



Partnership Opportunity

Invitation to Tender, September 2017

Progress: Building Better Opportunities for young people across Coventry & Warwickshire

Employer Engagement and Employment Support (Warwickshire)

REF: CovW/1/3/ES



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Overview

Groundwork UK is seeking a Specialist Partner to deliver employer engagement and employment support for 15-24 year old NEET and at risk of NEET young people across Warwickshire.

This programme is financed by the Big Lottery Fund and European Social Fund.

Context

Groundwork UK is delivering a Big Lottery Fund (BLF) and European Social Fund (ESF) co-financed programme called Building Better Opportunities (BBO) in partnership with 14 VCS and statutory organisations.

Progress started delivery in October 2016. Over 18 months Groundwork and its partners will deliver 'Progress' – a tailored programme of coaching support and bespoke activities to NEET and at risk of NEET young people aged between 15 and 24, enabling them to access training and employment opportunities. Progress brings together a unique partnership of local organisations – with support from local councils – to transform the prospects of some of the most marginalised young people in Coventry and Warwickshire. Our partnership will ensure that young people facing the most significant barriers to accessing learning and work are able to recognise their talents and realise their potential.

About 'Progress'

Progress aims to:

- help young people overcome the personal barriers and challenges preventing them from engaging positively in learning or work
- provide a clear pathway for young people to increase their skills and take the first steps on their future career path through training or employment

In order to achieve these aims we have developed a partnership that brings together leading youth and employment charities, organisations specialising in supporting young people with complex needs, colleges and training providers. Together, our focus will be on identifying and helping those young people most in need of support including care leavers, lone parents, young offenders, and young people with disabilities.

Progress will support at least 840 young people aged 15-24 years old, 40% of which will be unemployed and 60% classed as economically inactive. At least one fifth of those we support will be young people with disabilities and at least one in ten from a minority ethnic background.

Our approach will be to work closely together and collaboratively with local stakeholders, in particular local authorities, to provide an accessible and responsive service that encourages young people to succeed and provides clear pathways into positive progressions.

Our delivery model has been designed in consultation with young people and local stakeholders, and draws on a range of successful interventions delivered previously by partners. Central to our model is the deployment of **Progress Coaches** – experienced youth work professionals who will build trust with young people, encouraging them to set positive goals and helping them navigate a tailored path towards employment. Progress Coaches are employed by our End-to-End and Programme Partners who are responsible for the journey of the young person through the programme. **Specialist Partners** work closely with Progress Coaches to provide specialist support service to programme participants. This support is accessed via an internal referral mechanism based on the needs of the individual.

We will support young people through a **five-stage process**:

- **Getting on board** - using communications, outreach and referral arrangements with a range of partners to identify those most in need, ensure their eligibility and promote positive engagement in the programme.
- **Preparing and planning** - helping young people to identify hurdles they need to overcome and working together to develop an individually-tailored action plan containing clear goals and fostering ownership from the outset.

- **A pathway to success** - helping young people to access and benefit from specialist support services, offered from within the partnership and through local agencies, to help overcome personal challenges such as mental health issues, debt problems or substance misuse.
- **Building strengths** - using group work, training and volunteering to help young people grow in confidence or acquire new skills that will support their journey to employment.
- **Achieving goals** - identifying the most appropriate progression route for each young person, supporting a move into training or work and maintaining contact after the transition to help ensure success is sustained.

Our model is designed to be:

- **flexible** - providing intensive, long-term support to those who need it most while ensuring those who are ready to progress aren't held back
- **tailored** - offering a bespoke path through the programme based on individual aims and aspirations
- **trusted** - using youth work approaches to build relationships that offer support and understanding but also push and challenge when required
- **integrated** - working closely with other local services and provision ensuring clarity for those involved and maximising the impact of the programme.

Locations

Progress will support young people in all parts of Coventry and Warwickshire, with 60% of participants living in priority wards identified by the Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP). 70% of all activity will be focused in Warwickshire. We will address known areas of high need and focus efforts to engage young people who may be 'hidden NEETs', affected by isolation and not engaged through other initiatives. Progress partners will operate from a range of accessible local delivery hubs, including community buildings and youth clubs giving us capacity in urban centres and reach into more rural areas.

