

30 August 2017

Skills Summit – events agency tender document

Introduction

We are looking to appoint an events agency to support the Department in the delivery of a high profile business event. The agency will work with a communications project manager from the Department to arrange, deliver and evaluate the event.

About the Department for Education

The Department for Education is responsible for children's services and education, including higher and further education policy, apprenticeships and wider skills in England. The Department is also home to the Government Equalities Office. We work to provide children's services and education that ensure opportunity is equal for all, no matter what their background or family circumstances.

Background

Following machinery of Government changes in Autumn 2016, Skills policy moved over to the Department for Education from BEIS (formerly BIS). An ambitious range of policy reform is being taken forward in this area, covering: further education, including the development of T-levels; adult learning; apprenticeships; and traineeships. Key to the success of this will be securing buy-in and genuine input from business leaders and the further education sector. More information on the reforms is available [here](#), and further detail on our vision can be found in [this speech](#) by the Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State (SoS), Department for Education (DfE), is hosting a high profile Skills Summit in November (likely to be 23rd or 30th, half-day) supported by the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), to take forward this area of work. This event will signify a step change in the way the Department works with business and is designed to bring together senior business leaders and DfE Ministers to discuss the co-creation of reforms to England's technical education and skills system.

Our aim is to hold the event in the Department for Education's Head Office ([Sanctuary Buildings](#)). We have identified a large events space made of three linkable rooms on the fifth floor, and have also set aside four breakout/session rooms nearby.

Key deliverables for event agency

Deliverable

1. Overseeing delegate invitations

- Sourcing contact details for invites where relevant – for both business delegates and, if possible, representative younger and older learners who are already benefiting from further technical/vocational education (such as apprenticeships and other qualifications)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tracking delegate attendance, chasing confirmations, and ensuring approach secures desired attendance levels (in particular, of C-suite and Director level attendees) - Managing pre and post-event communications (including delegate packs and any post-event print and audio-visual materials) and aligning with event brands - Securing attendance of ‘high-profile’ delegates from the business world (e.g. James Dyson) working with the CBI and DfE where appropriate. - Assisting, if possible, to identify a high-profile facilitator/host from the business or media world to act as Master of Ceremonies for the event.
<p>2. Pre-event planning and event design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advising on proposed structure of event, to meet objectives and achieve desired look and feel - Sourcing and booking all audio-visual, technical and additional materials including the production of the event programme and video content to be used prior to, during and/or after the event - Arranging appropriate staffing - Conducting a full health and safety review and arranging/overseeing any public liability insurance requirements (if not provided).
<p>3. Event logistics on the day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set-up of venue, including staging of area that includes a large event visual for photo opportunities - Managing delegate arrivals - Buying in a lunch and refreshments service (if necessary) - Provide and manage the audio visual requirements including any technical equipment that delegates may need in the working sessions - Full clear-down of event space - Managing photography and capturing future communications content (e.g. vox-pops and other filming to be used in a post-event video).
<p>4. Event design, materials and signage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Significant thought will be needed regarding how the venue is decorated and structured, to help facilitate discussions, meet objectives and achieve the desired look and feel - The branding of the venue will also need to be carefully considered as part of this, and how it can be transformed to emphasise key messages - This approach should also be reflected in any motion graphics and video materials produced prior to and after the event - Signage around the building and to the room will also need to be considered.
<p>5. Creative input</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work with the project manager and Communications team to design creative additions to the event – such as design and branding, audio-visual production and filming, structure of the event and agenda, or technology tools – that can inject energy, emphasise our key messages, and make the event more than a Policy summit.
<p>6. Event evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriate sharing of contact details and post event feedback of delegates - Full KPIs and approach to event evaluation to be agreed with communications project manager.

Out of scope:

- Media support (we have an in-house media team)
- Design of the visual identity for the event (this is being handled by the in-house Government design agency) – although advice is needed on how this can be reflected in any branding/venue dressing that could be applied
- Liaising with Ministers and the Secretary of State

Objectives of event

- To engage business leaders and partners on our new skills offer, and to sustain collaboration on policy and planning in four key areas (apprenticeships, T levels and work placements, strengthening the FE profession, and local structures and processes).
- To reposition DfE's relationship with business/employers and signal that DfE is 'open to business', providing an opportunity for the SoS to firmly position herself as leading skills reform across Whitehall and working in partnership with industry.
- To issue a call to arms on skills: including through the launch of a statement of action, signed by DfE, CBI and other founding partners, setting out how we will work together to deliver the planned reforms to Skills policy, and a 'skills badge' for employers.
- To inspire business champions and advocates for the 'home-grown' skills revolution.

