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**SPECIFICATION**

**INVITATION TO TENDER: itt\_29907**

**SPECIFICATION REFERENCE: 05-002**

**ESF FUNDED ACTIVITY TO SUPPORT INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE NEET IN CORNWALL AND THE ISLES OF SCILLY LEP AREA**

**CORNWALL AND THE ISLES OF SCILLY**

**DATE: December 2015**

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| **EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND – NEET SPECIFICATION**  **Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LEP**  **Skills for Young People – vocationally based skills activity to bring young people from priority groups closer to employment or further learning**  **29907-05-002** | |
| 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) supports ESF Investment Priority 1.2 where the need has been identified both in the LEP area and European Structural and Investment Fund Strategies (ESIF).  The SFA is looking to procure an organisation to deliver education and training services to support young people who are 15-24 who are not in education employment or training (NEET) or at risk of becoming NEET in the LEP area set out below.  **Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership**  Our ambition for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is to ensure that we work together to ensure that the skills of our future workforce enable us to compete in the global economy. A key aspect is that every young person has a chance to progress, and to participate in high quality opportunities.  Several local strategies underpin the need for this work, e.g. the **Cornwall Children & Young People’s Plan 2013/14** which sets out the priorities for the delivery of services across the Children’s Trust aiming to improve outcomes for children, young people & families across the county.  The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LEP will, through its ESIF programme, procure vocational based skills activity that will bring vulnerable young people closer to employment or further learning.  This activity complements the LEP Strategy and the work undertaken by the Employment and Skills Board where the need to support the individual is identified as a priority. The activity aligns with the European Union Operational Programme, Investment Priority 1.2 Sustainable Integration of Young People, to get more young people into education, employment and training, and have fewer young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or at risk of becoming NEET. The activity directly links with the ESIF Conditions for Growth, Objective 5: ‘to improve progression into the labour market’.  The activity procured will address the *issues and challenges* outlined the text below.  The focus will be on delivery of targeted and tailored approaches that engage with, and then build up the confidence and abilities of, these young people. Interventions include: additional literacy, numeracy, ICT and employability provision relevant to all jobs; training and vocational qualifications to equip young people for specific jobs; and, intermediate labour market activity to provide work experience and work tasters.  *Issues and challenges*  The number of NEETs in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (4.4%) compares favourably to the national average & statistical neighbours for the proportion of young people in Years 12 to 14 NEET.  Nevertheless, evidence shows there are still significant local issues which need to be addressed:   * there is a significant variation across year groups ranging from 2.4% NEET in   Year 12 to 6.3% NEET in Year 14   * local tracking data shows there are significant geographical variations with high proportions of young people NEET in the Camborne & Redruth, Liskeard & Looe, & Bodmin community network areas * meeting the needs of vulnerable groups remains a challenge; learners with learning difficulties & disabilities (LLDD) make up over a third (35%) of the NEET cohort. Cornwall’s 16 – 19 review highlighted that whilst there are a range of work experience opportunities & activity for young people in this cohort, there is often a lack of suitable employment for young people to progress into * youth unemployment more generally is a concern. Data from Nomis shows that as at February 2013 there were 2,870 JSA Claims for young people under the age of 25. There is a larger percentage long term unemployed compared with the overall claimant rate. There is also clear evidence of the seasonal nature of youth employment and that young men are more likely to be unemployed than young women   Cornwall also faces other challenges which can impact on the outcomes for our young people. It is a large rural county, with significant pockets of deprivation, a dispersed population and relatively poor transport links.   * Key findings from a Department for Education (DfE) study into barriers to participation post 16 showed that the main barriers and constraints experienced by young people relate to: finance; transport; availability of, and access to, provision and their knowledge and awareness of the post-16 options available to them * Access to provision is a significant issue for young people living in the Isles of Scilly where all post 16 learners travel to the mainland to access learning. The development of distance learning models would help alleviate some of these challenges & the significant financial implications for young people & their families | |