Outcomes

Progress has been designed to form part of the solution to local challenges, linking with existing services to provide a suite of integrated interventions that will lead to the following outcomes:

- young people demonstrating increased confidence, and self-esteem
- young people with increasingly positive attitudes towards work and their own employment prospects
- young people with better skills for finding and sustaining employment
- young people reporting improved well-being.

To deliver these outcomes, we will aim to achieve the following results:

- 30% (252) of participants moving into education or training on leaving the programme
- 20% (168) of participants moving into employment or self-employment on leaving the programme
- 30% (151) of participants who were economically inactive before joining the programme regularly looking for work by the end.

Partnership Management

The Progress partnership will be led and managed by Groundwork UK, who will be responsible for ensuring high quality and compliant delivery within a supportive partnership framework, geared towards sharing learning and driving continuous improvement. Partnership governance arrangements will be underpinned by a Partnership Agreement setting out clear roles and responsibilities. Partners and stakeholders will oversee performance through an inclusive steering group, and a dedicated young person's steering group will ensure activities remain relevant and youth-led.

More information can be found in the Progress Partner Directory here:

<http://www.groundwork.org.uk/progress>

Opportunity

Groundwork UK is looking for a Specialist Partner or Partners to deliver **employability support** and **employment/ work placement services** to participants of BBO Progress across Warwickshire.

Proposals are sought from organisations with experience in **engaging employers** including **sourcing job/ work placement opportunities**, and providing **employment support** to young people aged between 15-24 who are facing significant barriers to engaging with education, employment and training. The varied and complex needs of young people will require an accessible, engaging, supportive approach. Support will ideally be provided in a combination of one-to-one and group settings, and will preferably be delivered in local, community settings across the county. Proposals are particularly welcome from organisations who are able to provide **tailored support for young people with learning differences and physical disabilities**, and who have experience supporting young people in **rural areas**.

Participants access Specialist Partner support via a referral from their Progress Coach. Whilst accessing specialist provision, the young person will also continue to receive support from their Progress Coach. Specialist Partners and Progress Coaches work together to track the progress of participants and ensure that they are taking the maximum benefit from the programme.

The successful tenderer will support other partners with their own **employer engagement strategies**, broker relationships with local employers across Warwickshire, and support a coordinated approach to Warwickshire employer engagement on behalf of the partnership. Ideally the partner(s) will be able to deliver across the whole county, but proposals from organisations delivering only in specific areas will be considered. In these circumstances the full budget may be distributed across a number of successful tenderers.

The approach to work placement and job brokerage activity should reflect the needs of the young people participating in the programme, with **tailored opportunities** identified to meet specific interest and needs. We envisage that this will require engagement with local, small employers to identify opportunities located in accessible location for young people.

Please note that all Building Better Opportunities activity **must** represent additional activity to any delivery paid for by other means.

Funding available:

A total of **£50,000** is available for the delivery of the above activity for young people across Warwickshire. This must provide the above support for a minimum of **55** young people.

Proposals will be considered and a tender / tenders awarded based on the merit of the submissions. Groundwork UK reserves the right to distribute the total funding between multiple organisations in order to obtain the best possible offer for programme beneficiaries.

An indicative breakdown of expected Progress participant numbers in each district is included below to aid planning.

	Coventry	North Warks	Nuneaton & Bedworth	Rugby	Stratford	Warwick	Pan-Warks	Total
Young people	252	65	205	80	70	98	70	870

Partner Requirements & Further Details

We are looking for organisations:

- With experience of engaging employers in Warwickshire.
- With track record of delivering deliver employability support.
- Able to deliver support through a flexible, accessible, engaging approach suited to the client group
- With delivery history and capacity in Warwickshire – ideally with experience of working with NEET / at risk of NEET young people and/or young people with complex or specific barriers – including learning differences and physical disabilities - to engagement with education, employment or training.
- With experience and track record in supporting young people.
- Committed to open communication and collaborative, partnership-focussed working.
- Ready to commence delivery from autumn 2017.
- Who will add value to the Progress partnership overall, supporting other partners to recruit and progress suitable young people.
- With the experience, capacity and capability to manage the requirements of the European Social Fund.

