



SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY

On behalf of the YPLA

**ESF 2011-2013 - South West
(Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly)**

Tender Ref: itt_29037

SW/YP/07 – Best Start for Young People

October 2010

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Introduction to tender

1.1 Background

The Skills Funding Agency is an agency of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).

The Agency funds and regulates adult Further Education (FE) and skills training in England and forms part of a network of organisations in the country who commission, manage and market training for adults. The mission is to ensure that people and businesses can access the skills training they need to succeed in playing their part in society and in growing England's economy. The Agency do this in the context of policy set by BIS and informed by the needs of businesses, communities and regions, and sector and industry bodies.

A Shared Service Agreement between the Skills Funding Agency and the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) agrees that the Skills Funding Agency will operate on behalf of the YPLA for the 14-19 ESF provision. The YPLA is sponsored by the Department for Education and exists to support the delivery of training and education to all 16-18 year olds in England. The YPLA and Local Authorities have the statutory duty to secure sufficient education and training provision for all young people aged between 14 and 18 and for 19 to 25 year olds assessed for a learning difficulty and/or disability, in their respective area.

The Young People's Learning Agency has produced this specification on the basis of the needs identified in local areas.

The overall strategic objective of the European Social Fund (ESF) programme of the Convergence programme is to support sustainable economic growth and social inclusion in England by contributing to policies to increase the employment rate and to develop a skilled and adaptable workforce.

The overall aim of this strand of the Skills Funding Agency's ESF Convergence Co-Financing plan is to achieve sustainable prosperity with opportunity for all by ensuring that young people have the best start in life and is focused on those young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET; to create a co-financed project that will help draw together the services provided to targeted young people who are aged 14-18 and assessed as being at risk of disengaging or who have already disengaged.

As directed by the Children's Plan, Local Area Agreement CYP1, and the integrated Youth Cornwall and ESF guidelines we seek to develop additional provision complementing the existing offer to young people in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Activity under the NEET programme will also seek to incentivise access to employment where appropriate, such as increasing access to Apprenticeships. As part of these investments we seek to strengthen the opportunities for young people within the target groups to access provision that they are entitled to. Strong links to

progression pathways and entitlement provision are critical to the long term sustainability of the support developed from ESF investments.

This aim will be achieved by:

- Targeted support to those young people NEET or at risk of NEET
- Increased access to Apprenticeships through Innovative Transitional Programmes
- Reform of Vocational Routes and Curriculum Development of Vocational Skills among 14-18 year olds
- Raising Awareness of Work, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship
- Capacity Building Activity in support of all the above

The Best Start for Young People specifications in the first Convergence phase have been used to develop programmes to support young people who are NEET or at risk; in particular those facing possible social and economic exclusion in the future, with associated risks of poor health, offending behaviour, drug misuse, homelessness and longer term unemployment.

We intend to further support the development of a simplified service offer (Freestyle, or equivalent model) for targeted eligible young people focusing on the needs of the individual and providing additional benefit to mainstream support, such as developing Foundation Learning provision under the strategic direction of Youth Cornwall and the Children's Trust (or subsequent local children's partnership as per government policy). These activities will deliver additional preventative programmes building on the experiences of previous projects.

The successful proposal will be expected to further the development of a simplified service for eligible young people which both focuses on the needs of the individual and provides additional benefit to mainstream support under the strategic direction of the Youth Cornwall Board and Cornwall's Children's Trust.

The impact on young people, particularly those in vulnerable situations or who are disadvantaged in any way at this time of unpredictable economic conditions, employment uncertainty and challenging social conditions (including housing) demands far greater use of a multi-agency investment and collaborative ways of working.

1.2 The picture in Cornwall [inc. NEET] - The Best Start for Young People

1.2.1 Economic picture in Cornwall and aspirations for our young people

The economy in Cornwall has changed substantially. Declines in traditional areas of employment, such as agriculture and fishing, have been matched by increases in other sectors, such as services, manufacturing, leisure and tourism. We need to ensure that the young people of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly have the right skills and qualifications that will enable and motivate them to progress to appropriate sustainable employment or Further Education.