| **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:** Other than 15 year olds at risk of being NEET, only people who are eligible to work in UK are eligible for this programme. Asylum seekers are not generally supported by ESF.  **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.  **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.  **Services:** The provision of education, training or support delivered to individuals.  **Start Date:** Employment status and age are determined on the date of starting on the Provision.  **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 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**  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 very local and flexible delivery in the areas where levels of NEET are highest. * 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.   ***Track record***  The ability to deliver the required activity, based on a track record in the successful delivery and management of this type of programme  Candidates will need to have an understanding of the varied needs of young people and an ability to engage and work with young people, especially those who are disengaged and vulnerable and have particular learning needs or barriers to learning.  Candidates will need to have experience of creating employment opportunities.  And in designing and delivering high quality provision for young people including those who are NEET/at risk of becoming NEET.  ***Management and quality assurance***  Candidates will need to have effective management arrangements in place to ensure all of the requirements of this specification particularly in regard to meeting the identified needs of identified young people 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.  Candidates will engage with every Local Authority (LA) in the LEP area and will be expected to identify internal LA links across different departments. 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.  ***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 and in particular, the specific factors affecting the area in which the Service is being delivered. A comprehensive understanding of the current employment market and the current and future social and economic indicators including labour market intelligence.  ***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 LAs, LEPs and the Skills Funding Agency ongoing performance management data as well as additional intelligence to improve the effectiveness of all NEET reduction and prevention activities including details of each young person supported and update them of the young person’s progress.  Candidates will be required to share delivery/outcomes to ensure full coverage.  **Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership**  **Specific**  The aim of the Services is to identify, engage and support young people aged 15 to 24, who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET. This is to be achieved through innovative and vocationally based skills activities leading to employment or further training/education opportunities. This target group of young people are not attaining the skills levels or qualifications needed to progress through to the labour market.  The Services must complement the LEP Strategy and the work undertaken by the Employment and Skills Board where the need to support the individual is identified as a priority. The Services align with the European Union Operational Programme, Investment Priority 1.2 Sustainable Integration of Young People, to get more young people into education, employment and training, and have fewer young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or at risk of becoming NEET.  The activity directly links with the ESIF Conditions for Growth, Objective 5: ‘to improve progression into the labour market’. A link to the ESIF strategy can be found here: <http://www.cornwallandislesofscillylep.com/eu-investment-strategy>  The objectives of the Services are to**:**   * Progress learners into traineeship and apprenticeship opportunities and where possible provide additional traineeship and apprenticeship vacancies * Raise qualification and skills levels, particularly basic skills. * Address the lack of engagement in higher level education through a transition programme of activity leading to learners accessing L3 and above qualifications. * Remove the barriers that the client group encounter e.g. transport, childcare (through the funding provided in the unit costs * Realise positive outcomes such as traineeships, apprenticeships, further learning, employment * Develop work ready, self-motivated individuals by raising qualification and skills levels, particularly basic skills. * Create higher levels of self-esteem and raise aspirations by increasing engagement in higher level education through a transition programme of activity leading to learners accessing L3 and above qualifications. * Support the Raising Participation Age agenda details of which can be found here: <http://www.cornwallandislesofscillylep.com/assets/file/LEP_Emp_Skills_Strategy_210x210_V7_AW.pdf>   The Service must fully adhere to the principles of re-engagement provision as set out in [Annex 3 of the Statutory Guidance for Raising of the Participation Age](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/349300/Participation_of_Young_People_Statutory_Guidance.pdf) and implement robust and transparent performance measures, linked to clear progression routes for learners should be in place linked to 16-19 Study Programmes, Raising Participation Age (RPA) guidance and DfE Principles of effective re-engagement.  The delivery of the Services must be linked to mainstream skills and functional skills development, Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) and employment activity so that it supports and integrates with the other relevant delivery mechanisms in the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly area, and must be based on a good understanding of the main skills and apprenticeship priorities for the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly area.  The Services must provide a package of interventions and innovative approaches to delivery, the tailored solutions will meet the needs of the young people and employers, which give young people experience of success in learning and increase commitment and motivation to achieve.  The Services must deliver interventions to support all target groups and their related needs across the whole of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership area. The Services must offer very local and flexible delivery in the areas where levels of NEET are highest including the location of a physical base within the area.  