|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SFA_BLK_AW** | Description: LogoESF_Col_Portrait |

**SPECIFICATION**

**INVITATION TO TENDER itt\_30138**

**Inclusive Labour Markets 17-901**

**Hertfordshire LEP**

**DATE: July 2016**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| SFA_BLK_AW | Description: LogoESF_Col_Portrait |
|  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **ESF: Access to Employment Hertfordshire LEP – NEET IAG itt\_30138** |
| BACKGROUND |
| **General**  The contracting authority is the Secretary of State for Business Innovation and Skills acting through the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), an executive agency of the Department for Business Innovation and Skills exercising functions to fund adult education and skills.  The SFA, acting as an Opt-In Organisation for the European Social Fund (ESF), is procuring education and training services to meet priorities identified by Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area European Structural and Investment Funds Sub–Committees. As an Opt-In Organisation the SFA provides match funding at Priority Axis level utilising sources of public funding as match for ESF funded activity.  This Invitation to Tender (ITT) is for Priority Axis 1 and its Investment Priorities (IP), where the need has been identified both in the LEP area and European Structural and Investment Fund Strategies.  The Priority Axis 1 supports activity to increase participation in the labour market and thereby improve social inclusion and mobility. The objectives of Priority Axis 1 covered in this specification are:   * To provide individuals from groups which face particular labour market disadvantage with additional support so that they can compete effectively in the labour market. * To encourage inactive people to participate in the labour market and to improve their employability. * To provide support for women at a disadvantage in the labour market, and particularly those who are currently inactive, to contribute to our efforts to reduce the gender employment gap. * To support people with multiple and complex barriers to participation to address these underlying issues and to move closer to or into the labour market. * To support prisoners in custody and on release, and those without work who are serving sentences in the community, to improve their employability. * To engage marginalised individuals and support them to re-engage with education, training, or in employment. * To engage marginalised 15-18 year olds and support them to re-engage with education or training. * To support young lone parents to overcome the barriers they face in participating in the labour market (including childcare). * To address the basic skills needs of young NEETS so that they can compete effectively in the labour market.   The strands in Priority Axis 1 in this specification are:  **Sustainable integration of young people** (IP1.2) - to focus on helping young people, particularly those who are NEET or at risk of NEET, to participate in the labour market and learning in areas through focused Information, Advice and Guidance.  **Sustainable Integration of Young People**  Unemployment can have a long-term scarring effect on young people, so this group remain a high priority as the recovery strengthens. A range of help is already available, but ESF will be used to support additional and complementary measures to increase the number of young people who are in education, employment and training, and to reduce the number who are NEET or at risk of being NEET. This investment priority will not support activities that duplicate or replace existing provision.  **The focus of the work under this strand will be the provision of Information, Advice and Guidance to these young people**.  **Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership Background**  Hertfordshire’s labour market profile has seen a reduction in the number of unemployed Jobseekers of around 25% between April 2015 and November 2015 in the 18-24 age category.  Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership has worked with Hertfordshire County Council and DWP to develop a skills strategy for Hertfordshire. A key theme within the strategy is skills to drive growth i.e. working with businesses and training providers to improve the skills of both the existing workforce and the future labour market in order to sustain economic growth. Another key theme within the strategy is developing our future workforce i.e. our young people are the most valuable asset for developing our future workforce. Our aspiration is for young people aged 16-24 years to be inspired to develop the skills to flourish in the workforce.  The service will be aimed at those young people aged between 15-24 seeking to gain enhanced information and advice with regards to future careers choice. This should deliver a co-ordinated project giving young people the skills and attributes local employers want which in turn should tackle current problems, enable better economic performance for employers and significantly improve employment pathways for young people with a particular focus on the disadvantaged.  Ensuring our workforce has the right skills to encourage future economic growth lies at the heart of delivering the vision set out in the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) which has defined the following vision: ‘that by 2030 Hertfordshire will be the leading economy at the heart of the UK’s ‘Golden Triangle’. Skills for growth will be an important element in achieving this vision with over 50% of Hertfordshire businesses being knowledge intensive.  The LEP has identified the following priority sectors as key to its aim of driving economic growth within the county;   * Life Sciences/advanced manufacturing/engineering and IT – including life sciences, defence and aerospace companies, software, ICT and telecoms services, equipment producers and communications integrators; * Film and digital media – noting that Hertfordshire has world class assets in the form of Leavesden (home of Warner Bros) and Elstree; * Financial and business services – where there are opportunities to accommodate national headquarters and also regional offices serving southern England: Watford, St Albans, Cheshunt, Hemel Hempstead can all claim notable businesses in this context; * High-end logistics – which is growing very quickly, particularly in servicing London-based households and businesses, and increasingly generates higher quality jobs.   