Existing partners are welcome to apply in the interests of diversifying or increasing their role in the programme, but they will not be at an advantage, with all tenders reviewed objectively and awards made on merit.

Due Diligence

Successful organisations will be subject to a full due diligence process to assess financial management capacity, financial stability, staffing capacity and relevant policies and procedures. Successful partners will be supported where possible to meet minimum requirements. A Due Diligence Template is available for information on request.

Delivery Dates

Delivery will be expected to begin during autumn 2017 and will end in December 2018.

Partnership arrangements

A Service Level Agreement will be put in place to outline delivery requirements.

In addition, partners will sign one shared Partnership Agreement within which all individual targets, profiles and due diligence commitments will be stated. Partners will be expected to operate collaboratively and in the spirit of partnership.

In doing so, there is a requirement to attend partnership meetings and meetings with stakeholders. Partners should expect to attend meetings designed to support ongoing collaboration and service integration at least monthly.

Funding and Payment

Payment will be made in the form of a **grant**, with a **maximum of 15%** of the grant available to partners to contribute towards **overhead costs**. As an ESF funded grant programme, grant recipients are **not** permitted to generate profit. Grant payments will be made **quarterly** according to an agreed profile, and any underspend or ineligible spend clawed back on a quarterly basis. It is the individual partner's responsibility to ensure that all expenditure must be made in line with Big Lottery Fund and European Social Fund requirements. Guidance will be provided in the Partner Agreement and accompanying documents.

Groundwork UK reserves the right to withhold payments due to poor performance. 5% of the grant will be retained until the end of the programme in line with Big Lottery Fund arrangements.

Management Information & Security

Successful partners will be required to use the management information processes and systems provided by Groundwork UK for all young person records and claims, and to comply with data security requirements as outlined in the Partnership Agreement in line with the Data Protection Act.

Quality, Compliance, and Evaluation

Successful partners will be expected to fully take part in programme-specific quality and compliance activities. Partners will be expected to regularly self-assess delivery quality, and to make files available for regular audits and spot checks by Groundwork UK and the funder. Partners will also be required to contribute to the external evaluation of the programme.

Procurement Process

1. With reference to the Scoring Matrix (Appendix C), please complete the following submit both documents below to eileen.henderson@groundwork.org.uk and contracts@groundwork.org.uk by **5pm on Monday 16th October 2017**:
 - a. **Tender Submission** (Appendix B) and
 - b. **Form of Tender** (Appendix D)
2. Groundwork will assess and score tenders and respond to all tenderers by **5pm on Friday 20th October 2017**.
3. The highest scoring tenderers may be invited to interview at Groundwork UK (Central Birmingham) on **25th or 26th October 2017**. Please ensure suitable representatives are available on one of these dates.
4. The outcome of the process will be communicated by **Friday 27th October 2017**.
5. The successful tenderer(s) will be invited to meet with Groundwork UK **week commencing 30th October 2017**.
6. Delivery to commence on or before **6th November 2017**.

