



## Pre-Tender Market Engagement

### STEP Ukraine Evaluation [CPD4126187]

**Authority:** Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities DLUHC (“the Authority”).

**Date Response required:** 17:00 (GMT) 05/02/2024

## 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This Pre-Tender Market Engagement (PTME) seeks information in preparation for the potential procurement of a Supplier (from herein referred to as a “**Potential Supplier**”) to conduct a process evaluation of the Homes for Ukraine scheme. The purpose of this PTME is to:
  - 1.1.1 help define the requirement;
  - 1.1.2 help provide a better understanding of the feasibility of the requirement;
  - 1.1.3 understand the best approach;
  - 1.1.4 understand the capacity of the market to deliver and possible risks involved; and
  - 1.1.5 provide the market with an opportunity to ask questions, raise queries and any issues to be addressed at an early stage.
  - 1.1.6 help to define the costs of the requirement.
  - 1.1.7 understand the potential methodologies that could be used for this requirement.
- 1.2 The Authority shall maintain commercial confidentiality of information received during the PTME.

## 2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 At spring budget 2023, the Chancellor announced £11.5m for a programme to support English language training for Ukrainians in the UK, as part of the government’s new suite of labour market interventions to increase supply. As the lead department for integrating and resettling this cohort, DLUHC launched the £11.5m STEP Ukraine programme in August 2023, an intensive online English language and employment support programme for 9,100 eligible Ukrainians (across the UK) under the three humanitarian Ukraine visa schemes. World Jewish Relief have been contracted to deliver the employment support, with British Council sub-contracted to provide the English language training.

2.2 To be eligible, applicants must be either unemployed or in low-paid employment, and able to commit to the intense scheduling. Low pay is defined as gross earnings below £1,580 per month.

2.3 The service is flexible and online, to better enable those with childcare or other responsibilities to access the service, a barrier which some Ukrainians have reported. The programme provides an intensive 17.5 hours of English learning a week (of which 12.5 hours is live teacher-led learning), over a period of ten weeks, alongside 12 weeks of individualised wrap around employability support.

2.4 The STEP Ukraine core objectives are as follows:

**Objective 1:** To assess learners' initial English Language skills and identify barriers to entering the employment market, or into higher paid roles, and develop tailored support plans.

**Measure of Success 1:** For 90% of all students to have a tailored support plan which identifies barriers to employment with agreed steps to reducing these barriers. For 85% of all students that have completed the course to report that employment support sessions were helpful, at the point of their completion of the course (to be determined by exit survey).

**Objective 2:** To provide English Language tuition for up to 10,000 Ukrainians, of which two thirds are unemployed and one third are in low paid employment.

**Measure of Success 2:** For all eligible learners to have improved by at least 1 level of Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) qualification (or by 100 points in the English Score app) compared to their baseline at the start of the project.

**Objective 3:** To provide high-quality, individualised employability support for up to 10,000 Ukrainians in parallel to providing English Language classes.

**Measure of Success 3:** For at least 40% of unemployed participants to be in employment within 12 months of beginning their training, and for at least 20% of underemployed participants to have increased their monthly earnings or entered employment more commensurate with their skill level (as assessed by follow up survey after 12 months and HMRC data linking).

### 3 HIGH LEVEL OUTLINE PROJECT OUTCOMES REQUIRED

3.1 Due to the unique nature of the STEP Ukraine programme, there is a need to evaluate the impact of the programme on students and the barriers and facilitators to delivery in order to inform future policymaking. DLUHC are seeking an external contractor to undertake a process, impact and value for money evaluation of the STEP Ukraine programme.

3.2 The programme currently has the following data sources to be used for evaluative purposes:

- **Pre- and post-intervention English proficiency assessments:** These assessments will determine the baseline English level of learners and track their progress through the professional English language level assessments throughout the intervention
- **Pre, post and 12 months post-intervention learner surveys:** These surveys will focus on the learner experience of the intervention and attitudes towards their English language levels and employment outcomes. They will also focus on user satisfaction of the service, with specific focus on accessibility and barriers to English language and employment support.

