



Opportunity to provide engagement and advice services for Cumbria Business Growth Hub

This opportunity is issued by Cumbria Chamber of Commerce in relation to engaging businesses in support and delivering advice. Our requirement is in relation to a number of separate initiatives supporting non ERDF eligible businesses.

Note: If you are already working for us as an adviser in any capacity you should reapply to work on this activity, ensuring you highlight relevant sector experience (submitting a previous application plus a covering letter with appropriate cross referencing and any additional information you wish to provide will be acceptable).

Background

The Chamber delivers a number of support initiatives aimed at non ERDF eligible businesses. These include local initiatives funded by local authorities and a Cumbria-wide scheme funded by BEIS through Cumbria LEP.

Non ERDF eligible businesses include, for example, those in sectors such as agriculture, horticulture, visitor economy, consumer services, retail and the nuclear supply chain. As part of this there is a requirement to support scale-up businesses as well as steady state and those looking to grow more slowly.

Specific requirements

We therefore have a requirement for subcontracted advisers to:

- engage businesses, promote the project offer and encourage take up
- review business needs and produce an action plan
- provide generalist and/or specialist advice to businesses
- make clients aware of the wider support on offer and refer them into this
- ensure that project paperwork is fully and correctly completed, including required signatures, and provided to the Growth Hub in a timely manner

Advisers may bring their own clients to these initiatives and/or support clients referred to them by the Growth Hub.

Timescales

These initiatives operate to varying timescales, with some expected to run until approximately March 2019. Note that there will be no commitment to a particular number of hours under the contract, either in total or in any given period.

Payments





Payment will be in arrears against monthly invoices itemising authorised work carried out during the month, and subject to provision of satisfactorily completed paperwork. Payment rates are detailed in the template contract provided at Schedule A, with the basic rate £25/hour (plus VAT if VAT registered) for client support.

Drawing advisers from the pool

We are looking to add to the pool of advisers to work on this activity.

Where an adviser brings a client to the project they will work with that client unless they or the client choose otherwise.

Where advisers have made days available for bookings, clients will be booked in based on client availability/time preference.

Otherwise advisers will be allocated on the basis of geographic location and in rotation (subject to availability) – note we may allocate a batch of clients to an adviser to minimise travel.

Submission content/tender completion information

Responses must be written in English.

As a minimum your submission should include a clear statement of who will be delivering the work and for each of these:

- Detailed CV
- At least two relevant referees if you have not previously been contracted by the Chamber in a similar role; one relevant reference if you have previously been contracted by the Chamber in a similar role
- Clarification of the area(s) you are happy to cover in (Allerdale, Barrow & Furness, Carlisle, Copeland, Eden, South Lakeland excluding Furness)
- Availability to deliver in terms of time
- Confirmation that you are happy to accept the pricing structure, payment and performance model included within this brief
- An explanation of how you meet the criteria set out below
- An outline of any other contracts/business activities in which you are involved in (to enable us to assess potential conflicts of interest)

You must also include:

- The name of the company/sole trader bidding
- Address
- Named contact with job title plus email and phone contact details
- VAT and company numbers (if applicable)

Criteria (please answer separately for each person who would be delivering this work):





- *Relevant expertise, qualifications and experience*
Please explain your relevant expertise, qualifications and experience, including specific examples and sectors.
- *Proactive approach to client management and ensuring clients progress in a timely manner*
Please set out clearly your approach, experience and track record, with examples/evidence.
- *Good paperwork and organisation, i.e. demonstrable ability and evidence of completing paperwork fully but concisely, correctly and in a timely manner, and proven ability to organise your work to ensure clients progress with their support in a timely manner*
Please set out your approach, experience and track record, with examples/evidence.
- *Awareness, understanding and knowledge of relevant issues facing businesses in Cumbria and any relevant sector/business type/topic issues*
Please highlight your awareness, understanding and knowledge of the relevant issues, with evidence/examples.
- *Availability – while there is no commitment to particular levels of work overall or in any given period by either party, advisers need to be generally available to work with clients within a reasonable timeframe, with, for example, an initial appointment within 10 working days as standard*
Please confirm your availability to meet this requirement.

Where the applicant has worked for us in a similar capacity we will take past performance into account, alongside one reference. Where they have not then two relevant references will be required.

Where the tenderer is a company the tender must be signed by a duly authorised representative of the company. In the case of a sole trader you should sign and give your name in full together with the name under which you are trading.

You may be invited to meet with us before being offered a contract.

For all applicants in assessing you against the above criteria we will take into account your written responses as requested above, your CV, references and our own experiences of working with you. We will use the tender assessment method and award criteria set out in the Award Criteria provided – see schedule A for scoring mechanism.

Instructions for submission





A pool of advisers is required. This call will remain open until noon on 4.10.17. Submissions may be made at any time up to that time and will be considered for addition to the pool as and when they are received.

Any response received after the deadline will not be opened or considered.

Please respond by email to suzanne@cumbriachamber.co.uk.

Clarifications

Any clarifications should be submitted to suzanne@cumbriachamber.co.uk.

Contract terms

The draft contract proposed is attached as Schedule A. By submitting a tender, tenderers are agreeing to be bound by the terms of this brief and the relevant contract without further negotiation or amendment.

Warnings and disclaimers

While the information contained in this brief is believed to be correct at the time of issue, the Chamber will not accept any liability for its accuracy, adequacy or completeness, nor will any express or implied warranty be given. Neither the issue of this brief nor any of the information presented in it should be regarded as a commitment or representation on the part of the Chamber (or any other person) to enter into a contractual arrangement.

Confidentiality

All responses will be treated as confidential during the procurement process. Requests for information received following the procurement process will be considered on a case-by-case basis applying the principles of the Data Protection Act 1998. The Chamber may consult with third party providers of information before it is disclosed, but cannot guarantee that this will be done.

Publicity

No publicity regarding the services or award of the contract will be permitted unless and until the Chamber has given express written consent to the relevant communication and ensured it complies with Chamber/Growth Hub and any other relevant guidelines.

Tenderer conduct and conflicts of interest

Any attempt by tenderers/their advisers to influence the process in any way may result in disqualification. Tenderers are responsible for ensuring that no conflicts of interest exist between the tenderer and its advisers and the Chamber and their advisers. Any tenderer who fails to comply with this requirement may be disqualified from the procurement at the discretion of the Chamber.

The Chamber's rights

The Chamber reserves the right to:





- Waive or change the requirements of this brief from time to time without prior, or any notice, being given
- Seek clarification or documentation in respect of a tenderers submission
- Disqualify any tenderer that does not submit a compliant tender in accordance with the instructions in this brief
- Disqualify any tender that is guilty of serious misrepresentation in relation to its tender or the tender process
- Withdraw this brief at any time or reinvoke tenders on the same or any alternative basis
- Choose not to award any contract or accept the lowest or any tender as a result of the current procurement process
- Make whatever changes they see fit to the timetable, structure of content of the procurement process

Bid costs

The Chamber will not be liable for any bid costs, expenditure, work or effort in responding to this procurement, including if the procurement process is terminated or amended by the Chamber.

Project Funding

These initiatives are supported through a range of sources including, but not necessarily limited to: Allerdale Borough Council/Allerdale Social Investment Fund; Barrow Borough Council/Coastal Communities Fund; Carlisle City Council; Eden District Council; South Lakeland District Council; and the Department for Business Energy & Industrial Strategy.