In addition to the above, the LEP realises the importance of employment growth sectors such as hospitality, health & social care, retail and other service based sectors, however prioritises those listed above  The Hertfordshire Businesses’ Skills Gap Survey (HBSGS) identified the most common skills gaps reported by businesses are job-specific, however the general skills most noted are: problem solving, oral and written communications and advanced IT skills. Too often a lack of work experience and work-related learning combined with limited employability skills exacerbates the concerns identified by employers. Equally, the lack of employer involvement in certain sectors or geographical areas often results in a lack of awareness of young people’s potential, especially those without traditional qualifications.    Many employers provide work experience opportunities but there are gaps in job sectors and locations meaning that young people do not have the opportunity for placements in certain industries or parts of the county. Gaps identified include: science-based fields, specific IT such as game development, construction including most trades i.e. plumbing/plastering/carpentry & joinery, engineering companies, agricultural and public services and these gaps are countywide. The lack of employer involvement in certain sectors or areas may in turn mean that they lack awareness of young people’s potential, especially those without traditional qualifications.  Our aspiration is to work with businesses, Higher Education (HE), Further Education (FE) and other training providers to improve the skills of both the existing workforce and the future labour market ensuring a better matching of skills to business needs in order to sustain economic growth. |
| **DEFINITION OF TERMS** |
| **At risk of becoming NEET:** Support for at risk young people aged 15 to prevent them becoming NEET**.**  **Candidate:** means an organisation who has been invited to take part in this restricted procurement procedure  **Disability**: A person has a disability if they disclose a disability that limits their ability to work.  **Eligibility:** Only people who are eligible to work in UK are eligible for this EU programme.  **Employed**: People are employed if they perform work for pay, profit or family gain. People are self-employed if they work in his/her own business for the purpose of earning a profit, even if they are not making a profit or are just setting up.  **IAG:** Information, advice and guidance service offered to participants.  **Inactive:** Inactive are persons currently not part of the labour force (in the sense that they are not employed or unemployed according to the definitions provided).  **Job Seeking:** Where applicable, persons engaged in job seeking is understood to be persons usually without work and actively seeking work.  **Qualifications:** Qualification means a formal outcome assessment and validation process which is obtained when a competent body determines that an individual has achieved learning outcomes to given standards. Regulated qualifications/aims are those listed in the Learning Aims Reference Service as being regulated. Non-regulated aims are those listed in the Learning Aims Reference Service as being non-regulated.  Regulated and non-regulated aims must be planned to be delivered within budget.  Qualification rates are based on the published LARS rates at the start of the contract or when the qualification starts if this later.  **Services:** The provision of education, training or support delivered to individuals.  **Status:** Employment status and age are determined on the date of starting on the Services.  **Survey**: Where applicable, long term sustained outcomes over 6 months will be monitored separately. Some ESF indicators will be collected by survey by the ESF Managing Authority directly from the participants.  **Unemployed:** Unemployed are persons usually without work, available for work and actively seeking work. Persons considered registered unemployed would be included. Full time students are considered as inactive but not eligible for this provision as they are not available for work. Long term unemployment is greater than 6 months for under 25 years old and greater than 12 months for 25 years old or more. |
| **SERVICE REQUIREMENTS** |
| **General Service Requirements**  All activities must complement and avoid duplication with other provision, thereby adding value to Department for Work and Pensions/Big Lottery, Education Funding Agency, Skills Funding Agency, local authority, National Careers Service and the new Careers Enterprise Company funded provision. Successful candidates will be required to ensure that ESF provision will clearly add value and not duplicate any provision that can be arranged locally through existing mainstream institutions.  ***Capacity and readiness to deliver***  Candidates must have:   * The resources to offer locally tailored solutions and flexible delivery to meet the skills and Apprenticeship priorities of employers and employees in the defined geographical area of delivery. If the LEP area also has a ‘transitional’ area defined in addition to the ‘more developed’ area, delivery locations will have to be available *in each locality* * The capacity to deliver provision immediately upon commencement of the contract and that delivery should not be delayed in any way by any recruitment processes or other processes or relationships that need to be established. * Candidates must be able to demonstrate the ability to undertake robust initial assessment of eligible individuals. Vocational training delivered must be regulated units and qualifications on the Qualifications and Curriculum Framework and be able to support individuals into higher levels of training and workplace progression   ***Track record***  The ability to deliver the required activity, based on a track record in the successful delivery and management of this type and size of programme  ***Information, Advice and Guidance***  Where the activity requires effective Information, Advice and Guidance successful  applicants and/or subcontractors delivering this element will either hold or be  working towards the Matrix standard.  ***Management and quality assurance***  Candidates will need to have effective management arrangements in place to ensure all of the requirements of this specification are fulfilled. The Services must be delivered to a high quality and successful tenderers will need to have in place quality assurance and improvement processes.  The Service needs to be flexible and responsive to the changing economic and political landscape and take into consideration that the approach and associated processes may change during the life of this contract. Therefore Candidates will be expected to be able to change the delivery of the Services accordingly.  ***Partnership working***  Candidates will be required to work in partnership with other organisations delivering education and training in the area to ensure the Service is complementary to and not in competition with other funded provision.  The Service must be able to respond to changing local needs and opportunities, as well as policy changes.  Candidates will be required to establish linkages with and have an understanding of, local stakeholder needs and develop strong links with the key stakeholders.  