to delivery of the Services and the use of context-specific screener tools in the workplace to help employees at all levels to engage and acquire and/or improve their functional basic skills to help raise their productivity and progression within work and ultimately help to reduce the number of skills gaps reported by employers.  A training needs analysis must be conducted in conjunction with the employer to identify the skills needed to increase the competitiveness of the employer’s business. Bespoke packages of learning activity must be devised to meet the identified business needs agreed with the employer and delivered.  There must be assessments of the individual Employees’ current skills profiles to produce the development of an appropriate learning pathway. Ideally, we would like to see the use of context-specific screener tools, particularly around the literacy, numeracy and digital skills.  The Services must provide, advice and guidance, personal development planning, skills development and learning and mentoring on an individual basis.  The Services must deliver solutions to meet the identified skills gaps/needs, and will focus on the provision of basic skills to allow career progression, and to drive employer growth. The Services must work with employers to develop opportunities for individuals to include a core set of employability skills, knowledge of how business works and acquire more vocationally specific work experience and qualifications alongside core qualifications including basic skills, English, Maths or ESOL at entry level, level 1 or level 2.  The Services must provide support to sustain individuals in work and to enable them to continue to acquire the skills for progression. This support should include mentoring and follow up support for individuals in learning and specific vocational short courses and bite sized learning to help individuals to continue to progress.  The Services should be delivered in the workplace or at a suitable location with the agreement of the employer and must ensure maximum innovation and flexibility.  The successful Candidate must conduct exit interviews with employers to assess the impact of the activity. |
| ELIGIBILITY |
| **General**  General eligibility requirements are set out in : the European Social Fund Programme for England 2014-2020 National Eligibility Rules which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/european-structural-and-investment-funds-programme-guidance>  Please note LEP Specific requirements are subject to the National Eligibility Rules detailed above.  In delivering the Services, the successful Candidate must take into account and support the targets for the following groups where this is consistent with the other Services requirements for addressing the needs of groups identified as priority and meeting the Services deliverables.    Over 50s min 20%  Ethnic groups                          min 18%  Female                                    min 49%  Disability/health issues            min 8%  Lone parents                           min 5%  No basic skills                         min 18%  Theme 1, 2 and 3 - Employed and unemployed and aged 16 +  Theme 4 – Employed and aged 16+ |
| **GEOGRAPHY / AREA OF DELIVERY** |
| The Services will be delivered within the whole South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership area.  Provision must be aligned and work in partnership with provision across the overlapping areas of Northamptonshire, Bucks Thames Valley and Oxfordshire. |
| **FUNDING AND DELIVERABLES** |
| **LEP Specific**  An allocation of up to £6,480,000 will be available for the period from August 2016 to March 2018.  Provision will be procured under 4 themed lots:   * Apprenticeship Services - £1,620,000 * Skills Support for Redundancy - £810,000 * Skills Support for the Workforce (Higher skills) - £3,078,000 * Skills Support for the Workforce (basic skills) - £972,000   The table below shows the initial planned outcomes, but performance management may change the volumes and mix during the life of the contract.  From the funding available on the regulated and non-regulated lines, the provider must plan to deliver the appropriate education & training for each participant to enable them to progress.  The minimum service deliverables, values and volumes for which evidence must be provided are:  **Lot 1: Apprenticeship Services £1,620,000**   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Description** | **Volumes** | **Unit Cost Total Value Average per Intervention** | **£** | | ST01 Learner Assessment and Plan | 1163 | £50 | £58,150 | | RQ01 Regulated Learning |  |  | £731,850 | | NR01 Non Regulated Activity |  |  | £300,000 | | PG04 Progression Apprenticeship (EDU) | 700 | £400 | £280,000 | | SD02 Business Engagement/Brokerage Service and recruitment of higher level apprentice (one payment per employer) | 500 | £500 | £250,000 | | Total |  |  | £1,620,000 |   **Lot 2: Skills Support for Redundancy £810,000**   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Description** | **Volumes** | **Unit Cost Total Value Average per Intervention** | **£** | | ST01 Learner Assessment and Plan | 576.00 | £50 | £28,800 | | RQ01 Regulated Learning |  |  | £150,000 | | NR01 Non Regulated Activity |  |  | £150,000 | | PG01 Progression Paid Employment (EMP) | 300.00 | £600 | £180,000 | | PG04 Progression Apprenticeship (EDU) | 250.00 | £600 | £150,000 | | SU01 Sustained Employment 3 months | 200.00 | £400 | £80,000 | | SU04 Sustained Apprenticeship 3 Months | 178.00 | £400 | £71,200 | | Total |  |  | £810,000 |   **Lot 3: Skills Support for the Workforce (Higher Skills) £3,078,000**   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Description** | **Volumes** | **Unit Cost Total Value Average per Intervention** | **£** | | ST01 Learner Assessment and Plan | 2198 | £50 | £109,900 | | RQ01 Regulated Learning |  |  | £1,099,000 | | NR01 Non Regulated Activity |  |  | £1,099,000 | | SME Engagement and training needs analysis | 219 | £300 | £65,700 | | SD02 Progression within work | 550 | £600 | £330,000 | | PG03 Progression Education (EDU) | 550 | £600 | £330,000 | | PG04 Progression Apprenticeship (EDU) | 74 | £600 | £44,400 | | Total |  |  | £3,078,000 |   **Lot 4: Skills Support for the Workforce (basic skills) £972,000**   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Description** | **Volumes** | **Unit Cost Total Value Average per Intervention** | **£** | | ST01 Learner Assessment and Plan | 694 | £50 | £34,700 | | RQ01 Regulated Learning |  |  | £347,000 | | NR01 Non Regulated Activity |  |  | £347,000 | | SME Engagement and Training Needs Analysis | 71 | £300 | £21,300 | | PG03 Progression Education (EDU) | 150 | £600 | £90,000 | | SD02 Progression within work | 120 | £600 | £72,000 | | PG04 Progression Apprenticeship (EDU) | 100 | £600 | £60,000 | | Total |  |  | £972,000 | |