**2024/25**

**Turing Scheme**

**Call for Partners**

**Tender Specification**

**February 2024**

Contract Period: 1 September 2024 – 31 August 2025, (12 months) subject to external funding.

1. **Partnership Working**

Leicester College is a provider of high-quality education and skills to a wide and diverse range of young people and adults; we value partnership working to offer our students the best possible solution to their training and skills needs. Collaborative partnership working allows Leicester College to offer a wider range of opportunities and broaden the geographic footprint of our delivery, introduce specialist learning aims or operate diverse delivery modes.

Leicester College considers that this procurement is for below-threshold contract(s) under Chapter 8 of the Public Contracts Regulations for the purpose of procuring the services described in this document.

1. **Turing Scheme Overview**

In Spring 2024, Leicester College intends to submit a grant funding application to the Department for Education (DfE) for the 2024/25 Turing Scheme. The Scheme funds mobility placements in education and training across the world. Further details on this bid opportunity can be accessed here (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/turing-scheme-international-study-and-work-placements/overview-of-the-turing-scheme>).

By the end of 2023/24 academic year, we will have supported 99 students with life-changing experiences to work abroad and develop new skills, gain vital international experience, and boost their employability. We currently offer these mobility placements in Spain and are now seeking providers to help us geographically expand our mobility placement offer.

To enable selected 2024/25 student cohorts to benefit from overseas further education-based mobility placements, we are currently welcoming tenders from experienced and reputable organisations to support us by organising, managing, and delivering these international mobility placements. Partners will need to agree to be named in the College’s application for funding by signing letters of intent, to be provided prior to interview. Signature of the of the letter of intent should not be interpreted as an undertaking to purchase any goods or services to any specific value.

Leicester College proposes to enter into one or more contract(s) for a maximum period of 12 months.

The anticipated annual value of the services is approximately £25,000 to £125,000.

Details of current or historic numbers or potential future uptake or expenditure are given in good faith as a guide to past purchasing and current planning to assist you in submitting your tender. They should not be interpreted as an undertaking to purchase any goods or services to any specific value and do not form part of the contract.

1. **Minimum Expectations**

To be considered as a partner organisation we require, as a minimum:

* Experience of supporting mobility placements abroad with UK further education students including apprentices
* Evidence of working with underrepresented students which include ethnic/white minorities, those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND), including people with additional learning needs (ALN).
* Mobility placements with external employers which enable students to enhance skills and improve educational and career prospects (organisations can list single or multiple sectors/locations).
* Placements of at least 14 days (excluding travel time) or at least 7 days for those students with SEND/ALN.
* Mobility placements to take place between mid-October 2024 to 31 August 2025.
1. **Tender Values/Cost**

From the stated funds available for further education providers (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/turing-scheme-international-study-and-work-placements/turing-scheme-guidance-for-further-education-providers>), we expect bidders to pitch their mobility placement programmes based on the “**Travel funding**” and “**Contribution to living costs**” categories both of which depend on the destination.

Bidders can also put in a bid solely for the **“Contribution to living costs”** category.

These are based on an assessment of the general cost of living in those destinations:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Group 1** – higher cost of living | **Group 2** – lower cost of living |

There is information on the destinations in each group in the list of destinations and the travel funding grant rates: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/turing-scheme-international-study-and-work-placements/list-of-destinations-and-grant-rates>

The funding we bid for is capped as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Placement Duration** | **Group 1** | **Group 2** |
| First 14 days | £109 per day | £87 per day |
| After 14 days | £76 per day | £61 per day |

Please note, we expect placements to last at least 14 days (excluding travel time) or at least 7 days for those students with SEND/ALN. *If you are an organisation offering mobility placements for students with additional needs, then please include any details of the costs expected as these will be applied for within our bid.*

The “Organisational Support” and “Travel Cost” (if not requested) funding will be utilised by the College to help coordinate the recruitment process, project audits, and the travel costs of the mobility placements.

1. **Clarifications about the Services or ITT**

Any clarifications relating to this ITT must be submitted by email to iwex@leicestercollege.ac.uk.

Leicester College will respond to all reasonable clarifications as soon as possible and will publish bidders' questions and Leicester College's response to them in a Clarifications Log. If a bidder wishes Leicester College to treat a clarification as confidential and not issue the response to all bidders, it must state this when submitting the clarification. If, in the opinion of Leicester College, the clarification is not confidential, Leicester College will inform the bidder and it will have an opportunity to withdraw it. If the clarification is not withdrawn, the response will be issued to all bidders.