The Convergence programme, alongside the Children's Plans, has a further contribution to the overall support available to young people in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly by providing a critical link between social and economic environments. We

must therefore also ensure that the Skills Funding Agency co-financing plan helps to reduce poverty cycles and the embedded long term impacts of poverty on both social and economic wellbeing. This linkage with the broader local Strategies will ensure we are prepared to invest in transformational provision ahead of the forthcoming bill on poverty. In turn, this will help the economies of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly to develop and prosper with access to a skilled and knowledgeable population. To support the development of these knowledge based economies, young people need to be effectively prepared with the right specialist knowledge and ICT skills for the demands of such an economy.

A higher level of achievement by the young people of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly is crucial if we wish to:

- Plug future skills gaps and shortages;
- Improve productivity and competitiveness;
- Reduce Teenage Pregnancy;
- Improve Health and Wellbeing outcomes, such as reducing obesity and its evidential impact on both social wellbeing and economic productivity;
- Improve work based learning in general, in particular for key added value sectors;
- Serve the future planned knowledge based economy of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly;
- Tackle significant pockets of poverty by facilitating the regeneration of communities;
- Respond to the challenging economic conditions over time by ensuring that young people are better prepared for working life
- Ensure that Safeguarding is central to all our plans.

ESF support will be targeted at these groups and those that are already NEET - raising participation and attainment, tackling disengagement and ensuring that young people are offered a range of learning and support options that are attractive to them, and that meet their needs.

Raising aspirations, achievement, self esteem and success levels, developing a culture of aspiration and ambition, [whatever their background for all young people], raising the profile of self employment as an option and making Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly an attractive area for young people to live and work is central to this ESF Priority 4 [Extending Employment Opportunities] opportunity.

The implications of the economic situation suggest that unemployment within this group is rising and is also highest amongst those hardest to reach young people. This trend needs to be better understood but may simply reflect rising unemployment and the fact that challenging economic conditions will disproportionately affect those with low-level skills. In Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly participation of young people 16+ has risen by c3.6% in 2009/10 compared to 2008/09 which is contrary to recent regional and national trends.

1.2.2 Policy

Whilst there are no specific central government targets for NEET in the Coalition's Structural Reform Plans [SRPs], the central tenants of 'fairness and responsibility'

are encompassed within the programme work in this tender. We have seen a move toward locally determined curriculum offers and a directive to give schools, colleges and work based learning providers more freedom and incentives to build partnerships at the local level and to encourage links to employers and universities. From a curriculum standpoint, the introduction of Foundation Learning opens up opportunities for young people to learn to gain accreditation in small personalised learning programmes [based on initial assessment].

1.2.3 Impact of NEET¹

According to an Audit Commission study published in 2009, the 2008 NEET cohort will cost an estimated £13 billion in public finance costs and £22 billion in opportunity costs over their lifetimes. Young men who were NEET are three times more likely to suffer from depression, and five times more likely to have a criminal record, than their peers. Ten per cent of young people remain NEET for six months or more [Audit Commission, 2009].

As a consequence of the current economic climate, fewer jobs without training are being made available to 16-18 year olds and this group presents specific challenges in re-engagement with education [Audit Commission, 2009].

1.2.4 Increased chances of becoming NEET – client group characteristics

Those who are NEET are not a homogeneous group. Often stereotyped as being the least able and most disadvantaged ‘school leavers’, it is increasingly recognised that the 16-18 NEET cohort also includes increasing numbers of 17-18 year olds, some of whom have achieved Level 2 qualifications, or above². Each group also represents its own set of challenges.

The table below highlights some of the possible longer-term implications of being NEET should certain factors occur.

