**Expression of Interest for members of the**

**English Hubs Council**

Expression of Interest for reading experts for the English Hubs Council

**Overview**

The Department for Education is seeking to procure professional services from three experts in reading with a focus on systematic synthetic phonics, to become members of the English Hubs Council. Members may also have wider specialisms, including in early language and developing a love of reading, to develop a balanced Council membership. The Council will provide advice to the Department for Education (DfE) on developing the scope and strategic direction of the English Hubs programme and the work of the English Hubs Training Centre to ensure change and improvement in the teaching of early language and literacy. The Council will also provide expertise in support of implementation activity as agreed with the DfE, for example in reviewing Annual Hub Development Plans.

The English Hubs Council will form part of the national English Hubs Programme, a £26m investment to drive improvement in the teaching of early language and reading, working through 32 high-performing hub schools and their literacy specialists. The 32 hub schools are supported by DfE who will also provide secretariat support for the Hubs Council. Up to six representatives from the English Hub schools will be appointed through a parallel process to the English Hubs Council.

A national English Hubs Training Centre will train literacy specialists in hub schools to improve outcomes in supported schools, with an emphasis on the most disadvantaged children. The Training Centre will also quality assure the work of the literacy specialists within hub schools. The Training Centre is being procured through a separate tender exercise. A representative from the English Hubs Training Centre will also sit on the English Hubs Council.

The English Hubs Programme focusses on supporting excellent teaching of reading, with a focus on systematic synthetic phonics and early language in school-based Early Years and Key Stage 1, centred on three priority areas:

1. Early language development: Providing evidence-based approaches to early language development and closing the word gap in school-based early years settings, including appropriate use of formative assessment;
2. Age-appropriate phonics provision: Encouraging best practice in systematic synthetic phonics teaching from school-based early years provision to the end of Key Stage 1, and as the primary reading strategy throughout the school. This includes:

* encouraging fidelity to a single systematic synthetic phonics programme;
* supporting the effective use of decodable books in the early stages of learning to read, as a way of establishing phonic decoding;
* supporting effective practice in formative assessment in relation to phonics/early reading.

1. Promoting a love of reading: Encouraging reading for enjoyment including by supporting whole school reading approaches, reading to children at least once a day and encouraging reading at home; developing teachers’ knowledge of appropriate children’s literature.

**Requirements for English Hubs Council members**

The services provided by Hub Council members will include:

* Advice to the DfE about the scope and strategic direction of the English Hubs programme, including its reach, target audience, support offer, and development in the future to ensure change and improvement in the teaching of reading, with a focus on systematic synthetics phonics, and early language.
* Advice to the DfE about the work of the English Hubs Training Centre, including the content of the training programme and the Training Centre’s quality assurance of the work of Hub schools.
* Support of implementation activity, including: reviewing Annual Hub Development Plans; highlighting delivery risks and resolving issues; and communications activity to share the opportunities for schools in the hubs network.

Skills and experience

The Council will comprise up to six representatives from the active Hubs Network, one representative from the Training Centre, along with three other experts in reading. All council members will be committed to teaching reading through systematic synthetic phonics, and may have wider specialisms in early language and developing a love of reading. Priority will be given during the selection process to candidates who can demonstrate additional system insight: for example in work with disadvantaged children. The DfE welcomes applications from a diverse range of professionals. The Council chair will be appointed by the DfE from among those submitting an expression of interest for membership of the Council. Membership of the Council will be for a one-year term with the possibility of renewal for subsequent terms.

Availability and working arrangements

Members of the Hubs Council should be available to meet four times per year in person and engage with relevant papers that inform these sessions. Additional input on wider English issues might be requested from members between meetings by the DfE. On these occasions, teleconference facilities will be available and additional costs will be reimbursed in line with current DfE expense rates.

The Chair, with the support of their DfE secretariat, will also coordinate communications with any other partners such as the English Hubs Training Centre and any external programme evaluator.

Candidates with an actual or potential conflict of interest should set this out clearly in their application and the DfE will maintain a register of these for successful candidates. If you are successful in your application for membership of the English Hubs Council, you cannot continue to supply another service as part of the English Hubs programme with the exception of services paid for by hub schools for the schools they are supporting. Should you or your employer be successful in an application to supply the English Hubs Training Centre, your application for the English Hubs Council will be withdrawn. Candidates must manage actual or potential conflicts of interest on an on-going basis. For example, should a candidate or their employer subsequently supply (or express an interest in supplying) another service as part of the English Hubs programme, then the Department may remove such candidate from the Council.