The deadline for receipt of clarifications relating to the Services or this ITT is set out below: “Timelines”.

Bidders are advised not to rely on communications from Leicester College in respect of the Services or ITT unless they are made in accordance with these instructions.

1. **Post Tender Submission**

After we review the tenders received, further clarification questions and/or a short panel interview process will be used to ensure we can make informed choices.

Following this process, a suitable partner, or partners, will be listed within the College’s anticipated bid for the 2024/25 Turing Scheme.

1. **Contract Award**

Leicester College may award Contract(s) on the basis of the tender submitted in accordance with the instructions below.

Contract award is subject to the formal approval process of Leicester College and confirmation of funding from the DfE. Until all necessary approvals are obtained, the standstill period completed, and funding confirmed no Contract(s) will be entered into.

Once Leicester College has reached a decision in respect of a contract award, it will notify all bidders of that decision and provide for a standstill period in accordance with the PCR 2015 before entering into any Contract(s). Notification that a tender has been successful does not guarantee a Contract will be awarded.

No Contracts will be entered into until the College has received confirmation from the DfE that its application for Turing funding for 2024/25 has been successful, and the amount of funding to be awarded has been confirmed.

Leicester College does not undertake to accept the lowest priced tender, or part, or all of any tender, and the acknowledgement of receipt of any submitted tender shall not constitute any actual or implied contract between Leicester College and the bidder. Leicester College reserves the right to accept any tender at its sole discretion.

1. **Timelines**

These are the indicative timescales (except for the deadlines in bold) and may be subject to change at the College’s discretion.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Stage/Event** | **Date** |
| Invitation to Tender Opens | 12 February 2024 |
| Clarification Deadline | 11am on 19 February 2024 |
| **Invitation to Tender Closes** | **11am on 27 February 2024** |
| Assessment, clarification, due diligence | 28 - 29 February 2024 |
| Interviews | 4 - 5 March 2024 |
| Outcome | 8 March 2024 |
| Letters of intent returned | 11 March 2024 |

Responses to this ITT must be sent by email to iwex@leicestercollege.ac.uk Responses must be received at the address and in the manner prescribed no later than the deadline.

1. **Scoring**

Leicester College will assess all grant applications submitted by **11am 27 February 2024**.

A five-point scoring framework will be used as follows:

| **Score** | **Assessment** | **Description** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | Unacceptable | Response is unacceptable or no response received. Does not offer confidence in the ability of the bidding organisation to deliver the contract. |
| 1 | Poor/Weak | Inadequate detail provided, or some of the answer is not directly relevant to the question. Supported by none or a weak standard of evidence giving rise to concern about the ability of the bidding organisation to deliver the contract. |
| 2 | Satisfactory | Acceptable response for the level of detail, accuracy, and relevance. Supported by satisfactory standard of evidence in most areas. However, a few areas lack detail/evidence giving rise to the ability of the bidding organisation to deliver the contract. |
| 3 | Good | Comprehensive, supported by a high standard of evidence. Offers a high level of confidence in the ability of the bidder organisation to deliver the contract.  |
| 5 | Excellent | In addition to satisfying the criteria for ‘3 Good’, the response also exceeds the bid requirements, for example, added value such as integration/synergy with other projects. |

For questions 3B and 3C the data provided will be considered as part of the response provided in question 3.

1. **Scoring Split (per question)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Question** | **Max Score** |
| 1A | Not scored |
| 1B | Not scored |
| 1C | Not scored |
| 2 | Not Scored |
| 3A | 5 |
| 3B | Scored as Evidence for 3A |
| 3C |
| 4A | 5 |
| 4B | 5 |
| 4C | 5 |
| 5 | 5 |
| 6 | 5 |
| 7 | 5 |
| 8 | 5 |
| 9 | 5 |
| 10 | 5 |
| 11 | 5 |
| 12 | 5 |

1. **Price Envelope**

The price envelope will be determined by the amount of funding awarded by the DfE.

Leicester College will evaluate eligible tenders on the basis of quality only, provided that the bidder’s tendered price is within the Price Envelope. Following assessment, Leicester College will inform all applicants of the outcome of the assessment and provide feedback if requested.

1. **Contract Terms and Conditions**

The draft Contract that Leicester College proposes to use is provided as **Document 3 – Draft Contract.** By submitting a tender, bidders are agreeing to be bound by the terms of this ITT and the Contract without further negotiation or amendment.