- **Monitoring data:** This detailed collection of data will focus on the demographic make-up of the learner cohort, attendance levels of both English proficiency sessions as well as employment support sessions, dropout rates, length of time in the UK. This data source will also collect the National Insurance numbers of learners to enable data linking with HMRC employment data.
- **Qualitative data:** This data is collected by the employment advisors and is recorded in student's case notes. It will include information on how students have found the course and any issues that have arisen in its duration.

3.3 The STEP Ukraine evaluation should cover the following key research questions:

- **Impact** - What was the impact on learners of the STEP Ukraine programme?
  - To what extent was the programme successful in increasing the English language ability of learners?
  - To what extent was the programme successful in providing high-quality, individualised employment support for learners (including developing tailored employment plans)?
  - To what extent was the programme successful in assisting learners into employment, higher paid employment or employment more commensurate with their skill level, within 12 months of beginning the programme?
  - To what extent was the programme successful in improving participant attitudes and confidence around their perceived employability/language proficiency?
  - What has been the additional impact of STEP Ukraine (e.g. on the speed of English learning skills and the speed of gaining employment)?
- **Process** - How was STEP Ukraine rolled out in practice?
  - What were the barriers/facilitators to the delivery of STEP Ukraine?
  - What were the barriers to effective participation?
  - Who did the scheme reach? Who did the scheme not reach? Why?
  - How was the programme experienced by learners/stakeholders/delivery partners?
- **VFM** - Is the STEP Ukraine programme Value for Money for HMG?
  - Did the STEP Ukraine programme provide better economic benefits to HMG than existing ESOL services?

The evaluation should include a **counterfactual group** which provides a robust impact assessment of the programme. Data linking with HMRC is a potential methodology to produce a counterfactual group of Ukrainian visa holders who did not undertake the STEP Ukraine programme. Developing a potential counterfactual survey with the ONS is also a potential avenue for exploration. The Authority will be responsible for gaining any necessary data sharing agreements for using HMRC data.

In addition to assessing the impact of the intervention with a counterfactual group, there is also interest in exploring the impact of the STEP Ukraine programme in comparison to other forms of existing ESOL interventions.

We expect the supplier to devise an evaluation approach which aligns with this and the key research questions above, however, the methodology should include analysis of existing

pre/post English examinations, survey data, and attendance rates. Evidence synthesis of standard ESOL evaluations as well as qualitative research with key stakeholders would also be ideal.

This is the Authority's current position on evaluation approach; however, this is subject to change. The Authority may also be open to other methodologies suggested in bids to any potential tender.

3.4 The potential supplier should show how they meet social value themes described below and detailed in this guide: [Social value quick reference guide](#). The proposed social value themes that the supplier may be asked to demonstrate are:

MAC 8.1: Demonstrate collaboration with users and communities in the co-design and delivery of the contract to support strong integrated communities.

MAC 8.2: Influence staff, suppliers, customers and communities through the delivery of the contract to support strong, integrated communities.

## 4 OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES

- 4.1 Outputs and deliverables will be finalised as part of the potential tender, but the current deliverables to be expected are:
  - 4.1.1 The Potential Supplier will be expected to produce an interim evaluation report for The Authority after 6 months of the evaluation's commencement (Winter 2024).
  - 4.1.2 The final, full evaluation report is expected to be returned to DLUHC after 12 months of the evaluation's commencement (Summer 2025).