Factor	Increase in chance of being NEET for six months or more
Being NEET at least once before	7.9 times more likely
Pregnancy or parenthood	2.8 times more likely
Supervision by youth offending team	2.6 times more likely
Fewer than three months post-16 education	2.3 times more likely
Disclosed substance abuse	2.1 times more likely
Responsibilities as a carer	2.0 times more likely

¹ Source: Audit Commission report: Against the Odds, July 2009

² Source: Best Practise in tackling NEET – LSC Research Report Dec 2008

16-18 NEET rates in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly have been kept significantly lower than the national average despite sometimes challenging economic conditions and the difficulties of access to a full range of opportunities in more rural areas.

1.2.5 A brief history of activities to support young people

There has been intensive activity undertaken by Cornwall's Children's Trust seeking to prevent young people becoming disengaged from employment, education and training, and to reduce numbers of young people falling into this category. Targeted programmes have been developed including, a series of successful Objective 1 funded projects, the national Activity Agreement pilot, the Convergence funded 'Freestyle', and Best Start for Young People programmes which included a support fund for learners. These programmes have also been available to the Isles of Scilly, although take up has traditionally been minimal due to the low population numbers on the Islands and the personalised support provided to individuals through previous ESF projects, such as the Progressive Isles. It is recognised that the geographical isolation of the Islands and the issues of access to post 16 provision means that a high percentage of 16-18 year olds on the Islands are at risk of becoming NEET although participation remains very high.

1.2.6 Importance of the work

Despite these efforts and this investment, there continues to be a hard core of young people who remain NEET for longer periods than their peers, or repeatedly re-enter the NEETs group. The [Freestyle - Best Start for Young People programme](#) targets support at these groups more generally but the proposed activity will be directly targeting those young people 16-18 who are already disengaged Post-16. They are at particular risk of social and economic exclusion in the future and have associated risks of poor health, offending behaviour, drug misuse, homelessness and longer term unemployment. In addition a fund representing around 20% of the overall programme can be used to support young people 14-16 who are at risk of becoming NEET post 16.

1.2.7 Eligible learners under Convergence

- Young people not in education, employment or training or at risk of becoming NEET.
- 14-19 year olds
- Resident (or working) in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

In addition to those above, another group of young people often overlooked when considering eligibility for ESF are Young Carers who provide crucial services. These are a group that we would wish to ensure has appropriate support available.

The Youth Offending Team in Cornwall has shown that significant numbers of 'harder end' young offenders that end up NEET lack the basic skills to engage in mainstream provision. Further development of activity to help draw together the services provided to targeted young people who are 14-18 (including 19-24 with complex needs) and assessed as being at risk of disengaging is required.

Due consideration should be given to those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD), supporting activity that moves people into employment and independent living – coaching, mentoring, work experience, travel training, tied in with social services and other agencies.

Any statutory training; for example, training that employers must provide under Health and Safety legislation, is not eligible for support through ESF projects.

1.3 Additional requirements

1.3.1 Information, Advice and Guidance

Effective Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) are an important aspect of this programme. Successful providers will either hold the Matrix standard* or will provide an equivalent level of support, for example by sub-contracting this aspect of delivery to partners who are Matrix-accredited. Applicants must state whether they hold the Matrix standard for IAG or are working towards it.

* the Matrix standard is the unique quality framework for the effective delivery of information, advice and/or guidance on learning and work. Further information may be obtained from www.matrixStandard.com

1.3.2 Quality

Applicants must demonstrate in their tenders how they will provide training to the required quality, as detailed below.

- Providers will need to demonstrate that they have a track record of delivering high quality provision to learners, employers or employees. Evidence of inspection grades of 3 or above or external quality assurance such as Training Quality Standard accreditation or application made to become accredited, awarding bodies' external verification reports, ISO9000 accreditation and Investor in People status will serve to support providers' applications.
- Providers should note that the direction of travel for the Skills Funding Agency is that the preferred external accredited standard is the Training Quality Standard.

1.3.3 EMA / other future targeted support

The Comprehensive Spending Review (20 October 2010) announced that EMA (Education Maintenance Allowance) is to be replaced with more targeted support for the disadvantaged. It would still be helpful, however, for tenders to reflect how you propose to assist young people with their applications for EMA or any other future targeted support as part of this project. Where specifications refer to EMA, please bear this in mind.

