

Clair Bowman
Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

Submitted by email to: Clair.Bowman@beis.gov.uk

Dear Clair,

Please find enclosed Nesta's tender submission for Business Basics interim report 21/22 & final evaluation report 22/23 Tender Reference TRN5026.04.2021

The proposal is organised as follows:

- Introduction: setting out the context and rationale for this work
- Understanding of business support programmes & policy environment
- Approach and methodology
- Skills and experience of staff
- Annexes:
 - Annex B: Risk register
 - Annex C: Breakdown in staff time allocated
 - Annex D: Timetable
 - Annex E: Draft visualisation of BBF projects

Additional documents accompanying this proposal

- Annex A – Pricing schedule
- Declarations 1-6
- CVs for IGL team

This proposal is valid for 90 days from the date of submission.

Submission Date: 19 May 2021

Proposal Contact detail

[REDACTED]

Proposal to produce the *Business Basics* interim and final evaluation reports

The Business Basics Programme is the first large-scale initiative to promote experimentation in UK SME business support policy. Introduced in 2018 alongside a number of other measures to improve firm level productivity. The programme was designed to support SMEs whilst also addressing a longstanding gap¹ in our understanding of what works to encourage SMEs to adopt existing technologies and management practices. The programme is generating much useful learning about the effectiveness of the interventions tested, as well as about the optimal management of programmes and an experimentation fund. Realising the full value of BEIS's investment requires the findings to reach those who design and deliver business support interventions, to guide them in making more effective decisions and to/ encourage wider experimentation.

With this proposal, the Innovation Growth Lab (IGL) will take responsibility for carrying out a robust and independent evaluation of the programme. This will include a detailed review of each of the 17 randomised controlled trials (RCTs) and 15 proof of concept projects supported by the Business Basics Fund (BBF), critically assessing the quality of the projects and collating their findings. Key outputs will be two publishable reports and presentations that synthesise the findings, ensuring that these are made accessible to policymakers, researchers and the public.

Understanding of business support programmes & policy environment

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[Redacted footnote text]

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Approach and methodology

IGL's work under this proposal will be divided into five work packages (WPs). The final plan will be agreed with BEIS at the start of the work, with the specific details of the tasks and the timetable being adapted as appropriate. We will review progress on an ongoing basis, and expect to revise this plan at the end of the 21/22 financial year so as to maximise the value of the activities carried out in the second year of the contract. If approval for the 22/23 funding is not granted, we would explore options with BEIS for how best to structure the work within the 21/22 financial year.

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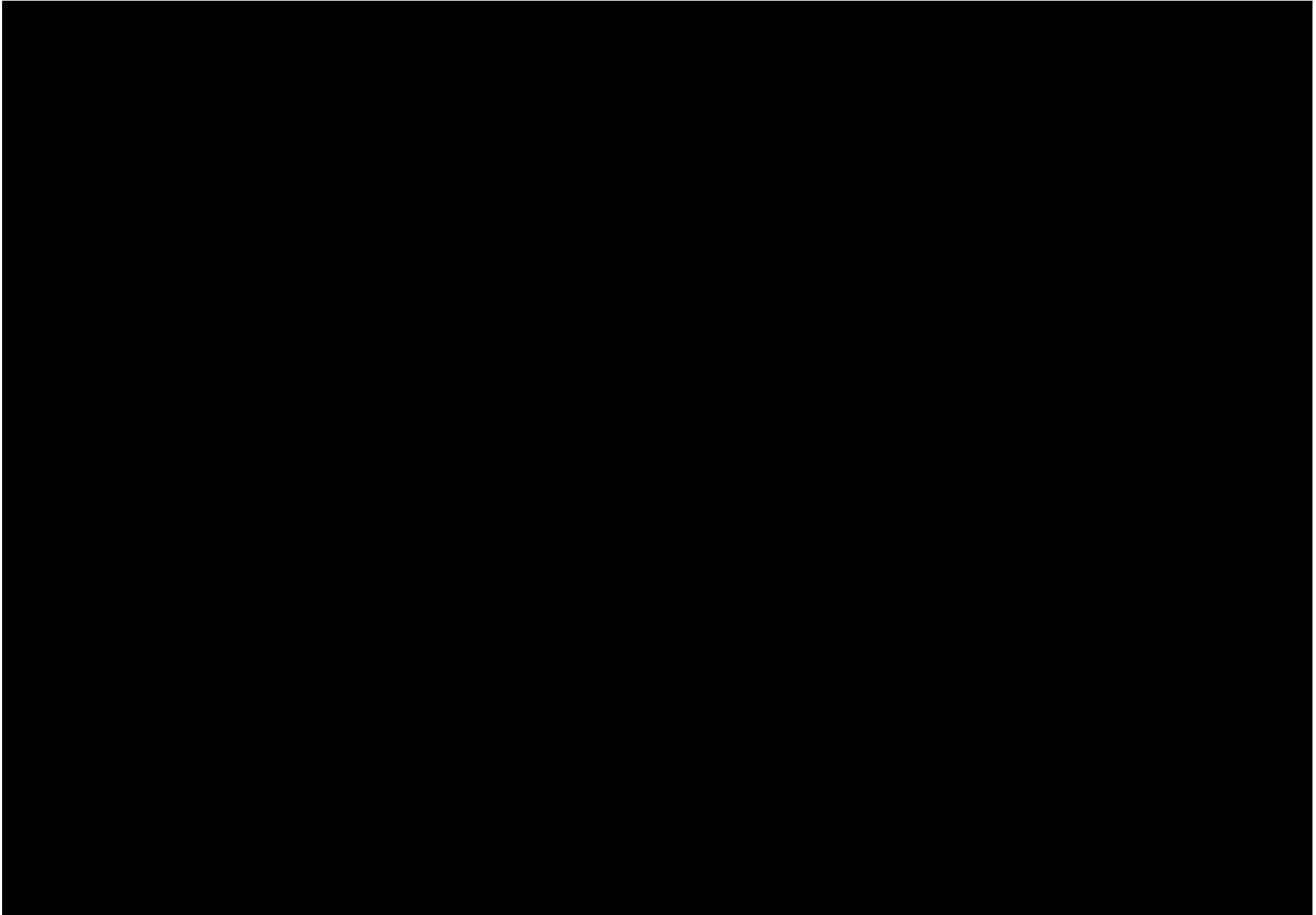
Annex B: Risk register

A full risk register will be discussed and revised in coordination with BEIS during the inception

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Annex C: Breakdown in staff time allocated, by activity and financial year —



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Annex E: Draft visualisation of BBF projects

