



SPECIFICATION

# INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

QUALITY AND IMPACT

## 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The West of England Works Project wishes to appoint an external organisation to conduct an independent evaluation of the project. This will include:
  - 1.1.1. Working with the West of England Works Project Management Team to agree and develop appropriate measures and approaches through which to evaluate the project in terms of:
    - 1.1.2. The quality and effectiveness of delivery;
    - 1.1.3. The impact on individual participants;
    - 1.1.4. The impact on individual project partners and the local voluntary and community sector;
    - 1.1.5. Wider socio-economic impact;
    - 1.1.6. The effective promotion of project cross-cutting themes:
      - 1.1.6.1. Equality, Diversity and Gender Equality [EDGE];
      - 1.1.6.2. Sustainable Development.
  - 1.1.7. Conducting an ongoing independent evaluation of the project in line with the measures agreed;
  - 1.1.8. Reporting on the findings of the ongoing independent evaluation of the project through the production of evaluation reports and presentations to appropriate audiences at intervals throughout the project and at the end of the project.
- 1.2. The project seeks to recruit participants resident within the West of England area (i.e. the unitary authorities of Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire) and is currently delivered through a network of 9 voluntary and community organisations.
- 1.3. Following contract award, the evaluation programme (including the publication of the final report) will run until 30<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

- 1.4. The maximum budget available to support this work is £45,000. Proposals that demonstrate an ability to complete the evaluation to the required level of quality within a lower budget will be considered favourably;
- 1.5. If you have any questions regarding this procurement exercise please contact:  
  
[procurement@westofenglandworks.org.uk](mailto:procurement@westofenglandworks.org.uk)
- 1.6. We are required to maintain openness and transparency through ensuring that all potential tenderers have access to the same information and support. Given this we reserve the right to circulate any question submitted and the associated response to all tendering organisations.
- 1.7. All proposals should be submitted electronically through contract finder.

## 2. CONTEXT - THE WEST OF ENGLAND WORKS PROJECT

2.1. The West of England Works Project is part of the national Building Better Opportunities programme delivering across the following unitary authority areas:

- Bath and North East Somerset
- Bristol
- North Somerset
- South Gloucestershire

2.2. The project supports unemployed and economically inactive individuals with complex needs who face multiple barriers to employment to develop their confidence and skills in order to secure employment. In contrast to other programmes aimed at supporting the unemployed, the West of England Works project is specifically designed and intended to support the individuals who are hardest to help and furthest from the labour market. Groups of such individuals include:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ▪ Disabled People  | ▪ People with drug and alcohol dependency                 |
| ▪ People who are over 50                                   | ▪ People with educational attainment issues               |
| ▪ People who are homeless or in housing need               | ▪ People with family, parenting and relationship problems |
| ▪ People from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities | ▪ People with health problems                             |
| ▪ People who are offenders or ex-offenders                 | ▪ People operating in the informal economy                |
| ▪ People with caring responsibilities                      | ▪ Young people  |
| ▪ People with digital exclusion issues                     | ▪ Social, emotional and mental health problems            |

2.3. The project is jointly funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and the European Social Fund and runs from 1st January 2017 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

2.4. The evaluation will be in to parts:

2.4.1. Evaluation of current delivery

2.4.2. Final programme evaluation post 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

- 2.5. The project is led by Weston College and delivered through a network of local voluntary and community sector organisations located across the West of England area. Partners include:

Current Partners

- Wellspring Settlement
- Broadway Lodge
- Carers Support Centre
- Creative Youth Network
- Releasing New Potential
- Southmead Development Trust
- Team North Somerset
- DHI

Previous Partners

- Business in the Community
- Julian House
- Prince's Trust
- Southern Brooks Community Partnership
- The Park
- West of England Centre for Inclusive Living

2.6. Referral routes

2.6.1. Each partner is tasked with using a variety of approaches to identify potential participants and recruit them to the project. Some participants will be referred by statutory services such as JobcentrePlus, others will be referred by other organisations within the wider local voluntary and community sector and others will be directly engaged by the partner through outreach activities within the local community.

