**Contract 5:**

**Reference:** CSEC (SEND) 17-18/05: Supporting access to employment for young people with special educational needs and disabilities

**Title:** Contract to support access to employment for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

**Contact Details**:

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**Background and description of the services required**

On 1 September 2014, Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 took effect, offering simpler, improved and more consistent help for children and young people in England with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The new system is:

* replacing statements of SEN and learning disability assessments with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans - setting out in one place all the support families will receive;
* requiring councils to publish a ‘local offer’ showing the support available in the area to all children and young people who have disabilities or SEN;
* requiring better co-operation between councils and health services to make sure services for children and young people with SEN and disabilities are jointly planned and commissioned;
* giving parents and young people with EHC plans the offer of a personal budget;
* introducing mediation for disputes; and
* introducing a legal right for children and young people with an EHC plan to express a preference for state academies, free schools and further education colleges.

On 26 January 2016, the Children’s Minister Edward Timpson, announced a package of additional support for implementation of the SEND reforms in England during 2016-17. This included:

* £35.8 million in [implementation funding for local authorities in 2016 to 2017](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-reform-funding-for-local-authorities-2016-to-2017), recognising the additional duties placed on them as a result of the transition to EHC plans
* £27.3 million for the [Family Fund Trust](http://www.familyfund.org.uk/) to support low income families with disabled children
* £15 million to fund the [independent supporters programme](http://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/independentsupport), helping to support families and young people to navigate the system, and creating positive experiences for them
* £2.3 million for [Parent Carer Forums](http://www.nnpcf.org.uk/), which bring parents together to provide invaluable support and advice for families

To complement this programme of delivery support, the Government is now seeking applications for a new contract in 2017-18 to improve access to employment for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Some of the key requirements for the contract are provided at Annex A. Further information is contained within the Invitation to Tender documentation. To request a copy of the documentation, please e mail the contracts mailbox at: Contracts2017-18.SEND@education.gov.uk, quoting the contract title and reference number. In the subject line of your e mail, please include the words ‘Request for ITT documentation’.

**Estimated Contract Start Date (subject to change): 1 April 2017**

**Contract End Date: 31 March 2018**

**Estimated value or range of values**:

The maximum estimated value of this contract is up to £300,000 over the 12 month period, inclusive of VAT.

**Deadline for receipt of tenders (time and date)**:

Three hard copies of all completed tenders must be received by Angela Overington no later than 10.00am on Monday 30 January 2017 at:

The Department for Education

0-25 SEND Unit

Level 1, Sanctuary Buildings

Great Smith Street

London SW1P 3BT

An electronic PDF version must also be submitted no later than 10.00am on

Monday 30 January 2017 to the contracts mailbox at:

Contracts2017-18.SEND@education.gov.uk

**Attachments**

At Annex A are some of the key contract requirements for this tender.

**Whether suitable for SMEs**: Yes

**Whether suitable for VCS**: Yes

**Any other info**:

There may be an option to extend this contract for up to two additional years depending on the contractor’s performance, the availability of funds and an ongoing need for the services provided.

**The estimated date for award is Tuesday 21 March** **2017**

**Annex A: Key Contract Requirements**

**Contract 05 CSEC (SEND)16-17/05: SUPPORTING ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND**

The overarching aims of this contract award are to:

* create a national bank of work placements for young people with SEND on study programmes that meets the needs of education providers; and
* develop a universal access online module for work experience providers to provide them with expertise and best practice in engaging employers.

**1.1 Contract Requirement 1 – to create a national bank of work placements for young people with SEND on study programmes that meets the needs of education providers.**

Work experience should be an integral part of most students’ study programmes. High quality work experience is especially important for low-attaining students with SEND because it helps prepare them for employment and adult life more generally. For young people with SEND, a substantial period of time in the workplace can be a critical step to paid employment – especially if they are unlikely to achieve many academic qualifications – yet only 38% of employers offer work experience.

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Create a national bank of work placements for young people with SEND on study programmes that meets the needs of education providers covering:
	+ the majority of local authorities in England;
	+ a range of different types of SEND;
	+ a range of complexity of SEND;
	+ a range of education providers who deliver post-16 EFA-funded study programmes;
	+ placements in a variety of different sectors and roles; and
	+ all study programmes (except traineeships) and different lengths of placement, with a focus on supported internships and other substantial placements.
* Draw on existing relationships with employers, and also develop relationships with new organisations, thereby increasing the overall number of employers offering work placements to young people with SEND. Placements should be developed in consultation with the needs of education providers so that new placements are created according to need in specific geographical locations and sectors, e.g. for supported internship placements.
* Work with organisations such as the Careers and Enterprise Company to take into account research and best practice on what works.

The contractor should also be willing to liaise and co-operate with government if other similar programmes are offered.

The bidder should demonstrate:

* How many work placements they could develop for the funding available.
* Capacity and expertise to establish where placements are needed for which kinds of sectors / study programmes.
* That they have considered how to engage with small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) **and** national employers to create placements, covering the range of SEND and study programmes as detailed above.
* That they have thought about how to develop a system that ensures fair coverage nationally as demand is likely to outstrip supply, e.g. a maximum number of work placements per education provider.
* That they have developed a system that works effectively so that education providers are provided with a named contact in an organisation who knows about the employer’s commitment to providing these placements. The bidder will not be expected to set up the specifics of work placements; but education providers should be given sufficient information to enable them to do this so that the overwhelming majority end up in a placement being arranged.