Your tender should reflect how you propose to assist young people with their applications for EMA (or any other targeted support) as part of this project. Where applicants are not eligible for EMA or any other future targeted support, it is anticipated that payment of a training allowance will be paid to learners. Any training allowance payment would be from the overall budget for this programme and providers must build this in to their costs

1.3.4 Transport

Poor access to transport has been identified as a significant barrier to participation in learning. As part of submissions, information should be provided about the approach to addressing transport issues that will be undertaken as part of the project.

1.4 ESF requirements and information

Contractual requirements

Applicants should refer to the sample contract documentation issued with the ITT

Contracting requirements

Please read the READ ME FIRST document as there is important information contained in this document relating to current and future contracting requirements.

1.5 Cross Cutting Themes - contracting requirements

1.5.1 Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities:

Gender Equality (GE) and Equal Opportunities (EO) is a cross cutting theme of the Convergence ESF Framework. The National Operational Programme maintains the dual approach to promoting gender equality and equality of opportunities by funding specific activities which target women and disadvantaged groups as well as integrating equal opportunities into the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the programme as a whole.

Action to promote equality and diversity is an integral part of the Skills Funding Agency business objectives. A world-class workforce can only be created if we remove barriers, eliminate discrimination, address disadvantage and raise the aspirations of both present and potential learners.

1.5.2 Sustainable Development

Sustainable Development (SD) activity is a mandatory requirement of all projects funded through the ESF programme. Applicants will be required to complete the Skills Funding Agency SD toolkit and have in place an operational SD policy and implementation/action plan within 6 months of the project start date. Performance monitoring of the project will include a review of progress against the implementation/action plan on a quarterly basis.

To engage young people in developing their understanding and in contributing to environmental challenges of carbon reduction e.g. in skills development and working with employers to achieve local, effective, economic low carbon solutions. To enable young people to use the digital technologies appropriately as an integrated part of the activities in which they are engaged.

THE BEST START FOR YOUNG

REFERENCE: SW/NP/01

PEOPLE

Detail of provision – AIM

The overall aim of this strand of the Skills Funding Agency's ESF Convergence Co-Financing plan is to achieve sustainable prosperity with opportunity for all by ensuring that young people have the best start in life. Achieved by raising aspirations, achievement, self esteem and success levels, developing a culture of aspiration and ambition, making everyone aware of the benefits higher education and higher level skills programmes can bring, whatever their background, for all young people in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, raising the profile of self employment and enterprise as an option and making Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly an attractive area for young people to live and work.

Being NEET or at risk of becoming NEET between the ages of 14-18 is a major predictor of later unemployment and low income. Young people in the NEET group are also more likely to be susceptible to poor mental and physical health and associated other problems in later life. This is especially the case for those young people who remain NEET for extended periods or who repeatedly re-enter the NEET group.

This aim will be achieved by:

- Targeted support to those young people NEET or at risk of NEET
- Increased access to Apprenticeships through Innovative Transitional Programmes, including pre/post Apprenticeship support
- Ensuring the offer is appropriate to the needs of young people
- Raising Awareness of Work, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship
- Capacity Building Activity in support of all the above

SERVICE REQUIREMENT

To provide a “wrap-around” service to young people aged 14-19 who are NEET or at risk of NEET, with a particular focus on:

Targeted Support to NEETs and those at risk of NEET

Key activity will support access to, retention in and success of mainstream delivery of Foundation Learning and progression routes, leading to improved co-ordination of mainstream provision, supported progression routes and ongoing personalised activity.