2.6.2. The Central team at Weston College have been actively undertaking the task of participant recruitment.

2.6.3. Once engaged, the partner will complete a detailed and holistic assessment of the participant in order to identify issues and barriers that prevent or disadvantage the individual from securing gainful employment. Once the barriers are identified the partner and the participant will jointly design and agree an individualised programme of support intended to address the barriers identified and progress the participant towards and into employment and/or training.

- 2.7. Individualised programmes of support may include a very broad range of interventions, some drawing upon the expertise of specialist organisations to deliver, but most will include personal and social development, general employability skills, jobsearch, CV writing, interview skills and (where appropriate) a work experience placement.

- 2.8. The partner and participant will regularly review progress throughout their time on the programme and modify the individualised programme of support in order to address emerging issues and barriers.

2.9. As the project works with the individuals who are hardest to help and furthest from the labour market, it is recognised that a job may not be a realistic outcome for some in the time allowing. For such individuals progression to Independent jobsearch and/or a formal training course may be more appropriate progression routes.

2.10. The project is required to deliver the following by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023:

		Target for project	% of total Starts
<b>Outputs</b>	Total number of participants	3126	100%
	Number of men	1550	50%
	Number of women	1576	50%
	Number who are unemployed, including long-term unemployed	681	22%
	Number who are economically inactive, including not in education or training	2445	78%
	Number who are aged 50 or over	547	17%
	Number with disabilities	1822	58%
	Number from ethnic minorities	456	15%
<b>Results</b>	Number who move into education or training on leaving	616	20%
	(R1)Unemployed participants into employment	255	8%
	(R2)Economically inactive into employment, including self employment, or into job search on leaving	1174	38%
<b>Outcomes</b>	Number of participants who report feeling more confidence and better prepared to seek employment following participation	1740	56%
	Number of participants with mental health issues who report an improvement in their ability to understand and manage their health and well-being as a result of participating in the project	1326	42%
	Number of people that report that they have an improved awareness of employment and training opportunities and are better equipped to access them	1769	57%
	Number of participants undertaking work-tasters, work experience, volunteering or directly progressing into employment	1231	39%

2.11. Further information regarding the West of England Works Project can be found here:

[West Of England Works | Weston College Group](#)

Further information regarding the wider National Lottery Community Fund Building Better Opportunities Programme can be found here:

[Building Better Opportunities | The National Lottery Community Fund \(tnlcommunityfund.org.uk\)](#)

Specific guidance concerning project rules, processes, paperwork, claims etc can be found here:

[Guide to delivering European funding \(England only\) | The National Lottery Community Fund \(tnlcommunityfund.org.uk\)](#)

### **3. DETERMINING THE SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION**

3.1. The first piece of work to be conducted as part of the independent evaluation process will be to formally agree the scope of the evaluation and specific measures that will be used to evaluate the project. Subject to negotiation, we anticipate that the scope of evaluative activities will include:

3.1.1. The quality and effectiveness of delivery;

3.1.2. The impact on individual participants;

3.1.3. The impact on individual project partners and the wider West of England voluntary and community sector;

3.1.4. Wider socio-economic impact;

3.1.5. The effective promotion of project cross-cutting themes:

3.1.5.1. Equality, Diversity and Gender Equality [EDGE];

3.1.5.2. Sustainable Development.

3.2. These may be updated and / or amended through negotiation between the successful applicant and the West of England Works project team if sensible alternatives and / or different approaches are recommended, though we anticipate that the broad areas set out above will form the core of the evaluation.

3.3. The successful applicant will also be able to draw upon evidence secured through Anchor Partner Self-Assessment and the programme of performance reviews and compliance checks undertaken by the West of England Works project team.

