**Mandarin Expansion Programme FAQ**

Schools participating in the programme

**Q.** Will the Department identify the initial cohort of schools who will participate in the programme, rather than the contractor?

**A.** The Department is drawing up a list of possible schools and we will work to recruit schools from this list. We anticipate that these will be recruited before the contract is in place. However, the contractor may need to assist in recruiting schools if this is not the case.

**Q.** The Invitation to Tender mentioned a list of schools provided by the department of education. Is it possible to have the list of schools at this stage?

Please can you provide an indication of the geographical spread of the 20 schools that have been selected to commence the programme in Year 1?

**A.** We have not yet confirmed which schools will be participating in the first year of the programme and still need to go through a process of recruiting them. All schools that will be approached will already have established Mandarin programmes.

**Q.** We are a school that would like to participate in the programme. How do we apply?

Is this opportunity open to all mainstream secondary schools in England, regardless of whether they offer Mandarin or not?

**A.** For the first year of the programme, we are drawing up a list of schools who have established Mandarin programmes and we will be approaching these. For latter years, we will be working with the contractor over which schools participate in the programme and the contractor will give further advice once appointed.

**Q.** What is the DfE view on the number of schools to be engaged with the programme?

**A.** It is expected that around /up to 20 schools will participate in the programme in the first year. In later years, it is for the contractor to manage the required number of schools to meet the 5,000 pupils target. Please note that every school who participates in the programme must be given £20,000 each year they participate by the contractor.

School incentive payment and teacher employment

**Q.** On page 20, clause 17.1.10 you say that the Contractor should pay £20,000 to each school per year. The calculation below shows that these payments will be greater than the total project value.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Number of schools | Number of students (20 per school) | Payment (£20,000 per school) |
| Year 1 | 20 | 400 | 20 x £20,000 |
| Year 2 | 100 | 2000 | 100 x £20,000 |
| Year 3 | 250 | 5000 | 250 x £20,000 |
| Year 4 | 250 | 5000 | 250 x £20,000 |
| TOTAL |  |  | £12,400,000 |

Can you please confirm our understanding of clause 17.1.10 is correct?

**A.** It is for the contractor to make proposals that come within the budget allocated to the programme, but there may be more than one cohort of pupils per-school. Please do propose figures that you think are viable.

**Q.** Can you please clarify what costs will be covered from the £20,000 incentive payment to schools? Will this include teachers’ salaries as well?

**A.** It will be a matter for schools to decide how best to use the £20,000, but schools are expected to employ necessary teachers and pay the subsequent costs, including their salary, and NI contributions.

Expert group

**Q.** Can you please confirm who is going to be the point of contact within the expert group?

**A.** The Department for Education will be the point of contact for the expert group.

**Q.** Who will be on the expert group? We welcome the expert group’s input, though of course we would not expect the group to impose project changes that take us out of any final signed contract unless we were in agreement. Can we clarify that point?

**A.** The expert group will be formed of a range of sector experts from schools, higher education institutions and other relevant organisations. The expert group will decide on pedagogical approaches, resources to be used and how the 8 hours should be distributed (please see the tender document for the full list of their responsibilities). The contractor is required to implement these recommendations where reasonably possible.

**Q.** We have seen that a programme expert group will be convened by the DfE. We wanted to understand whether we could apply to contribute to this group and what would be the process for that.

**A.** The Minister for Schools is responsible for deciding who will be on the expert group and there is no process to apply to be a part of it.

**Q.** Will the contractor have a position on the expert group?

**A.** We will have discussions with the winning bidder regarding how their views will be represented in the expert group

Other

**Q.** I would like to get in contact with other bidding organisations, can you give me their contact details?

**A.** Unfortunately, we cannot release the contact details of organisations who have requested an invitation to tender document, but we can pass your details on to them, so that they can consider contacting you.

**Q.** Are you expecting the bidder to define what a native speaker is?

**A.** This will be decided by schools on an individual basis.

**Q.** We already have a suite of resources, are we able to include these in the delivery of the programme?

**A.** It is required that any resources created as a part of the programme must be made available for free. For pre-existing resources, the expert group will decide which may be used and they may consider the associated costs, quality and availability.

**Q.** Can money be allocated for activity beyond the term of the contract? e.g. pupil visits to China.

**A.** It is not required that every child participating in the programme will visit China, however, bidders may propose any number of pupils visiting China. Regarding those that may visit beyond the term of the contract, again, bidders may include whatever solution they think is most appropriate. It is not normal practice to fund activity in advance, however, if this is required to recruit pupils then the contractor is able to use money they receive from payment by results to fund this.

**Q.** The tender document states that pupils should take exams within 6 years after starting the programme. Is this 6 years after September 2016 or from when the pupil has joined the programme?

**A.** Pupils are expected to reach a high level of fluency, as defined in the invitation to tender document, within 6 years of starting the programme. Not within 6 years of the programme starting.

**Q.** In Item 11.3 of the invitation to tender document, a copy of the last two audited accounts are requested. Due to the size of our organisation we are not required to submit around accounts to be audited. How can this be managed?

**A.** This would not result in mandatory exclusion and will not adversely impact scores against our evaluation criteria. Please send a viable alternative such as accounts submitted to HMRC.

**Q.** Is a contents page included in the 25 page limit?

**A.** Yes, however it is not required to be a full page.

**Q.** Does the £100k communications spend limit include VAT?

**A.** Yes.

**Q.** The Terms and Conditions set out in the invitation to tender document are in direct opposition with our statutory obligations as a public body.

**A.** If any of our terms should hinder any other organisation’s statutory responsibilities we would amend such terms if an organisation of this nature is successful.