Support will include development of a relevant, coherent and consistent individual learning plan for young people, supported by independent tutorial advice and guidance along with one to one mentoring with appropriate adult role models, to inform progression at all stages

Activities may include:

- Improving access to, retention and success within mainstream provision for young people such as Foundation Learning, Apprenticeships, Further Education, School Sixth Forms etc
- Programme sustainability initiatives enhancing the long term capacity of Third Sector provision in delivering mainstream programmes such as Foundation Learning
- Enhance the capacity of the sector to engage with the Skills Funding Agency in delivering mainstream provision e.g. developing capability to contribute further to Foundation Learning programmes
- Enhance the capacity of the sector to engage with mainstream providers in supporting and improving provision for their client groups
- Improve retention and access to mainstream provision
- Ensure that provision for young people who are at risk of being NEET is embedded within the Youth Offer
- Support multi-agency service provision targeted at young people aged 14-19
- Personalisation of provision
- Links to be developed with the home educated, Short Stay Schools and other young people not in school who would benefit from this targeted approach
- Develop a mentoring system to support young people who will be supported by this work
- Ensure robust assessment processes are in place to ensure participants are adequately prepared for their programmes
- Ensure robust processes are in place to determine eligibility for the programmes include suitable confirmation of the young people being at risk or NEET
- Provision of a learner support fund to support retention and access to learning
- Develop the capacity and capability of schools and local communities to deliver quality assured Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) that will help them engage more effectively with parents
- Supporting initiatives and innovative programmes on reducing social exclusion and engaging with the following groups: Traveller and Gypsy families, Migrant Workers families, children in care, disabled children;

Increased access to Apprenticeships through Innovative Transitional Programmes

Apprenticeships

Increasing the number of young people accessing Apprenticeships through thorough Innovative Transitional Programmes from Pre-16 to Post-16 opportunities (working with employers/providers/schools/Youth Cornwall) and Post-16 Pre-Apprenticeship programmes. Pre-Apprenticeship programmes can be supported as part of this approach.

Activities may include:

- Increase Apprenticeship participation through additional support for access, programme promotional activity, provide where necessary wage incentives, transport and childcare support, etc
- Potential to develop opportunities for alternative programmes such as Young Apprenticeships by engaging eligible young people at 14-16 (where they are at

risk of being NEET post 16) and providing a vocational route as a mechanism to help prevent drop out at the KS3/KS4 and KS4/post 16 transitions;

- Introduce intermediate labour market type access routes as an enhanced option or personalisation of programme led pathways (link to Skills Funding Agency Co-financing workforce development, sector programme and JCP/DWP pathways to work programmes)
- Enhancement of Apprenticeship options such as additional input or enhanced flexibility of additional content or support
- Potential to develop Level 1 provision and progression routes post L1. Enable development of Level 1 vocational routeways
- Improving retention and success rates

Reform of Vocational Routes and Curriculum Development of Vocational Skills among 14-19 year olds

Developing appropriate ways of designing the curriculum to meet the needs of and to inspire young people aged 14-18 who are at risk of NEET or who are NEET.

Adding value to the current curriculum so that NEETs and those at risk are re-engaged or kept engaged

Activities may include:

- Support the embedding of Foundation Learning
- Develop innovative programmes of learning to broaden the curriculum offer beyond that traditionally offered to young people, particularly using digital technologies to best effect
- Enable and enhance the capacity of those working within 14-18 provision (all sectors) to provide sustainable curriculum support to young people NEET or at risk of becoming NEET
- Enhanced collaboration between school, colleges, private providers, employers and other support services
- Links to emerging themes in Priority 5
- Increase the provision of employability training; link to DWP/JCP/Skills Funding Agency, Cornwall Works and employability focused provision. This must be synergistic with the integration and development of Youth Cornwall
- Support collaborative approaches to broadening the curriculum offer including:
 - Targeted activity to prevent exclusion or disengagement
 - To develop opportunities for gifted and talented young people to access provision or progress to next stage in their education or training within a personalised programme when they are at risk of disengagement
 - To meet specific geographical curriculum needs and issues of rural isolation
- Support for Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities, and challenges associated with mental health

Raising Awareness of Work, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship

- Offer opportunities to young people to maximise their potential with regard to enterprise and entrepreneurship, e.g. building on the Hot House project part of the current Convergence programmes supporting young people in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.
- This strand directly contributes to the Convergence integrated theme of developing enterprise and entrepreneurial culture change

Activities may include:

- Developing initiatives to support the provision of learning activities in respect of enterprise, entrepreneurial behaviours and skills, innovation and creativity in business / employability, team work and leadership for young people;
- Providing appropriate mentoring support to young people.
- Support for young people post 16 into self-employment
- Engaging young people in Enterprise Education activities, such as potential internships and enterprise experiences e.g. linked to ERDF Innovation Centre
- The potential development of youth change agents or inspirational figures, community entrepreneurs, community mentors, community leaders, peer development opportunities
- Enabling and gaining the experience, knowledge and input from employers, businesses, appropriate Sector Skills Councils and Sector Groups in achieving a relevant and topical curriculum and work experience opportunities; link closely with the Skills Funding Agency co-financing Workforce Development specification
- Links to other ESF/ERDF funded projects that would support young people

Capacity Building

Capacity Building Activity as required within the sections above, comprising:

- Establishment of current status
- Establishment of need to address initiatives required
- Development of Action Plan
- Culminating in implementation and evaluation of initiatives implemented at the end of the project

Tailored transition programmes for the NEET group and those at risk of becoming NEET will prepare vulnerable young people for working life, further learning and training and will complement and extend activity to support the NEET client group including FE, and Sixth Form provision and that offered by Apprenticeships, Foundation Learning (Entry to Employment), the School Engagement Programme and Young Apprenticeships.

ESF proposals should therefore also target those:

- Who remained in learning immediately following the end of compulsory schooling but left during the subsequent year;
- Who experienced difficulty (or are likely to experience difficulty) during the transition to post-16 learning and for whom additional support would make a

difference to the likelihood of their retention in learning until the age of 18

- For whom employment or self-employment is, or could become, a realistic option either by the age of 19 or subsequently
- For whom voluntary work is, or could become, a route into or back into learning;
- Who would benefit from, but cannot currently, access practical vocational learning (either in the form of short “taster” sessions or more prolonged courses that lead directly or indirectly to qualifications);
- Where the Skills Funding Agency would wish to see that ESF continues to provide needs led investments providing a wider support package for young people
- Programmes that support a young persons’ learning journey culminating in progression into volunteering

Target groups & priorities

The activities must support a minimum of 2,500 participants.

The split is expected to be 1,250 who are NEET and 1,250 who may be at risk of becoming NEET.

All participants must be:

- Young people not in education, employment or training or at risk of becoming NEET.
- 14-19 year olds
- Resident (or working in) Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly

This may include -

- Children of Gypsies, Travellers, Migrant Workers,
- Children in care, vulnerable and hard to reach young people
- Young Offenders,
- Homeless young people and those who are struggling with independent living arrangements;
- Children educated out of school and in referral units;
- Young Carers

The Project should also take into consideration the following demographic priorities:

PRIORITY	4
Participants with disabilities or health conditions	27%
Participants from ethnic minorities	3%
Female participants	51%
Number of Participants who are Lone Parents	8%

Geography / area of delivery

Activities must cover the whole of the Convergence area of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Funding available

The total amount of funding available for all activities within this specification is **£6,750,039**.

Output	No of Learners	Unit cost	Funding available
S2 Start – Participant Assessment, planning and support	2500	£215 (*assumes average £115 per participant learner support funding)	£537,500
S4 - Start Non Accredited (fully funded)	500	£1,000	£500,000
S5 - Start Accredited (fully funded)	500	£1,000	£500,000
S6 - Start Level 1 (fully funded/added value)	500	£1,000	£500,000
S7 - Start Level 2 (fully funded/added value)	500	£1,000	£500,000
A2 - Completion Non Accredited	300	£930	£279,000
A3 - Completion Accredited	300	£930	£279,000
A9 - Completion Level 1	300	£930	£279,000
A10 - Completion Level 2	300	£930	£279,000
P7 - Progression into job search/further learning/volunteering	1500	£1,420	£2,130,000
S11 - Retention in Learning at 3+ months	500	£930	£465,000
CB5 - Capacity building	800	£500	£400,000
S12 - Capacity Building Final Payment	118	£860.50	£101,539
M4 – Project evaluation completed	TBC	£0	£0
New deliverable – Regarding requirements of the Cross cutting themes - to be defined S33 & A28 may be used as it gathers data for all accredited courses	TBC	£0	£0

