**Clarifications to Invitation To Tender (ITT) for Four Research Projects into the SME Engagement with the Skills Services Within Cornwall**

Q1. To optimise the budget available for this research, we will be proposing to run the research as one single project but with questions/strands that pick-up on the topics within each Lot (e.g. one overarching SME survey, rather than four individual surveys).  Please can you confirm that you will accept our response on this basis.

We would draw your attention to the following sections in the ITT:

*Section 5*

*The budget for each Lot will be reviewed as part of the ITT evaluation detailed in Section 11.*

*A contractor can bid for one or multiple lots, however there is no financial advantage to be gained from securing more than one commission.*

The responses for each Lot will be assessed individually as per Section 13.

You will therefore be required to provide costing for each of the Lots. It is for you to determine how you meet the requirements set out in 9.2 and 9.3

Q2. To check regarding point 9.2, is it ‘no more than 4 sides of A4’ **per** Lot?

Yes.

Q3. Do contractors need to source sample for the different audiences? More specifically:

* Do you have a list of SMEs that the Skills Hub has engaged with that can be provided for research purposes? If so, what contact details can be provided (e.g. name, phone number, email, reason for contact, recency of contact, activities undertaken)?
* Do you have a wider (representative) sample of SME businesses in Cornwall that can be used for the research? If so, what contact details can be provided?

The Skills Hub has a database of client businesses; however this research use is not currently within the GDPR parameters of it’s use. We are able to share the opportunity to partake in research opportunities with our clients asking them to “opt in”.

Skills Hub is part of wider business networks with whom the opportunity to take part in research could be shared with and any interested businesses asked to “opt in”.

Contractors are able to use their own resources to identify/contact businesses from different audiences.

Q4. What definition are you using for SMEs? Are you applying a cut-off of 250 employees? Are all industry sectors to be included in the research?

SME in this context is a company with <250 employees and an annual turnover of less than or equal to €50 million or a balance sheet of less than or equal to €43 million. All industry sectors are included in this research.

Q5. Is the main focus of the research on SMEs that have their head office in Cornwall / Isle of Scilly? (rather than, say, SMEs who only have ‘sites’ within Cornwall / Isle of Scilly, and not a head office?)

The focus of this research should be on SMEs who have >50% economic activity in the CIoS.

Q6. With reference to the ITT ‘Four Research Projects into the SME Engagement with the Skills Services Within Cornwall’, could you clarify:

The number of SME’s to be included within the research i.e. is there a minimum expectation, and whether the SME contact information will be provided by the Skills Hub / Growth Hub

The number of SMEs included should reflect the proposed budget submission. We would refer you to answer 3.

**Clarification questions close for this opportunity at 1600 22 December 2022**