



DRAFT Call for Skills Support for the Workforce

Background

This provision will align with a range of existing provision, working alongside further provision to support specific groups that are being commissioned as part of the 2014-2020 ESF Programme.

This specification sets out requirements for support to help employed people gain the necessary skills to be able to progress onto higher skilled and higher paid roles, increasing productivity and decreasing dependency on in work tax credits. Provision will be aimed at supporting sustainable employment and promoting in-work progression, targeting those with low skills through the delivery of work related training.

This specification sets out requirements for:

- Provision of skills support for individuals employed in Greater Manchester, including those at risk of redundancy that enhances career opportunities and allows individuals to progress from current qualification levels to the next level up, and beyond.

Call Summary:

ERDF/ESF	ESF	Theme	Enhancing equal access to lifelong learning
Call / Lot Title	Skills Support for the Workforce		
Call Lot Value	C£4,000,000 to £5,000,000		
What is the call seeking to secure for GM?	<p>The programme will support the up-skilling of the GM workforce, ensuring that employers have staff with the right skills and that individuals are supported to sustain and progress in their jobs.</p> <p>This tender will purchase solutions that respond to local skills needs and support employed individuals to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance their skills in order to become more successful in the labour market; • advance their career prospects; • reduce the risk of cycling in and out of employment; • access training to gain higher level skills; • access training which supports sector development and change; • access flexible and bespoke learning programmes aligned towards educational, employer and individual needs; • identify the skills needed to enhance their employability in the labour market to gain alternative employment, if facing redundancy. <p>The deliverables for activity delivered under this call will be segmented into three categories: Basic skills; advanced/higher level skills; redundancy support. Applicants should encompass activity within all three of these areas in their proposals.</p> <p>The services must not duplicate or undermine national policy including policy on grants, loans and on entitlement to funding for Level 2 and below qualifications under the Adult Skills Budget.</p>		



Timescales for delivery	September 2016 to March 2018
Why does GM need this project?	
<p>It is estimated that a quarter of the productivity gap between Greater Manchester (GM) and the UK as a whole is caused by higher than average levels of worklessness and low levels of economic activity. The other three quarters is caused by lower levels of economic output, with people in work not as productive as elsewhere in the country, and of which low skill levels is a critical component.</p> <p>This programme will raise productivity through workforce skills development, particularly at advanced and higher levels in those existing and emerging growth sectors (identified as being business, financial & professional services, advanced manufacturing (including advanced materials), digital and creative, construction, logistics and low carbon), where possible.</p> <p>Provision will support sustainable employment and promote in-work progression for individuals through the delivery of work-related skills training. Greater Manchester will fund provision that raises the attainment levels achieved by these individuals, enabling them to improve their employment status and move on to undertake higher levels of training.</p>	
Proposed delivery method	
<p>To ensure proposals are innovative and creative, GM LEP have not specified a delivery model for this call, however there are some specific activities that we would like to see delivered and these are outlined below.</p> <p>We would like to see proposals that include provision that increases the skill levels of employed individuals from the existing level to the next level up; support for part time workers (including those on in-work Universal Credit) to access jobs that increase hours/wages; leadership and management training particularly within SMEs; developing the digital skills of employees to meet future need and to support digital inclusion; expanding and enhancing Apprenticeships in line with career progression and skills and training packages in response to redundancy.</p> <p>Where possible, support can include careers information, advice and guidance for employees in order to determine the most relevant skills/training and progression routes for the individual. Proposals can also include support for employers in order to proactively involve them in supporting their employees to access skills training in order to increase workforce development and productivity. This should include carrying out Training Needs Analysis with employers to determine skills gaps and in order to assess impact.</p> <p>Working to the SFA's agreed funding formulas we envisage an average spend of £1800 per learner and applicants will be expected to show stretched targets to maximise on the level of funding provided.</p> <p>GM LEP are seeking a lead provider to work with a broad consortium of subcontractors (including different types of providers, i.e. those from the voluntary and community sector) to ensure full geographical and sectoral coverage, ensuring the skill needs of employed individuals are met (with support from employers to identify skills gaps).</p> <p>Applicants should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have experience of managing contracts of at least a comparable size to that available through this tender;• Be able to demonstrate that they (and/or any proposed sub-contractors listed) have a strong track-record of delivering skills support to employed individuals in Greater Manchester (or an area with similar geographic size and economic need as GM);• Demonstrate that they can deliver provision in each of the ten GM local authorities, either in fixed office locations or in outreach venues to ensure accessibility for all;	



- Establish (or demonstrate existing) working relationships with key stakeholders including Local Authorities, GM Combined Authority and LEP, employers, GM Chamber of Commerce and other relevant organisations.

Target clients / beneficiaries / geographical area

Individuals supported must be:

- aged 19 or over
- employed in GM (based on postcode of workplace)
- eligible for ESF funding

Priority should be given to employees that fall into (one or more of) the following priority groups:

- Older workers – aged 50+
- Young workforce – aged 19-24
- Workers with learning disabilities – including LLDD
- Women
- Lone parents
- Low skilled workers – who do not have a full Level 2 (or equivalent) qualification
- Low paid workers, workers on part-time or temporary contracts including individuals in receipt of in-work Universal Credit
- Workers at risk of redundancy

Priority should also be given to employers that are in one of GM's priority growth sectors which are expected to drive employment and/or GVA growth, or to have significant on-going employment opportunities:

- business, financial & professional services
- advanced manufacturing (including advanced materials)
- digital and creative
- construction
- logistics

Applicants will be expected to deliver services across all of the ten local authority areas within Greater Manchester.

Linkages and impact with European Social Fund / Growth & Reform Plan / Devolution Agreement.

Engaging with employers and employees to understand the requirements of both sets of skills needs and provide localised support with appropriate education or training that is in line with labour market need will support both Growth and Reform in GM.

The Devolution Agreement provides a foundation for change in the skills system in GM and will enable the system to be designed to better understand and align local employers (including those in the key growth sectors) with workers who have the skills and experience to provide sustainable solutions to employers' demand.