Note: It is expected that the majority of provision will be fully funded by ESF rather

than offering enhancement to mainstream programmes as is the central model for the current phase of Skills Funding Agency ESF investment in the NEET group. During the initial stages of the investment and to ensure that we are targeting the hardest to reach with dedicated personalised programmes we will be anticipating a focus on additional activity. At Level 2 it is expected that young people will be linking into mainstream programmes as their learning journey progresses leading to the expectation that ongoing enhancement of programmes will be appropriate and offer the best value for money and additionality.

Start and end dates

Contracts may begin from January 2011 with activities starting from April 2011. All contracts will end on 31st December 2013.

Applicants must not recruit individuals if there is insufficient time available to allow them to achieve the outcomes of the project.

Contracting details

The applicant should demonstrate how it links to and supports the following strategies (evidence should be provided of linkages, such as letters of support from the relevant leading bodies):

- DWP/JCP/ Cornwall Works pathways projects
- Vocational routeways specification projects
- Work of Cornwall Learning with schools and a range of other partners such as The School for Social Entrepreneurs, The Learning Space, Young Enterprise, Business Link etc
- CUC Enterprise Institute developments
- ERDF programme developments
- Children and Young People's plan
- Cornwall & The Isles of Scilly Economic Strategy - Strategy and Action
- Youth Cornwall Board
- 14-19 Strategic Advisory Group
- YPLA

For information:

Successful organisations will be expected to develop cross programme arrangements to ensure young people on the border between Devon and Cornwall are supported effectively.

Links to mainstream provision: It is expected that one of the key activities within this specification is the optimisation of the learner journey and adding value to an individuals progression opportunities through the additional support provided by ESF.

This could include:

- Enhancing mainstream to improve retention and success rates at KS4 and Level 2 and 3 at age 19
- Support the embedding of Foundation Learning at KS4 and post 16
- Progression and post mainstream opportunities focusing on jobs with training
- Enhanced personalisation and improved progression options
- Sustainability of collaborative provision post ESF support
- Enhanced progression opportunities to improve success rates especially for Level 2 and 3 at age 19
- Improved targeting and participation post 16
- Improve retention post 17
- Additional volumes of mainstream activity
- Pre-mainstream such as Pre-Apprenticeships
- Enhancing mainstream

The Skills Funding Agency wishes to contract down to sub-regional level, however we are looking to award the minimum number of contracts required in order to ensure both the required full geographical coverage and value for money

SPECIFICATION QUESTIONNAIRE:	
TENDER TITLE:	SW/NP/07- THE BEST START FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
ORGANISATION NAME:	Please enter the name of your organisation here

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Please provide a summary of the activities you intend to deliver. This information will be used as part of the decision making process to provide an overview of the applicant's response to the tender.

(maximum character limit = 5000)

Ref: [Q Overview]

Please enter your answer here

1

What is your proposed delivery model and what structures will you use to support the model?

(Maximum character limit = 9000) (Maximum score = 200)

This section is about your proposed delivery model that will be put in place to work with and through LAs in your role as a successful organisation.

Tips

This section must clearly demonstrate:

- Whether you will build on the existing Local Authority led commissioning model or whether you propose an alternative approach (inc. the intervention proposed and the means of delivery).
- Why your model is appropriate for the target groups
- The arrangements for delivering activities and whether you have the infrastructure in place to start immediately
- How you will identify and work with other deliverers / intermediary bodies, where appropriate
- If appropriate to your delivery model, your previous experience of managing partners / sub-contractors where appropriate to your delivery model
- Outlines of key milestones and timetables
- An appropriate exit strategy for your proposed activities is expected (inc. links within your partnership to enable progression to further learning)
- It should, where appropriate, reference national and local strategies, plans and policy initiatives demonstrating an understanding of the 14-19 agenda

Ref: [Q1]

Please enter your answer here

2

How will you manage and deliver the proposed activity?