Audience

Approximately 60 - 80 delegates comprising:

- Senior Ministers from DfE;
- Director-General of the CBI;
- Senior business leaders (employers) including household names (FTSE 100), at C-suite and Director level
- Senior representatives from professional bodies e.g. Federation of Small Business, Institute of Directors, British Chambers of Commerce; learning providers and public service contractors;
- Participants involved in the delivery of the event may include young people, apprentices and adult learners to bring the human interest element into the programme/agenda

What success looks like

- **Event design and delivery:**
- An energetic/engaging high profile event that leaves delegates feeling motivated and enthused and thinking more positively about DfE and the TE/skills reform
- High level of attendance of senior business leaders – C-suite, from a range of sectors
- Genuine Government/employer skills engagement and policy co-development
- Increased understanding of the importance of skills reform in boosting social mobility
- Bold badge/name for event that sticks and has longevity – including good use of the hashtag
- Landing the Summit positively in the media and with key stakeholders – demonstrating progress and action on the technical education reforms, with the shift in Departmental positioning noted by key influencers.
- **Event outcomes**
- Secure new business partners – not previously engaged on skills agenda
- Commitments secured from delegates to become advocates for the skills agenda and the reforms to technical education by signing a 'Statement of Action' at the Summit
- Commitments secured for ongoing engagement for sustained programme of co-designed employer supported skills policy development & implementation
- Increased reach and influence of DfE's message on skills – amplified via business and provider channels (CBI etc.), and increased credibility through advocacy via business leader networks.

Proposed agenda

The event is planned to run for a half day and the programme is broadly as follows – timings are TBC:
0830-1000: Breakfast for key business leaders (15 – 20) with SoS (DfE lead)

1000 - 1020	Opening address to main event in plenary – Secretary of State Breakfast attendees and young people to share platform. Call to action – to sign Statement of Action etc. Master of Ceremonies to be confirmed.	
1020 - 1030	Personal address to plenary – young learner/apprentice	
1030 -1050	Response to plenary – Carolyn Fairbairn CBI and other senior business leaders Call to action – to sign Statement of Action etc.	
1115 - 1230	Roundtable 1: Implementing work placements Chairs: Minister Milton and (tbc)	Roundtable 2: Implementing the first T-levels Chairs: Lord Salisbury and (tbc):
	Roundtable 3: The FE Profession Chairs (tbc)	Roundtable 4: Widening Participation (in Apprenticeships and Technical Education) Chairs (tbc)
1230 -1240	Next steps – Master of ceremonies	
1240 - 1300	Closing address to plenary – SoS/Minister - to highlight social mobility and productivity/basic skills	
1300 - 1430	Lunch A wider group including young learners and apprentices Meal interspersed by short interventions by attendees at the breakfast meeting and young learners/apprentices	

Creative delivery - guidance

It is important that the event is stimulating and energetic, to generate enthusiasm amongst delegates. It cannot feel just like a standard Policy summit hosted by a Government Department, but should inspire them to become advocates for this area. It is also key that we remind delegates of the huge importance of skills policy, specifically in relation to:

- The success of our economy, particularly in a post-Brexit context
- Ensuring the next generation reaches their full potential, boosting social mobility
- Preparing this country's workforce for the future economy and the rapid pace of technological change.

To aid this we require creative tools to reinforce these messages, and would like input and advice from the agency appointed on how best to achieve this. The structure of the event is flexible, and can gain additions that will help to achieve this aim, for example:

- Restructuring or amending the agenda and design of the event (e.g. incorporating inspirational talks by high-profile attendees or young people who've succeeded by pursuing technical education training, and adults who've benefited from skills training)
- Workshops or stands to offer interactive sessions (e.g. learn to code in 30 mins workshop)
- Technological tools that can aid audience interaction (e.g. voting and participation tools)
- Input from, or materials created by, apprentices/those in technical education
- Video content to kick off the session, that can also be shared on social media, including vox-pops with young apprentices or the Prime Minister.

Tender process

1. Tender document emailed to shortlisted agencies (three – four), and uploaded to [contracts finder](#).
2. Deadline of five days given for written response – final deadline for response 10.30 AM Wednesday September 6.
3. Agencies are permitted to email in questions to the named project manager, but responses will have to be shared with all agencies to ensure a fair tendering process.
4. Following this period, the Communications team will review all written proposals, and seek to inform the winning agency within 24 hours. All other agencies will be informed of the outcome at this point as well.
5. The winning agency will then enter into formal contract negotiations, and agree statement of work.

Tender evaluation

Whilst price and timely delivery will be important final considerations, all tenders will also be expected to provide information on:

- What experience do you have of delivering similar events, on behalf of HM Government? Ideally highlight examples where you have secured attendance of C-suite level delegates from leading UK businesses
- How you will project manage the event, including information on governance arrangements and project management tools?
- How you will resource the project? Who will be involved and what expertise will they offer?
- What tools and processes will you use to manage the pre and post-event communications?
- Proposed breakdown of costs – and if possible, please provide multiple budget options up to the full cost to allow comparisons to be made of what can be achieved to different budgets
- What creative engagement mechanisms would you recommend for the event, to bring the key messages to life and inject energy?
- How would you evaluate the event?

Given the event has a focus on skills and employment, it is also important the successful agency holds a commitment to equal opportunities, diversity, and does not make use of zero-hour contracts. Please provide information on your approach to this.

Costs:

The event should cost no more than £15,000 to deliver. Separate budget has been allocated for the venue and catering should it be needed. The venue will be sourced via DfE business services.

Contract award management

The project will be delivered against a formal Purchase Order (PO) for the Department. Prior to the PO being raised the successful tendering company must demonstrate compliance against Government procurement guidance and requirements. The bid must not include costs for alcohol or personal expenses of staff or delegates. Where necessary third-parties may also be procured to deliver certain elements of the brief. All external press/PR activity related to the award of the contract and details of the event must be agreed with the Department in advance.

Contact details

The communications project manager is Oliver Lamb:
oliver.lamb@education.gov.uk T: 020 7340 8036 M: 07392 136401