## 5 KEY DATES & TENDERING PROCESS

- 5.1 If it is decided this service is required, it is anticipated that a procurement may start March 2024 with the contract to commence Summer 2024. These indicative dates are for information purposes only. The Authority reserve the right to amend these dates at any time, and Potential Suppliers rely on them entirely at their own risk.
- 5.2 The contract is expected to be for a period of 12 months.
- 5.3 Interim report to be published after 6 months (Winter 2024)
- 5.4 Final full evaluation report to be published after 12 months (Summer 2025)

## 6 RESPONSE

- 6.1 Please respond by email to [commercialtenders@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:commercialtenders@levellingup.gov.uk) with the following by 17:00 GMT 05/02/24 (the "Response Deadline"). Please use the subject heading 'CPD4126187: STEP Ukraine – PTME'.
  - 1. Would you be interested in bidding for this project? At this stage the Authority are considering a number of procurement routes to market such as the CCS [Research and Insights Framework](#). However, please be aware that the department will use filters on this framework to shortlist the required skills and expertise.
  - 2. Is this project deliverable in the timeframe proposed?

3. Are the Authority's goals, desired outcomes and/or requirements clear?
4. What, if anything, has the Authority missed or overlooked in setting out their requirement?
5. Is there anything here which is irrelevant, outdated or unnecessary?
6. What are the broad approaches to methodologies you would suggest for this requirement? What micro/macro modelling or social research methods would you use? The Authority is interested in suggestions on counterfactual groups that could be used in the impact assessment, and how they would be sourced. This could include counterfactual groups receiving no English language provision, as well as those who have received alternative forms of provision.
7. What is the indicative budget range your organisation would cost for this evaluation? Should the contract focus on the analysis of collected data (as outlined above), and the development and analysis of the counterfactual, how would that affect budget?
8. What do you anticipate being the main challenges in addressing the requirements of this project?
9. Is the proposed Social Value Theme, Policy Outcomes Criteria, Reporting Metrics and weightings appropriate for this requirement? Please elaborate on your reasons why and/or suggest alternatives from [the model](#) that could be applied and why these alternatives would be more relevant?

## 7 QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

- 7.1 Potential Suppliers may raise questions or seek clarification regarding any aspect of this PTME document at any time prior to the Response Deadline. Questions must be submitted by email to [commercialtenders@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:commercialtenders@levellingup.gov.uk) only. Please use the subject heading '**CPD4126187: STEP Ukraine – Clarification Question**'.
- 7.2 To ensure that all Potential Suppliers have equal access to information regarding this PTME exercise, responses to questions raised by Potential Suppliers will be published in a "Questions and Answers" document.
- 7.3 Responses to questions will not identify the originator of the question.
- 7.4 If a Potential Supplier wishes to ask a question or seek clarification without the question and answer being revealed, then the Potential Supplier must state this in their email and provide its justification for withholding the question and any response. If the Authority does not consider that there is sufficient justification for withholding the question and the corresponding response, the Potential Supplier will be invited to decide whether:
  - 7.4.1 the question/clarification and the response should in fact be published; or
  - 7.4.2 it wishes to withdraw the question/clarification.

## 8 GENERAL CONDITIONS

- 8.1 This PTME will help the Authority to refine the requirements and to understand the potential level of interest in the delivering requirements. It will also aid Potential Supplier's understanding of the requirements in advance of any formal competitive tender exercise.
- 8.2 The Authority reserves the right to change any information contained within this PTME at any time, and Potential Suppliers rely upon it entirely at their own risk.
- 8.3 The Authority reserves the right not to proceed with a competitive tender exercise after this PTME or to award any contract.
- 8.4 Any and all costs associated with the production of such a response to this PTME must be borne by the Potential Supplier.
- 8.5 No down-selection of Potential Suppliers will take place as a consequence of any responses or interactions relating to this PTME.
- 8.6 The Authority expects that all responses to this PTME will be provided by Potential Suppliers in good faith to the best of their ability in the light of information available at the time of their response.
- 8.7 No information provided by a Potential Supplier in response to this PTME will be carried forward, used or acknowledged in any way for the purpose of evaluating the Potential Supplier, in any subsequent formal procurement process.