If the terms of the Contract render the proposals in the bidder's tender unworkable, the bidder should submit a clarification in accordance with this ITT and Leicester College will consider whether any amendment to the Contract is required. Any amendments shall be published through a Clarifications Log and shall apply to all bidders. Where both the amendment and the original drafting are acceptable and workable to Leicester College, Leicester College shall publish the amendment as an alternative to the original drafting. Bidders should indicate if they prefer the amendment; otherwise the original drafting shall apply. Any amendments which are proposed, but not approved by Leicester College through this process, will not be acceptable and may be construed as a rejection of the terms leading to the disqualification of the tender.

1. **Clarifications**

If any bidder wishes to raise any queries in relation to this ITT or the procurement process the bidder must submit the enquiry via the iwex@leicestercollege.ac.uk email address.

Leicester College will endeavour to respond to clarification requests as quickly as possible but encourages bidders to raise clarifications as soon as they can.

Leicester College shall not be responsible in any way to bidders as a result of any delay or failure in answering any request for clarification or any decision not to answer a request for clarification (either in full or in part) or to treat any request for clarification as commercially sensitive or not commercially sensitive. Absence of a response from Leicester College shall not entitle bidders to qualify their tenders.

Any tender received after the deadline shall not be opened or considered. Leicester College may, however, in its own absolute discretion extend the deadline and, in such circumstances, Leicester College will notify all bidders of any change.

1. **References and Due Diligence**

Bidders are requested to supply two references; these will be used to verify the technical proposals put forward in the tender and will not be scored. Leicester College reserves the right to seek references from any of the bidder's customers, including Leicester College, whether or not the bidder has listed such customers as referees. Leicester College reserves the right to conduct further due diligence checks prior to contract award.

1. **Warnings and Disclaimers**

While the information contained in this ITT is believed to be correct at the time of issue, neither Leicester College, its advisors, nor any other awarding authorities will accept any liability for its accuracy, adequacy or completeness, nor will any express or implied warranty be given. This exclusion extends to liability in relation to any statement, opinion or conclusion contained in or any omission from, this ITT (including its appendices) and in respect of any other written or oral communication transmitted (or otherwise made available) to any bidder. This exclusion does not extend to any fraudulent misrepresentation made by or on behalf of Leicester College.

If a bidder proposes to enter into a Contract with Leicester College, it must rely on its own enquiries and on the terms and conditions set out in the Contract(s) (as and when finally executed), subject to the limitations and restrictions specified in it.

Neither the issue of this ITT, nor any of the information presented in it, should be regarded as a commitment or representation on the part of Leicester College (or any other person) to enter into a contractual arrangement.

1. **Confidentiality and Freedom of Information**

All information supplied by Leicester College to bidders (including this ITT and all other documents relating to the procurement), whether in writing or orally, is supplied on condition that it (including the fact that the bidder has received this ITT) be kept confidential by the bidder; it must not be copied, reproduced, distributed or passed to any other person at any time (except to professional advisors, consortium members or subcontractors for the sole purpose of enabling the bidder to submit a tender) unless the information is already in the public domain.

As a public body, Leicester College is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/3391) (EIR) in respect of information it holds (including third party information). Any member of the public or other interested party may make a request for information. Leicester College is also subject to various public sector transparency policies and legal requirements, including the placing of contract award notices on the Contracts Finder database which identify the contract values and successful supplier and the provision of information to candidates and tenderers in regulation 112 of the PCR 2015.

Bidders should therefore be aware that information provided in connection with this procurement, or in connection with any contract awarded, may be disclosed by Leicester College, unless Leicester College decides (in its absolute discretion) that one of the statutory exemptions under the FOIA or the EIR applies. Requests for information and application of any exemptions shall be considered on a case-by-case basis. By taking part in this procurement, the bidder agrees to such disclosure or publication by Leicester College.

Bidders may designate any information supplied as part of their tender response or otherwise in connection with the procurement as confidential or commercially sensitive by clearly identifying it as such to Leicester College in the template provided at Schedule 9. Blanket protective markings applied to the whole document will not be sufficient. While designating material as confidential or commercially sensitive or equivalent does not guarantee non-disclosure, Leicester College will consider this as part of any disclosure decision.

1. **Publicity**

No publicity regarding the Services or the award of any Contract will be permitted unless and until Leicester College has given prior express written consent to the relevant communication. For example, no statements may be made to the media regarding the nature of any tender, its contents or any proposals relating to it without the prior written consent of Leicester College.