## 4. THE QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF DELIVERY

- 4.1. As the West of England Works project is tasked with providing support for individuals who are furthest from the labour market and face significant, complex and multiple barriers to employment it is essential that our delivery model is effective and implemented to a high standard of quality.
- 4.2. We look to the successful applicant to propose a methodology through which this will be evaluated. The proposed methodology should evaluate and incorporate the findings of performance reviews which as a minimum answer the following key questions:
  - 4.2.1. How effectively does the WoEW project identify, target, recruit and induct appropriate participants (in terms of the level of disengagement and within all targeted demographic categories)?
    - 4.2.1.1. Is the project effectively recruiting participants in need of the intervention?
    - 4.2.1.2. How effectively do partners recruit participants from under-represented groups?
    - 4.2.1.3. How effectively do Anchor Partners work with Strategic Partners to secure appropriate referrals to the project
    - 4.2.1.4. If any, what impact has new services within the sector had on referral trends?
  - 4.2.2. How effectively does the WoEW project identify the full range of key issues / barriers that prevent the participant from progressing into (or closer to) employment?
    - 4.2.2.1. How effectively do Anchor Partners identify the underlying causes of barriers to employment rather than only the symptoms?
  - 4.2.3. How effectively does the WoEW project prioritise and translate the issues / barriers identified into an individualised programme of support?
  - 4.2.4. Does the individualised program of support offered by WoEW make effective use of alternative services, education provision, Specialist Provision, Work Tasters and Work Experience Placements?
  - 4.2.5. How effectively do partners review participant progress and update individualised programmes of support accordingly?



- 4.2.6. How effectively do partners support participants to progress to an appropriate positive destination and manage the progression process?
- 4.2.7. How effectively do partners support participants following progression to ensure that they are settled at the destination and gain assurance that the progression is secure?
- 4.2.8. How effectively do Anchor Partners assure the quality of their provision?
- 4.3. The successful applicant should set out the methodologies through which the above questions will be answered and propose any other relevant subjects / questions that they recommend should be included in the evaluation.

## **5. THE IMPACT ON INDIVIDUAL PROJECT PARTICIPANTS**

- 5.1. In addition to simply measuring the success of the project in terms of the specific and quantifiable targets set out in the project specification we are keen to identify and understand the wider qualitative impact that participation on the West of England Works project has on the lives of participants.
- 5.2. This qualitative impact could take many forms including (though not limited to):
  - 5.2.1. Increased confidence;
  - 5.2.2. More stability / less chaotic lifestyles;
  - 5.2.3. Positive impact on health / mental health;
  - 5.2.4. Increased self-sufficiency;
  - 5.2.5. Increased housing security;
  - 5.2.6. Continuing post-project positive progression.
  - 5.2.7. Decreased reoffending
  - 5.2.8. Reintroduction to learning environment
  - 5.2.9. Access to other appropriate services

- 5.3. The successful applicant should set out the methodology through which they plan to capture and analyse the broader impact of the project on participants;

## **6. THE IMPACT ON INDIVIDUAL PROJECT PARTNERS AND THE WIDER LOCAL VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR**

- 6.1. One of the key aims of the West of England Works project is build the capacity of the the local voluntary and community sector and support them to work more effectively together. Given this we need the external evaluation process to consider how partners have developed and grown as a result of the project.
- 6.2. The evaluation should be primarily concerned with the capacity building and increased effective working between project Anchor Partners but also wish to consider how effectively Anchor Partners, Specialist Partners, relevant stakeholders and Strategic Partners work together.
- 6.3. The project is also expected to have a beneficial impact on the wider voluntary and community sector.
- 6.4. The successful applicant should set out how they propose to analyse and evaluate capacity building that has taken place within the West of England Works project and form judgements regarding the effectiveness of working relationships between all key partners and any beneficial impact on the wider West of England Voluntary and Community Sector.

