**QUESTION AND ANSWERS FROM WOMEN LEADING IN EDUCATION COACHING PLEDGE MARKET ENGAGEMENT EVENT, 6 NOVEMBER 2018**

**Introduction**

This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document was compiled from questions asked on our supplier engagement day on 6 November 2018.  Answers provided were correct at the time of publishing and may change during the interim period up to publication of the associated invitation to tender.  The information included in the published invitation to tender documentation will take precedence and should be deemed as the final version, having been subject to appropriate approvals.

Please note that we are not able to respond to individual enquiries or to queries by phone. We are also unable to respond to specific enquiries about the nature of your proposals, as this is a competitive bidding process.

This is the final version of the FAQ document.  No further questions will be responded to relating to the supplier engagement event.  There will, of course, be an opportunity for clarification questions when the invitation to tender is published.

**Coaches**

**Q1: Do coaches have to be from an educational background?**

No, volunteers for coaching can be male or female and come from any background

**Q2: What is the split of coaches like at the moment?**

We plan to provide details of coaches by region in the ITT.

**Q3: Do organisations give a commitment to allow coaches to take up the role?**

Coaching is on a voluntary basis with individuals taking this up in their own time.

**Q4: What happens at the moment for opportunities for matching? Is it all online?**

At the moment it is done via face to face – the regional representatives are required to design and host these events in each sub-region. For some regions if face to face events are not successful (low attendance) then they will be asked to carry out online matching/telephone matching using the directory.

**Q5: How many coaches and participants have been engaged and what’s the target? Do you have insight into how many people seek a coach?**

To date, approximately 1,000 coaches have provided profiles and approximately 2,000 participants have registered to take part. Any KPI for the number of coaches will be addressed in the ITT.

**Delivery of activity, including measurement of progress**

**Q6: Can consortia’s submit tenders?**

Tenders from consortia are welcome. One tender should be submitted per consortium and include details of the lead contractor, expected role and contribution of each of the partner organisations. The composition of a consortium should remain the same throughout the tendering process. If any tenderer introduces new partners or changes the make-up of the tendering organisation in any way after submitting their tender, they must let the Department know as soon as possible and submit a revised tender, to reflect the tendering organisation’s new structure, within the deadline for submission of bids.

**Q7: How much do we anticipate the process and systems needing to**

**change?**

We will address the Department’s expectations about how the model for delivery will need to improve/change in the specification section of the ITT.

**Q8: To what extent does the DfE regard the development of guidelines for what coaches should deliver as part of the marketing and promotion brief?**

We expect to address this in the specification section of the ITT.

**Q9: Are there requirements for how much turnover the lead contractor would need to have?**

The authority refer to regulation 58 of the Public Contracts Regulations in ensuring that suppliers possess the necessary economic and financial capacity to perform the contract. The application of a percentage turnover figure to provide a general indication of financial stability and to be used in the undertaking of financial health checks, pre-award, is still to be decided. No organisation or consortium will be de-selected based on turnover alone.

**Q10a: Branding – will this be an extension of the existing branding or new?**

**Q11b: Is the intention to rebrand?**

This is still to be determined.

**Q12: Is there a risk of [not being able to] deliver the broad scope of requirements within the budget?**

We think that the contract value provided in the RFI is realistic. Responses to the ITT will be assessed on the basis of the most economically advantageous basis and value for money offered.

**Q13: What record sizes do you anticipate/have aspirations for?**

The ITT will provide details of KPIs and service levels.

**Q14: Is there an SLA available for the hosting requirement?**

An SLA has been agreed with the current provider, the TSC. The ITT will present proposed arrangements for sharing of any future SLA for the hosting requirement.

**Q15: What is the thinking behind innovative methods of managing the service?**

The tender process will be conducted in a manner that ensures tenders are evaluated fairly to ascertain the most economically advantageous tender. Suitably robust Award Criteria is to be developed to evaluate proposals against the published specification. This process will allow potential suppliers to state how they intend to deliver the service in accordance with the specified requirement.