1. **Bidder Conduct and Conflicts of Interest**

Any attempt by bidders or their advisors to influence the contract award process in any way may result in the bidder being disqualified. Specifically, bidders shall not directly or indirectly at any time:

* Devise or amend the content of their tender in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other person, other than in good faith with a person who is a proposed partner, supplier, consortium member or provider of finance.
* Enter into any agreement or arrangement with any other person as to the form or content of any other tender, or offer to pay any sum of money or valuable consideration to any person to effect changes to the form or content of any other tender.
* Enter into any agreement or arrangement with any other person that has the effect of prohibiting or excluding that person from submitting a tender.
* Canvass Leicester College or any employees or agents of Leicester College in relation to this procurement.
* Offer, promise or give any person working for or engaged by Leicester College a financial or other advantage as an inducement or reward for any improper performance of a function or activity relating to this procurement.
* Attempt to obtain information from any of the employees or agents of Leicester College or their advisors concerning another bidder or tender.
* Bidders are responsible for ensuring that no direct or indirect conflicts of interest exist (whether personal, financial or otherwise) between the bidder, its employees and advisors, and Leicester College, its employees and advisors. Bidders must prevent, identify and remedy any conflicts of interest within their group structures and within Consortium or Subcontracting arrangements which may result in any distortion of competition. Any bidder who fails to comply with these requirements may be disqualified from the procurement at the discretion of Leicester College.
1. **Authority's Rights**

Leicester College reserves the right to:

* Waive or change the requirements of this ITT from time to time without prior (or any) notice being given by Leicester College.
* Seek clarification in respect of any part of a bidder's submission.
* Request bidders to submit, supplement, clarify or complete relevant information or documentation where it appears to be incomplete, erroneous or missing.
* Disqualify any bidder that does not submit a compliant tender in accordance with the instructions in this ITT.
* Disqualify any bidder that is guilty of serious misrepresentation or of negligently providing misleading information in relation to its tender, expression of interest or the tender process.
* Not award a contract to the bidder submitting the most economically advantageous tender where it has established that the tender does not comply with applicable obligations in the fields of environmental, social and labour law established by national law, collective agreements or by the international environmental, social and labour law provisions.
* Withdraw this ITT at any time, or to re-invite tenders on the same or any alternative basis.
* Choose not to award any Contract as a result of the current procurement process or to abandon that process.
* Make whatever changes it sees fit to the timetable, structure or content of the procurement process, depending on approvals processes or for any other reason.
1. **Bid Costs**

Leicester College will not be liable for any bid costs, expenditure, work or effort incurred by a bidder in proceeding with or participating in this procurement, including if the procurement process is terminated or amended by Leicester College.

1. **No Implied Contract and Limitation of liability**

The bidder understands and acknowledges that no implied contract of any kind whatsoever, by, or on behalf, of Leicester College shall arise or be implied from anything contained in this Invitation to Tender. The bidder agrees that it prepares and submits a tender at its own risk, cost and expense. Only the agreed Contract shall create contractual rights as between the parties.

Notwithstanding anything else in this Invitation to Tender, if a contract is implied between the parties, Leicester College’s total aggregate liability in contract, tort (including negligence or breach of statutory duty), misrepresentation, restitution or otherwise, arising in connection with this Invitation to Tender shall, subject to the remainder of this paragraph be limited to £500, representing a reasonable pre-estimate of the bidder’s loss and damage. Nothing in this agreement excludes the liability of Leicester College for fraud or fraudulent misrepresentation; or for any other liability that cannot be excluded or limited by law. Leicester College shall not be liable whether in tort (including for negligence or breach of statutory duty), contract, misrepresentation, restitution or otherwise for any loss of profits, loss of business, depletion of goodwill and/or similar losses or loss or corruption of data or information, or pure economic loss, or for any special, indirect or consequential loss, costs, damages, charges or expenses however arising under this agreement.

1. **Next Steps**

If you are interested in becoming one of our listed delivery partners for the 2024/25 Turing Scheme, then please complete bidding form **Document 2 – Response Form**. This will help us examine your specific expertise, geographical coverage, track record, proposed delivery methodology, ability to achieve contractual outcomes and within the specified Turing Scheme funding rates.

Please note, the completion of the response form does not bind Leicester College to any contract.

Once completed please return **Document 2 - Response Form** to iwex@leicestercollege.ac.uk before **11am on 27 February 2024.**

Any questions regarding this process can also be directed to this address.

**Thank you for your interest in working with Leicester College.**