The Services must be delivered from a local presence and tailored so that it is effective at district/ward level. The Services must be delivered to those living on the Isles of Scilly both on the island and via other blended learning methods, including the provision of additional travel and accommodation costs as required for young people on the Isles of Scilly.  The Services must be delivered to the same standards across the whole geographical area outlined in this specification.  The Services to be provided include ’sustained progression’ in a range of outcomes (apprenticeships, education, etc.). All deliverables including ‘sustained progressions’ must be delivered during the term of the contract**.** This is to ensure that all agreed deliverables can be measured and funded.  In order to deliver the Services linkages must be established with local stakeholders which as a minimum will include: schools, FE colleges, independent private and IAG providers, and the providers of other relevant ESIF projects.  **The detailed services requirements are as follows:**  There must be a referral mechanism that will successfully engage with the target group and which will feature roll on roll off flexibility of recruitment to ensure ease of access for young people. This should include referrals from other NEET focused provision in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly including Young People First – engagement, support and aspirations programme.  There must be an innovative induction programme, which is flexible enough to gain early engagement of those at risk of being NEET and "not-known" individuals.  There must be robust initial assessment and needs analysis for all young people which will result in a robust individual learning plan with progress reviews and an exit interview. There must be arrangements to have additional support needs identified and provided, particularly to support progression; include literacy and numeracy skills development where required  The Services must meet the needs of young people in both rural and urban locations providing innovative ways to address mobility barriers to engagement especially in rural areas, and will need to address any issues with regard to rurality, difficulties with accessibility/transport and the requirement for provision for small groups in some areas  The Services must include the effective use of enhanced and impartial, intensive and high quality IAG at all stages of a young person’s learning programme, enhancing the National Careers Service offer to young people. This should be designed to help young people gain a greater understanding of their own abilities, learning needs and the range of opportunities available supported by intensive IAG.  The Services must include the development and delivery of personalised provision which is flexible (in terms of content, times and location) and involves young people in both the design and delivery of the programmes including training to provide peer support and ensures each young person is given the most appropriate level of support in line with their assessed needs. This must include a personalised transition or ‘moving on’ plan for every learner that will include a portfolio of activities and achievements whilst on the programme and aspirations for their own future.  The delivery of the Services must address aspects of the young person’s journey including: engagement, assessment, delivery, retention, progression, tracking and post-progression support and must be flexible so that young people can start and progress at the most appropriate times to them.  The Service must provide individualised wrap-around programmes of support focusing on English and maths and including skills that may not be funded through mainstream. This programme should, for example, include specialised provision for young/teenage parents. English and maths/ESOL courses should also be provided for young people who are already NEET.  The successful Candidate be required to:   * Provide the LEP with regular performance reports which detail actual and profile performance of the overall contract and individual sub-contractors and performance by target geographical areas in the context of the overall Agency contract including the provision of pipeline information * Engage with LEP / ESIF oversight and scrutiny activity to support the LEP's insight and scrutiny of this area of work * Undertake a quarterly (minimum) joint meeting with the SFA, LEP, or their nominated representative * Undertake an on-going review to ensure the regional/sub-regional/LA requirements are being met, and to report the findings of the review when requested to do so by the LEP, or their nominated representative * Provide information on sub-contractors used in the delivery of the Services and their performance data * Share information on how the Services engage with the LEP priorities * Complete a full evaluation report at the end of the contract | |
| **Horizontal Principles** |
| The Services must support the cross cutting themes of the ESF Framework. These are set out below.  Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development. The ESF programme maintains the dual approach to promoting gender equality and equality of opportunities by funding specific activities which target women and disadvantaged groups as well as integrating equal opportunities into the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the programme as a whole. Action to promote equality and diversity is an integral part of the SFA business objectives. A world-class workforce can only be created if we remove barriers, eliminate discrimination, address disadvantage and raise the aspirations of both present and potential learners. Performance monitoring of the project will include a review of progress against the implementation/action plan on a quarterly basis included in this specification.  Sustainable Development (SD) activity is a mandatory requirement of all projects funded through the ESF programme. Successful tenderers will be required to have in place an operational SD policy and implementation/action plan within two months of the project start date. Performance monitoring of the project will include a review of progress against the implementation/action plan on a quarterly basis included in this specification. Activity will need to promote and engage with priority individuals, such as those with protected characteristics. | |
