

# **CUMBRIA LEP TENDER SPECIFICATION FOR THE PROVISION OF MEDIUM INTENSITY BUSINESS SUPPORT ASSISTANCE**

## **1. INSTRUCTIONS FOR BIDDING**

Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership (CLEP) is seeking to appoint organisations to deliver 3 hour medium intensity business support advice to SMEs, within Cumbria, for the 2023/24 financial year.

CLEP's Programmes Team Hub will co-ordinate the delivery of Department of Business and Trade (DBT) funded business support activity in Cumbria, ensuring that this meets the needs of our businesses and supports their growth. The focus of business advice will be very much on supporting SMEs to deliver their growth ambitions moving forward. In delivering advisory sessions the appointed organisations will be required to consider the key themes and priorities as identified by DBT and Government, which will include but is not limited to innovation, investment, skills, Net Zero and international trade.

In delivering medium intensity business support advice to SMEs, CLEP would like to secure a range of delivery organisations that bring a geographic, sectoral or client group perspective, to ensure that SMEs receive support that is most appropriate to their needs. In addition to specialist organisations CLEP is open to sole traders with expertise in delivering business support services.

The contract will operate on the basis of pricing per 'unit', with the appointed organisation or individuals being paid a unit price for the delivery of the contract. Payment will only be made for the number of Medium Intensity 3 Hour Assists provided to businesses and subject to the provision of valid and completed paperwork. In advance of commencing the assist interview, the appointed organisations will need to secure agreement from CLEP to ensure that the businesses are not already receiving support.

CLEP is also interested in the delivery of 12 hour high intensity assists to SMEs with significant growth potential and tenderers are invited to also tender for the delivery of these, if they have the necessary expertise and client group. If you would like to tender for this please include an overview of how you would deliver this support within your application.

The contract will run from the date of appointment until 31 March 2024, subject to the satisfaction of the parties. Any work beyond this date would be subject to a further competitive tender.

Appointed organisations will need to provide all necessary paperwork in line with contractual requirements.

## Experience Required

The successfully appointed organisations or individuals will be required to have experience and expertise in:

- **Advice and Support** - to businesses, with recognised expertise in specific sectors, geographies or client groups;
- **Strong communication skills** – verbally, presentationally and in writing and confident in dealing with a range of audiences
- **Analytical skills** - to rapidly assess the needs of businesses and provide advice in relation to these
- **Outcome Focus** - to deliver high-quality outcomes to time and in line with work programme requirements
- **Ability to absorb large amounts of information** – in order to provide the necessary advice to businesses
- **Excellent planning, organisational and project management skills** – to ensure that all activity is managed and effectively recorded.
- **Well-developed IT skills** - including an understanding of management information systems, diary management, e-mail and CRM databases
- **Understanding of Cumbria's economy and business base** – to ensure that the support provided is fully informed by the operating environment.

## Recruitment and Project Management

CLEP will promote the programme and business support offer to businesses within its own wider networks in Cumbria. Delivery partners are also required to promote the programme through their own networks and encourage new businesses to take up the offer of support, funded by the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) through the Cumbria LEP.

Businesses will receive triage through CLEP's Programmes Team and then be signposted to the appropriate delivery partner for support; **or** if recruited directly the delivery partner will need to contact CLEP's Programme team to confirm the eligibility of the business to receive support and to log the business details with CLEP. A check will be made by CLEP to ensure that business is not already engaged with this programme of support.

A final customer satisfaction review will be conducted by CLEP at the end of each engagement as well as an opportunity to signpost to additional support that may be available to each business. All activity will be logged on a CLEP managed CRM system and delivery partners must provide all details in relation to this.

## Submission Date

Tender responses should be submitted by 11.59pm on Friday, 28 April 2023.

## 2. BACKGROUND

### The LEP

The Cumbria LEP (CLEP) is the government-endorsed body with the strategic responsibility for economic growth and productivity in Cumbria. It has responsibility for delivering on the roles and responsibilities outlined within government's "Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships" report namely taking lead responsibility for strategy; allocation of funds; co-ordination and advocacy in relation to economic growth, prosperity and productivity.

### About Cumbria

The CLEP geography is co-terminous with the boundary of Cumbria. It is a strategically important geography, with assets that are of consequence to the nation. Our economy generates £12 billion and we are home to 500,000 people. Across England's LEP areas we stand out in terms of our large geographical size (at 6,800 sq. miles we are the 8<sup>th</sup> largest LEP area) combined with a relatively low population (at around 500,000 the third smallest LEP area population). This means that Cumbria has by far the lowest population density and economic output density (GVA per hectare) of any LEP area. Cumbria therefore faces particular challenges from the degree to which our businesses are spread out over a large area in terms of delivery of services, linkages between businesses and travel to work and learn distances.