Where the Service works with Jobcentre Plus clients the Candidates will be required to co-operate effectively with Jobcentre Plus making them aware of candidates who fail to attend training and notifying them of any instances where individuals leave training due to starting work. Candidates will be required to establish links with Jobcentre Plus and visits to public or private sector employers should be made in conjunction with Jobcentre Plus and National Careers Service wherever possible to ensure a smooth, efficient, and joined up approach to arranging benefit claims, offering new employment opportunities and training for all eligible individuals.  ***Market intelligence and local knowledge***  The delivery of the Services must take into account the current and future social and economic indicators including labour market intelligence. Candidates must be able to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the current employment market and the current and future social and economic indicators including labour market intelligence for the geographical area being supported. Candidates must also have an understanding of local skills shortages and gaps and any existing skills support structures within the LEP area.  ***Management information and reporting***  Candidates will develop management information systems to enable it to submit data to the Skills Funding Agency via the Individual Learner Record (ILR) and put in place robust arrangements for ensuring that the evidence required to support payments is collected and retained.  Candidates will be required to share with LEPs and the Skills Funding Agency ongoing performance management data as well as additional intelligence to improve the effectiveness of projects in the LEP area in the future  **NEET IAG (IP:1.2)**  The Services must provide a focused careers guidance service to young people in the LEP area to enable them to identify opportunities to move into employment, training or education.  This must include:   * providing the cohort with generic information, advice and guidance focused on their needs within the LEP area * focused pre-employment activity for specific groups who may need more support to take advantage of opportunities work and education opportunities * signposting young people to the NEET provision in the area for specific skills training * working with schools, colleges and employers to develop work experience opportunities   The Services must add value to the existing National Careers Service provision and activity already taking place in schools which is delivered either in-house or via third party organisations.  Appropriately qualified practitioners must deliver the Services to ensure the standard of the Services are comparable to the services provided by the National Careers Service.  The Services must be delivered face to face to eligible individuals  The Services must target and engage parents of eligible individuals to highlight the importance of focused careers advice guidance  The Services must include a focus on sector specific (STEM related and other LEP sector priorities) activities that encourage SMEs to interface with the future working labour market.    The Services must consider offering differentiated activities to be focussed on age groups 15-18, 19-24.  The Service must include mentoring and support for individuals once they have finished their compulsory schooling, working with schools initially to identify those individuals that may not have a destination to go to once they leave school or who may be at risk of becoming NEET to help support them into a positive destination.    The Services must provide additional work experience in those geographies with Schools that provide little or no enhanced work experience particularly for those individuals who are more likely to become NEET  The Services must also include additional work experience opportunities in those sectors that are important to the local economy but are under- represented in the current work experience offer |
| Eligibility |
| **General**  General eligibility requirements are set out in : the European Social Fund Programme for England 2014-2020 National Eligibility Rules which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/european-structural-and-investment-funds-programme-guidance>  Please note LEP Specific requirements are subject to the National Eligibility Rules detailed above.  **IP1.2 Sustainable Integration of Young People**   * 15 to 24 years old * Those in education and are inactive * Also those Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)   In delivering the Services, the successful Candidate must take into account and support the targets for the following groups where this is consistent with the other Services requirements for addressing the needs of groups identified as priority and meeting the Services deliverables.  **IP1.2 Sustainable Integration of Young People:**   |  |  | | --- | --- | |  | **More Developed** | | Total participants who are unemployed (including long term unemployed) | 70% | | Total participants who are inactive | 25% | | Participants from ethnic minorities | 20% | | Female participants | 45% | | Participants with a disability or health problems | 10% | | Participants who are lone parents | 4% | | Participants without basic skills | 16% | |
| **GEOGRAPHY / AREA OF DELIVERY** |
| **LEP Specific**  The Services will be delivered within the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership area.  NEET IAG - £499,800 |
| **FUNDING AND DELIVERABLES** |
| **LEP Specific**  Currently £499,800 will be available for the period from September 2016 to March 2018. This may be increased if additional funding becomes available.  The table below shows the initial planned outcomes, but performance management may change the volumes and mix during the life of the contract.  From the funding available on the regulated and non-regulated lines, the provider must plan to deliver the appropriate education & training for each participant to enable them to progress.  The minimum service deliverables, values and volumes for which evidence must be provided are:   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Description** | **Volumes** | **Unit Cost Total Value Average per Intervention** | **£** | | ST01 Learner Assessment and Plan | 301 | £150 | £45,150 | | NR01 Non Regulated Activity |  |  | £195,650 | | PG01 Progression Paid Employment (EMP) | 75 | £700 | £52,500 | | PG02 Progression Unpaid Employment (VOL) | 25 | £500 | £12,500 | | PG03 Progression Education (EDU) | 70 | £650 | £45,500 | | PG04 Progression Apprenticeship (EDU) | 75 | £700 | £52,500 | | PG05 Progression Traineeship (EDU) | 30 | £700 | £21,000 | | SU01 Sustained Employment 3 Months | 62 | £600 | £37,200 | | SU04 Sustained Apprenticeship 3 Months | 63 | £600 | £37,800 | | Total |  |  | £499,800 | |