| 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.  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.    Ethnic groups                          min 2%  Female                                    min 49%  Disability/health issues            min 15%  Lone parents                           min 5%  No basic skills                         min 15%  **Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership**  **Specific**  The Services link with the ESF 2014/2020 programme Investment Priority 1.2 – Sustainable Integration of Young People.  The Services will support individuals who: are aged 15 – 24 (when starting on the project); NEET or at risk of becoming NEET; eligible for ESF funding as defined in the 2014 – 2020 Operational Programme;  Eligibility for this programme is dictated by where provision is delivered, which is Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. The priority for engagement will be for those young people who have at least one of the “priority groups” characteristics (listed below), and it is anticipated that approximately 15% will be in receipt of childcare support*.*  **The “priority groups” are:**   * Care leavers * Young people with LLDD * Young carers * Young people with mental health/health issues * Young people at risk of being engaged in crime, or those already known to be engaged with crime. * Young people with substance misuse issues * Lone parents * Those who are or at risk of exclusion from compulsory education   80% of participants should satisfy at least one of the above criteria.  For the 15-16 year olds either on or off school roll, the use of ESF funds is restricted to those young people who are disengaged from regular timetabled learning *and* are at risk of not participating post-16 or who are on the LA’s Risk of NEET Indicator list. Pre-16 provision will support underachieving pupils in schools/academies and ensure statutory provision for those off-school-roll. It is critical to work with the Local Authority prior to engaging this particular target group. | |
| **GEOGRAPHY / AREA OF DELIVERY** | |
| **LEP Specific**  The Services will be delivered within the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership area. | |
| **FUNDING AND DELIVERABLES** | |
| **LEP Specific**  Currently £1,150,100 will be available for the period from 1 April 2016 to 31 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 (refer to deliverables table below):  702 young people aged 15-24 years who are not in education, training or full time employment or at risk of becoming NEET receive training, development and support which encompasses:   * Start/induction/assessment * Non-accredited activity (to be defined) e.g. mentoring, specific packages, Work experience * Start on other accredited qualifications including Basic skills qualifications * Achievement of accredited qualifications and basic Skills qualifications * Progressions into traineeships/apprenticeships * Progression into Further Learning at a higher level * Progression into employment/self-employment * Return to sustained compulsory education * Learner support e.g. travel, childcare (funded within the unit cost)   Non-accredited activity will need to be clearly defined to ensure value for money.  Progressions and achievements need to be delivered before the contract ends.   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Description** | **Volumes** | **Unit Cost Total Value Average per Intervention** | **£** | | ST01 Learner Assessment and Plan | 702 | £50 | £35,100 | | RQ01 Regulated Learning |  |  | £504,000 | | NR01 Non Regulated Activity |  |  | £253,800 | | PG01 Progression Paid Employment (EMP) | 70 | £800 | £56,000 | | PG02 Progression Unpaid Employment (VOL) | 20 | £400 | £8,000 | | PG03 Progression Education (EDU) | 322 | £400 | £128,800 | | PG04 Progression Apprenticeship (EDU) | 85 | £800 | £68,000 | | PG05 Progression Traineeship (EDU) | 85 | £400 | £34,000 | | SU01 Sustained Employment 3 Months | 60 | £100 | £6,000 | | SU02 Sustained Unpaid Employment 3 Months | 20 | £100 | £2,000 | | SU03 Sustained Education 3 Months | 290 | £100 | £29,000 | | SU04 Sustained Apprenticeship 3 Months | 77 | £100 | £7,700 | | SU05 Sustained Traineeship 3 Months | 77 | £100 | £7,700 | | SU11 Sustained Employment 6 Months | 30 | £100 | £3,000 | | SU14 Sustained Apprenticeship 6 Months | 70 | £100 | £7,000 |   **Deliverables guidance:**  **RQ01 – Regulated Learning**: The successful Candidate should aim to ensure that at least 20% of the RQ01 deliverables are for Basic Skills (Skills for Life) type qualifications. The successful Candidate will need to monitor this separately from the ILR and will need to report performance on this to the LEP when required  **PG03 – Progression Education (EDU):** The successfulCandidate should aim to ensure that at least 20% of the PG03 deliverables are for Level 3 qualification courses. The Candidate will need to monitor this separately from the ILR and will need to report performance on this to the LEP when required  **Learner support costs:** The unit costs have taken into consideration the additional requirements young people may need such as: travel to and from learning or work experience; childcare costs which cannot be met from other sources (such as: Care to Learn, or Childcare Grant scheme), work clothes and/or equipment which allows the young person to take up employment.  The successful Candidate will need to monitor this separately from the ILR and will need to report performance on this to the LEP when required | |