Successful candidates will all be required to sign a Contract, a Declaration of Interest form and a Confidentiality Agreement.

**Funding**

A day rate of approximately £425 including VAT will be awarded to successful candidates; final amount per day will be determined following the closing date of the tender. Travel and subsistence costs (overnight stays will not usually be required) will be paid subject to DfE expenses limits and agreed with the DfE lead prior to the meeting attendance. Payment for expenses and attendance will be made in arrears following attendance at meetings and on production of an invoice and receipt(s). In March 2019, members will be required to prepare for and attend one meeting and conduct one Hub visit.

**Selection process**

If you would like to submit an expression of interest for one of these roles please apply by emailing a completed expression of interest (see below), including your daily rate inclusive of VAT, to English.IMPLEMENTATION@education.gov.uk by **5pm 31 January 2019.** Expressions of interest will be assessed by a panel of DfE officials who will consider the following before making a recommendation to DfE Ministers who will make the final decision on appointments.

**Expression of Interest**

Please answer the following questions as fully as possible, wherever possible giving examples to illustrate your answer. The weighting that will be given to each answer in assessing the expression of interest is shown in the column on the right hand side of each question.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **WEIGHT** |
| Q1. | **Your understanding of the DfE’s requirements:** please set out how you see the English Hub Council impacting the objectives of the English Hubs Programme  (Maximum 250 words) | 20% |
| A1 | ***Please insert your answer here*** |  |
| Q2. | **Your specialist expertise in reading:** please set out how your relevant delivery experience, sector insight and qualifications demonstrate your suitability to become a member of the English Hub Council. Please also indicate your commitment to systematic synthetic phonics. If you would like to draw our attention to any relevant specialisms including, for example, in early language, developing a love of reading, or working with disadvantaged children, please do so here.  (Maximum 500 words) | 80% |
| A2 | ***Please insert your answer here.*** |  |
| A2a | **If you wish to be considered for the role of Council Chair, insert your statement of suitability here**  (Maximum 100 words) |  |
| Q3. | **Actual and potential conflicts of interest:** Candidates with actual and potential conflicts of interest should set these out here, along with what action you would take to ensure you could still work effectively as part of the Hubs Council. | |
| A3 | ***Please insert your answer here. If there are no conflicts to declare, please state not applicable.*** | |

#### Candidate declaration

I confirm that all the information included in this expression of interest is correct.

Signature: Date:

Name:

**Evaluation criteria**

Expressions of interest will be evaluated using a 6-point scale (0 to 5), as set out below. Evaluators will assign a score to each evaluation question response, which will then be multiplied by the respective ‘multiplier’ to produce the final weighted score for each evaluation question. Evaluators will make appropriate notes to validate all scores awarded.

In general terms, higher scores will be awarded when the evidence provided demonstrates and provides high confidence in reliable delivery of the required Services. Lower scores will be given when the evidence provided does not demonstrate and/or provide confidence in reliable delivery of the requirement as specified. The criteria for each score are set out in the table below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **DESCRIPTION** | **CRITERIA** |
| 5 | Excellent | The response fully and successfully meets the criteria detailed and in addition offers significant and clearly recognisable benefits and desirable features, which are relevant and proportionate to the question, over and above the level required in the procurement documents,  **and**  full and relevant evidence is provided to support the response and explain how the Tenderer will satisfy the criteria in full and clearly offer significant and clearly recognisable benefits and desirable features. |
| 4 | Good | The response fully and successfully meets the criteria detailed,  **and**  full and relevant evidence is provided to support the response and explain how the Tenderer will satisfy the criteria in full. |
| 3 | Satisfactory | The response substantially meets the criteria detailed. Relevant evidence is provided to support the response. May lack some clarity or detail in how the proposed solutions will be achieved.  Lack of clarity and any missing evidence or detail is minor. |
| 2 | Poor | The response satisfies only some of the criteria detailed in the question,  **and/or** The response exhibits some omissions with regard to meeting the criteria detailed,  **and/or** Some evidence is provided to support the response, but this is lacking in sufficient detail in one or more areas. |
| 1 | Very Poor | The response clearly fails to meet a number of criteria detailed in the question,  **and/or** The response exhibits clear and significant omissions with regard to meeting the criteria detailed, **and/or**  Inadequate or no supporting evidence has been provided to support the response. |
| 0 | Nil Response | No response provided. |

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