**Q16: Is there any expectation of a supervision model? What is the coaching methodology?**

This will be addressed in the ITT.

**Q17: What KPI’s would be required for coaching? Will the KPI’s include measurement of accreditation, assessment and mentoring of individuals?**

Key performance indicators will be addressed in the ITT.

**Q18: Continued co-operation of TSC and regional representatives?**

The ITT will outline expectations for engagement between the provider, the TSC and the regional representatives.

**Support from the Department**

**Q19: Would DfE support with promotion of the database?**

Yes, the Department would promote the coaching pledge database via relevant education sector newsletters and work with the provider on publication of case studies subject to approvals.

**Q20: If applicable, would DfE support with the handover from the TSC to the newly appointed provider?**

Yes, the Department would work with the successful provider to support the transfer of data from the TSC and this could include facilitation of handover meetings.

**Q21a: Would the DfE be able to share statistics from the surveys they carry out / any access to existing insights and statistics?**

**Q21b: Could we have access to existing coaches/coachee insight?**

This information will be made available to the successful provider and it is our intention to include key themes as relevant as part of the ITT process

**Quality assurance**

**Q22: How do you manage and ensure the quality of the coaches are high?**

We ask the TSC comms lead to carry out due diligence on the profiles before they’re uploaded to the directory. We also ask TSC regional reps to carry out training opportunities for coaches so they can improve the offer of coaching in their region.

**Q23: How can we measure quality at scale?**

We expect to address this in the ITT.

**Coaching Pledge database**

**Q24: Would the TSC still host or will there be a transfer of activity? Or do we build from scratch?**

The arrangements for the data-base will be covered in the ITT.

**Q25: Do you have any stats on hits for the regional websites?**

We expect to address this in the ITT.

**Q26: Will a G-Cloud hosting provider be preferred?**

We anticipate that arrangements for the database will be addressed in the ITT.

**Q27: Will the TSC be removed from future activity for the database?**

We anticipate that arrangements for the database will be addressed in the ITT.

**Q28: Will the TSC be interested in bidding to remain in control of the database?**

The TSC would be free to express an interest.

**Value of the contract**

**Q29: If the Invitation to tender includes the database requirement, is the amount of money for the database realistic?**

We think that the contract value provided in the RFI is realistic. Responses to the ITT will be assessed on the basis of the most economically advantageous basis and value for money offered.

**Q30: The initial money for the promotion sounds good but there will be additional work that is emerging around the management of coaches, which doesn’t seem to be included in the cost?**

The final contract, for discussion with the successful provider, will provide a costing schedule for the delivery requirement, including the breakdown of costs between the different activities.

**Q31: Is it £95,000 extra to fund service requirement 2 or an extra £13,000?**

The costs as detailed in the RFI are: for delivery service requirement 1 (marketing and promotion only) up to £82,000; or for delivery service requirement 2 (marketing and promotion and hosting/ management of the database) up to £95,000.

**Q32: Is this activity financially viable if it grows too big? What will happen then? How much does it need to/is expected to grow? How will this affect funding?**

Regular structured and informed communication routes between the Contract Manager and successful supplier will be established to monitor delivery and facilitate ongoing development/growth. Processes should be well managed and tested and benchmarked to assess value for money with any identified major contractual changes subject to clear approval mechanisms and accountabilities. Essentially, commercial (financial) changes will be managed in a fair and structured manner

**Q33: What is the on-going contract value?**

This procurement requirement relates to the 2019-2020 financial year, and the ITT will confirm the contract value for this period (as detailed in the RFI). We are unable to provide confirmation about the contract value for future financial years, because this will be subject to allocation of funding and Ministerial approval for funding for this activity.

**GDPR requirements**

**Q34: For GDPR, do you need any specific audits?**

The draft contract, which will be included in the Invitation to Tender document, will detail the standard GDPR requirements for the Department.

**Q35: How do you see the GDPR requirement around the gathering,**

**maintenance and retention of the online data?**

The draft contract, which will be included in the ITT, will include details of the necessary GDPR requirements