Cumbria's economy is:

- one of the most **concentrated areas of manufacturing in the UK**: 23% of our GVA and 16% of our employment comes from manufacturing placing us 3<sup>rd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> in LEP rankings. We are home to world class manufacturing firms that export globally and are at the forefront of innovation.
- a major player in the UK's **energy sector**: a world recognised centre for **nuclear expertise**, especially in de-commissioning technologies and innovation; in integration development of defence nuclear power transmission in submarines; is home to over 16% of the UK's windfarm generation capacity, which as at the leading edge of energy generation improvements and home to a strong cluster of firms in the offshore sub-sea sector; a centre for the oil and gas sector; and a location of opportunities and expertise in several other forms of energy.
- **globally recognised for its beauty and natural capital** – with over 45 million visits each year and home to the world-renowned Lake District, the country's most visited National Park with the greatest level of tourism activity and now a World Heritage Site. The Lake District along with parts of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site and three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty mean that we have the most extensive coverage of protected landscapes in England.

- a market-leader in the **practical application of natural capital** to the sustainable management of land and agriculture, building on the opportunities from World Heritage Status for the Lake District and a centre for innovative **value-added production** from land-based industries.

### 3. SUBMISSION

The following information is required from tendering organisations:

#### A. Experience

Details of the skills and experience of the team member(s) providing advisory support:

- Evidence of experience in delivering this service for other organisations;
- A CV containing a synopsis of their skills and experience relevant to providing the service; (maximum three sides A4);
- The names and organisations of two referees for whom similar activity has been conducted.

#### B. Approach

Details of the proposed approach for successfully delivering the advisory activity, including the approach to lead generation to identify suitable clients. This should include the volume of sessions that the organisation wishes to deliver, together with a profile for the delivery of these for the period up until 31 March 2024. ***The profile should not be backloaded.***

#### C. Price

The expectation is that the payment for medium intensity assists will be £130 per 3-hour session, plus VAT. A similar metric will be applied for the payment of 12-hour assists. Payments to appointed contractors will be made monthly, in arrears.

#### D. Duration

The Contract will be until 31 March 2024. Any work beyond this date would be subject to a further competitive tender.

#### E. Submission Deadline

Applications are to be submitted by 11.59pm Friday 28 April 2023. Please send applications to Paul Foster, Head of Programmes at [paul.foster@thecumbrialep.co.uk](mailto:paul.foster@thecumbrialep.co.uk)

#### 4. EVALUATION OF SUBMISSION

CLEP will undertake to select the organisation whose tender most appropriately matches the desired outcomes listed in the brief, in terms of price, experience and approach.

The assessment of this submission will be based on quality, with and the following evaluation table used to score submissions.

<b>CRITERIA</b>	<b>S C O R E (1-10)</b>	<b>WEIGHTING</b>	<b>TOTAL (score x weighting)</b>
Quality – Experience		50	
Quality – Approach		50	
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>Max score 1000</b>

The highest scoring submission will be the one securing the highest total score against all criteria.

The evidence matrix below will be used to ensure a consistent approach when awarding a score of 0 to 10 against each of the criteria. A score of 2 (weak) or below in any category will automatically disqualify that submission.

Scores	Assessment	Interpretation
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10	Excellent	<p>The approach has been tailored specifically to suit the contract</p> <p>objectives and the requirements of the specification, uses innovative approaches to deal comprehensively with the main management and service risks, and is likely to maximise performance and deliver continuous improvement.</p>
8	Good	<p>The approach demonstrates a good understanding of the contract's objectives and the requirements of the specification. It deals fully</p> <p>with the main management and service risks and provides for delivering continuous improvement over the life of the contract.</p>
5	Acceptable	<p>The approach demonstrates an adequate understanding of the contract's objectives and the requirements of the specification. It</p> <p>covers the main management and service risks to an acceptable standard.</p>
2	Weak	<p>The approach meets the specification but fails to demonstrate an adequate understanding of the requirements of the specification.</p>
0	Fail	<p>The approach does not meet the requirements of the specification.</p>

CLEP reserves the right to cancel the tender process at any point. CLEP is not liable for any costs resulting from any cancellation of this tender process or for any other costs incurred by those tendering for this contract.