**1.2 Contract Requirement 2 – to develop a universal access online module (up to 2 hours) for work experience providers to provide them with expertise and best practice in engaging employers.**

Education providers routinely cite problems with employer engagement as the principal barrier to providing work placements to young people with SEND. Those responsible for setting up work placements may not possess the skills or experience to persuade an employer of the benefits of offering an opportunity to a young person with SEND.

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Develop an accessible, engaging online module (up to two hours) that is empowering and includes examples of best practice (e.g. through short films as well as written case studies) that can be studied in parts to fit in with a busy work experience coordinator’s schedule.
* We would expect the module to be piloted and delivered in the first three months of the contract, and be available and refined over the course of the contract.
* Promote the resource through networks, track usage and respond positively to feedback over the course of the contract.

The bidder should demonstrate:

* Understanding of the gap the resource needs to fill for work experience coordinators (e.g. through informal consultation with those the resource is intending to help), and which skills they need to develop through the module.
* That they have considered how to make the resource informative, engaging, empowering and useful, with good practice included.
* Development of a project plan that enables the module to be developed and piloted in the first three months, and then promoted and refined during the rest of the project.
* Capacity and expertise to develop an online module which is broken into a sensible set of sub-modules which can be easily started and stopped according to the availability of the user.

**1.3 Contract Requirement 3 – Security of Data**

Please submit a security plan that explains how you will ensure that departmental or personal data will be protected.

**1.4 Contract Requirement 4 – Overall delivery and project management**

Bidders should describe the staffing and management structure of the team required to deliver the contract. Bidders should think about any specific risks and issues they foresee. They should describe what contingencies and countermeasures they might put in place to mitigate these risks. They should also describe the structures and governance arrangements required to keep oversight of the scheme and proposed reporting mechanisms and measures.

Bidders should detail:

* proposed staffing and management structure (if bidding as a consortium, including the responsibilities of different consortium members and how they will work together, including who leads the consortium)
* key staff and their roles (CVs can be attached as an annex)
* how they would co-ordinate the different strands of work within the contract to provide a coherent package of support
* demonstrate that they have a detailed understanding of the processes and systems affecting disabled children and young people, and those with SEN, including a good working knowledge of the SEND reforms
* specific risks or issues in delivering the proposal and describe the contingencies they would put in place to mitigate them
* key performance indicators for the contract: what they would look like, examples of what they might include and how the contract’s success will be measured
* how the Department for Education will be provided with management and performance information, including who would provide day-to-day contact; and
* project management arrangements and a high level project/delivery plan.

The bidder should provide details of the proposed staffing structure that will be employed to deliver the outcomes, including key roles identified to lead the activity as well as other roles to support delivery. The bidder should indicate: whether staff are already in place, or would need to be recruited, what they will be responsible for, how much time they are expected to dedicate to the activity (on a Full Time Equivalent basis) and how, if at all, this will change during the contract.

**1.5 Contract Requirement 5 - Costs and value for money**

The Department expects to award a contract to run for one year from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

The proposed budget will be **£300,000** over the one year period. This funding is inclusive of all VAT that may be chargeable.

The scope of this contract may be extended up to a further value of 30% of the contract. Any changes, including the revised costs, would be agreed with the contractor.

The contract may be extended for up to two additional years should it continue to align with Government priorities and should funding be available.

Bidders will need to demonstrate that proposed costs are based on efficient models of delivery and provide good value for public money. You must ensure that all estimated costs are real, auditable and can be justified. Be sure you separately identify and include all expenditure that you expect to incur in relation to proposed activities, i.e. costs associated with:

* overheads i.e. premises/facilities/licences; and
* staffing i.e. management, delivery and administration.

There are restrictions on all paid for communications and marketing activities funded by the Department. You should set out any planned expenditure on these activities with supporting information on the nature of the planned activities.

We would expect quarterly reporting against spending. Please note that the contract is intended to be inclusive of VAT costs and that further amounts will not be available should a vatable supply claim be made at any later stage. No additional costs will be charged to the Department unless agreed with the contract manager prior to expenditure.

It is the responsibility of tenderers to check the VAT position with HMRC before submitting a bid.

Payments of costs to the supplier will be made quarterly by BACS transfer following receipt of a valid invoice.

Bidders should detail:

* a complete breakdown of all costs for the year i.e. 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018, including clear costs for all overheads, including recruitment, accommodation, etc and (if applicable) what VAT will be charged. Where bidders are intending to charge VAT this should be clearly set out in the costs breakdown, including what rate of VAT and an estimate of the total cost of VAT to be charged for the work in question.
* as a memorandum, any planned expenditure on communications and marketing activities and information on the nature of the planned activities
* accounting and finance provisions; and
* how the overall contract will be managed to ensure co-ordination and achieve economies of scale (whether or not provided as a consortium).

**5. Exit plans and Sustainability**

5.1 The contractor will be responsible for sustainability beyond the funded period. Lessons will be shared with external stakeholders through active dissemination with short breaks partners including through online guidance and e-learning, e-newsletters and other online resources produced by the contractor.

**6. Complying with new Government policies**

6.1 The funding is provided on the strict understanding that none of this funding is to be used for advertising, marketing, communications and consultancy, or for any costs associated with the maintenance, technical development or updating of existing websites or for the development/creation of new websites unless this has been agreed with the Department in writing as part of the terms of this contract.