## **7. WIDER SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT**

- 7.1. Although this can be difficult to isolate and quantify, in order to be judged to be truly effective the West of England Works project is expected to have a beneficial socio-economic impact within the West of England area. The project has specific targets that relate either directly or indirectly to local productivity, health and wellbeing but we hope that wider benefits will be realised in relation to broader socio-economic factors.
- 7.2. Key themes that have arisen during the delivery phase of the project include:
- 7.2.1. Social Isolation;
  - 7.2.2. Community Cohesion and Resilience;
  - 7.2.3. Hyper-local economic impact;

7.2.4. Social Prescribing

- 7.3. The successful applicant will propose a range of socio-economic factors against which the project may reasonably be expected to make a positive impact and set out how they intend to analyse and report on such impact.

## **8. THE EFFECTIVE PROMOTION OF CROSS-CUTTING THEMES**

- 8.1. All projects funded by the European Social Fund are expected to actively promote the cross-cutting themes:

8.1.1. Equality, Diversity and Gender Equality;

8.1.2. Sustainable Development.

- 8.2. As a minimum requirement all partners are expected to develop an effective policy and associated action plan in support of each cross-cutting theme.

- 8.3. Detailed guidance concerning cross-cutting themes can be found here:

[Cross Cutting Themes Resources Document.pdf \(buildingbetteropportunities.org.uk\)](https://buildingbetteropportunities.org.uk/Cross-Cutting-Themes-Resources-Document.pdf)

- 8.4. The successful applicant will set out the methodology through which they propose to evaluate the promotion of cross-cutting themes within the WoEW project with a specific focus on both quantifiable impact and illumination of each theme to participants through meaningful activities.

## **9. OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

- 9.1. As an appropriate evaluation proposal is likely to include participant interviews we require the successful applicant to ensure that current Disclosure and Barring Service Checks are in place for all staff who will be interacting with participants in an unsupervised manner.
- 9.2. The evaluation must be conducted in a manner that is compliant with the recently introduced General Data Protection Regulations and preferably regard for ISO27001.
- 9.3. The successful applicant will be expected to operate in line with project and Partner policies and procedures for both Safeguarding and PREVENT.
- 9.4. The successful applicant must hold adequate insurance for both employers and public liability;

- 9.5. The successful applicant will be expected to meet with the WoEW project team on at least a monthly basis in order to offer updates on progress.
- 9.6. The successful applicant should be in a position to demonstrate sufficient knowledge / experience within the following fields:
  - Information Advice and Guidance;
  - Initial Assessment / Diagnostics;
  - Employability Programmes;
  - Health and Wellbeing Programmes;
  - The Voluntary and Community Sector (ideally within the West of England);
  - Socio-Economic Impact Research;
  - The National Lottery Community Fund/ European Social Fund 'Building Better Opportunities' Programme in general (ideally including other projects for comparative purposes);
  - Sustainability;
  - Equality and Diversity.
- 9.7. The successful applicant should be in a position to demonstrate sufficient independence from Weston College and all WoEW delivery and strategic partners.
- 9.8. The successful applicant must be willing to share all data and reports arising from the independent evaluation with key stakeholders including Weston College, the National Lottery Community Fund , DWP, the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership, all West of England Local Authorities (including the Combined Authority) and any organisation appointed by the National Lottery Community Fund with responsibility for conducting programme evaluation at national level.

## **10. FINAL REPORT**

- 10.1. Programme delivery will cease on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 giving the opportunity to create a final project report by April 2023.
- 10.2. An evaluation both quantitative and qualitative will be required as to the impact of continuing the West of England Works project through alternate funding mechanisms over the coming years.
- 10.3. Infographics should be included which can be used to promote the work of the project.