Further Information

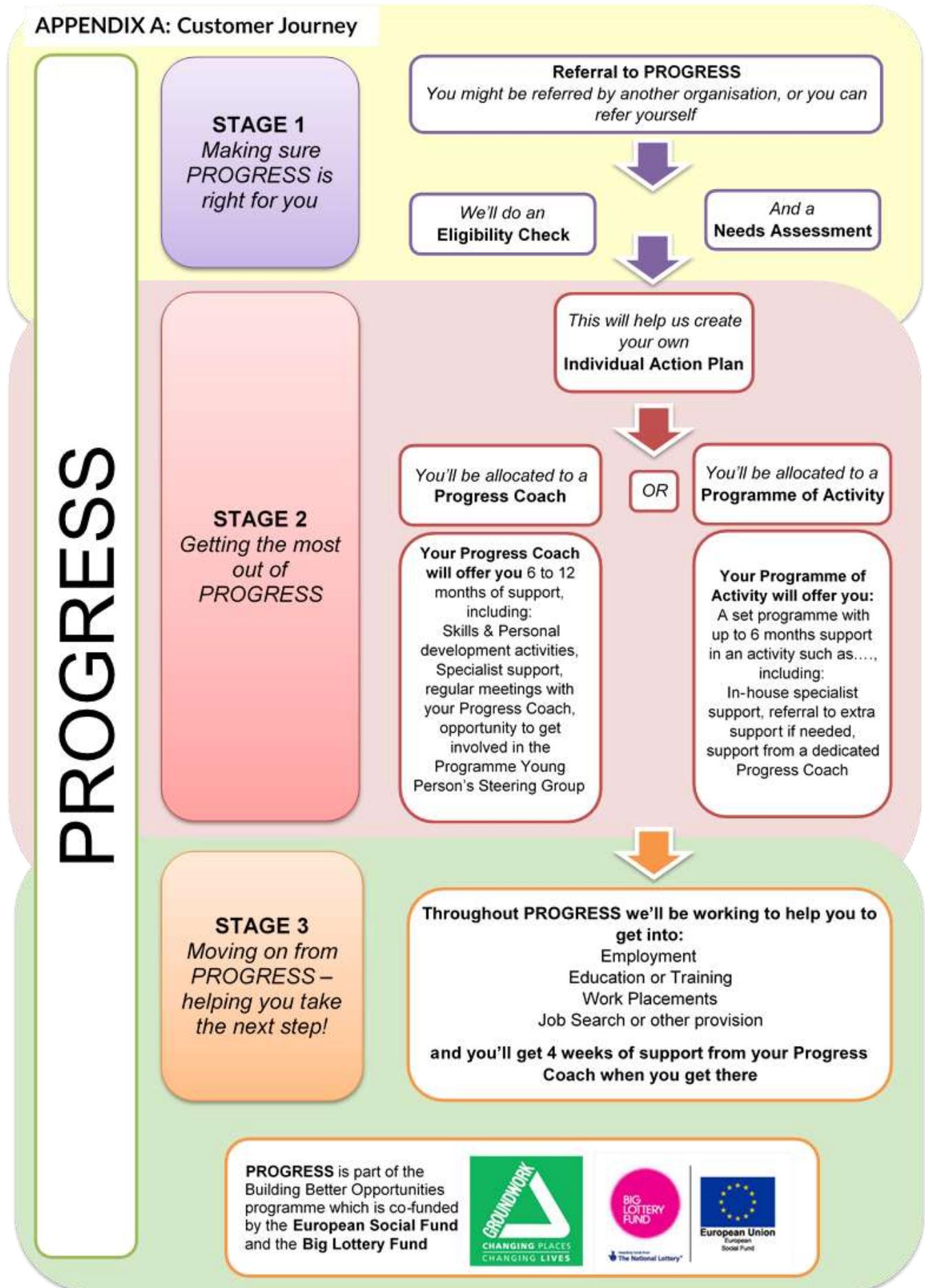
For further information or clarification please email progress@groundwork.org.uk stating "BBO Partnership Tender" in the email subject line, or contact Sarah Duncan or Andy Harrison on 0121 236 8565.

The final deadline for tender-related questions is **midday, Wednesday 11th October 2017**.

More information regarding BBO Progress, can be found on the Groundwork website <http://www.groundwork.org.uk/building-better-opportunities-progress>

Full details of the Building Better Opportunities programme can be found on the Big Lottery Fund website <https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/esf>.

Full guidance documents from the Big Lottery Fund can be found here: <https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/global-content/programmes/england/building-better-opportunities/building-better-opportunities-resources>



APPENDIX B: Tender Submission Template

Please refer to separate document:

BBO_ITT_APPENDIX B_SubmissionTemplate_CovW-1-3-EC_Aug17

APPENDIX C: Scoring Matrix

Please refer to separate document:

BBO_ITT_APPENDIX C_ScoringMatrix_CovW-1-3-EC_Aug17

APPENDIX D: Form of Tender

Please refer to separate document:

BBO_ITT_APPENDIX D_FormOfTender_CovW-1-3-EC_Aug17