## 11. BUDGET & PAYMENTS

- 11.1. The West of England Works project has set aside a budget of £45,000 to support the Independent Evaluation Process.
- 11.2. The £45,000 budget is intended to support all independent evaluation activities that take place up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.
- 11.3. Proposals that demonstrate an ability to deliver the required evaluation to an acceptable standard within a lower budget will be considered favourably.
- 11.4. Payments will be released in line with key milestones achieved within the Independent Evaluation Plan. A limited up-front payment may be considered provided that this can be suitably justified as necessary in order to deliver the evaluation.

## 12. RESPONSE

### 12.1. Response content

SECTION	CONTENT
1. ORGANISATION DETAILS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Full contact details (organisation and lead contact);</li> <li>▪ Legal status of organisation;</li> <li>▪ Companies House Registration Number (or equivalent);</li> <li>▪ Details of all individuals anticipated to play a role within the proposal;                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Details of specific role and relevant experience / CVs</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Organisational / individual experience of:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Information Advice and Guidance;</li> <li>○ Initial Assessment / Diagnostics;</li> <li>○ Employability Programmes;</li> <li>○ Health and Wellbeing Programmes;</li> <li>○ The Voluntary and Community Sector (ideally within the West of England);</li> <li>○ Socio-Economic Impact Research;</li> <li>○ The National Lottery Community Fund / European Social Fund 'Building Better Opportunities' Programme in general (ideally including other projects for comparative purposes);</li> <li>○ Sustainability;</li> <li>○ Equality and Diversity.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Details of at least 2 referees and / or examples of similar work previously undertaken</li> </ul>
2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A short summary of your proposal including details of all proposed key actions, milestones and deadlines;</li> </ul>
3. DETERMINING THE SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Initial proposals for specific areas to be added to or removed from the range of evaluative activities detailed within the specification</li> </ul>
4. THE QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF DELIVERY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A detailed initial project plan proposal that clearly sets out:</li> </ul>

5. THE IMPACT ON INDIVIDUAL PROJECT PARTICIPANTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The full range of proposed measures upon which the evaluation will be based;</li> <li>○ The specific methodologies through which data and evidence will be secured;</li> <li>○ Specific benchmarks / standards that will be applied in order to inform the evaluation;</li> <li>○ The proposed schedule for the evaluation including key activities, milestones, deadlines etc (Note: It is not a requirement that all evaluative activities take place concurrently. Where activities are planned to take place sequentially please provide proposed timings);</li> <li>○ Proposals for reporting methodologies and timescales (interim and final)</li> <li>○ Estimated number of hours requires to complete evaluation (with appropriate breakdown for key tasks)</li> </ul>
6. THE IMPACT ON INDIVIDUAL PROJECT PARTNERS AND THE WIDER LOCAL VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR	
7. WIDER SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT	
8. THE EFFECTIVE PROMOTION OF CROSS-CUTTING THEMES	
9. OTHER REQUIREMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Details of how your proposal addresses all items listed in the 'Other Requirements' section of the specification;</li> <li>▪ Note: Items that require the presentation of specific evidence e.g. DBS checks and Insurance) may be presented at this stage or (subject to confirmation at this stage) may be submitted prior to contract award.</li> </ul>
10. FINAL REPORT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Details of the effectiveness of the project, results and outcomes achieved, impact on the participants</li> </ul>
11. BUDGET AND PAYMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Details of proposed budget;</li> <li>▪ Details of proposed payment structure (including specific milestones that trigger payments);</li> <li>▪ Evidence of value for money (e.g. hourly rates of key staff and number of hours required to complete key tasks).</li> </ul>

12.2. All proposals should be submitted both electronically and in hard copy to:

Tender – Evaluation

Becky Morris,  
Head of Compliance and Project Operations  
West of England Works  
Weston College  
South West Skills Campus  
Locking Road  
Weston-Super-Mare  
BS22 8NL

[procurement@westofenglandworks.org.uk](mailto:procurement@westofenglandworks.org.uk)

12.3. The Deadline for responses is noon on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September 2022.