(Maximum character limit = 9000) (Maximum score = 250)

Tips

This section must clearly demonstrate:

- Your approach to initial assessment and designing of individual learning plans.
- Where activity is to take place (with appropriate reference to NEET hotspots)
- Any partnerships arrangements proposed, if appropriate to your delivery model
- Any sub-contracting arrangements, if relevant (inc. an explanation of their role and responsibilities in planning and delivery)
- How the different activities within your proposal will be developed, implemented, measured and evaluated (with due consideration to the flexibility required to deliver a changing offer dependent on the varying needs of the target groups)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The outcomes that are expected • How you plan to monitor programme activity and learner needs throughout • How you will ensure value for money is demonstrated • Your admin costs and justification for the percentage you are proposing • How you will monitor financial spend including your internal audit • How you will ensure data returns to the Skills Funding Agency are timely and accurate • How you will review performance against targets and be flexible to ensure the project meets those targets • How you will collate evidence to ensure that you have all paperwork to meet contractual requirements from partners <p>Ref: [Q2]</p>
Please enter your answer here	
<p>3</p>	<p>What is your experience of working successfully with the target group? (Maximum character limit = 9000) (Maximum score = 200)</p> <p>Tips Your response should identify and/or describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your, or the lead organisation if a partnership / consortium, staffs' previous experience of managing and delivering similar activities • The experience of other members of the consortium or partners (where applicable). • Your track record of designing, managing and successfully delivering similar activity (inc. details of outputs and projects / initiatives in the region). • Specific examples of engagement and retention strategies that have proved successful with the proposed target / client groups. <p>Applicants who do not have a track record of working with the proposed target groups must describe how they and/or their partners have worked with similar groups and explain how this experience will inform their work.</p> <p>Ref: [Q3]</p>
Please enter your answer here	
<p>4</p>	<p>How will you engage with and meet the needs of the eligible target group? (Maximum character limit = 9000) (Maximum score = 400)</p> <p>Tips As a minimum your response should describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of strategies that you will use to engage with, recruit and retain individuals and demonstrate how the strategies are appropriate to the target group • How you will target and engage with those who are the most hardest to reach, who may have a range of challenges • How you will ensure that your delivery will be flexible in meeting the needs of your target group • How you will ensure equality of opportunity • How you will provide continues training and coaching for participants who leave their programmes (positively or not) to ensure they are either continuing in employment, education or training, or are referred on when the programme isn't

	<p>suitable</p> <p>Ref: [Q4]</p>
<p>Please enter your answer here</p>	
<p>5</p>	<p>How do your proposed activities complement and link in to other activities that are available to the target group? (Maximum character limit = 9000) (Maximum score = 100)</p> <p>Tips Your response should describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your understanding of the core provision available to the target group in the region / sub-region and experience of working with referral agencies. • How your proposed activity enhances and complements rather than duplicates existing provision • How duplication will be avoided <p>Ref: [Q5]</p>
<p>Please enter your answer here</p>	
<p>6</p>	<p>How will you ensure the quality of provision? (Maximum character limit = 9000) (Maximum score = 50)</p> <p>Tips: As a minimum your response should describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What your proposed quality assurance arrangements are • An explanation of how your organisation assesses the quality of its provision if it is not currently inspected • Confirmation that accreditation exists within your organisation and, if applicable to your delivery model within your partnership to deliver the qualifications / activity being proposed • If applicable to your delivery model, how you will deal with partner under-performance • How you will review your project activities taking into account the Cross Cutting Themes of Equal Opportunities and Sustainable Development including the creation and follow up on action plans <p>Ref: [Q6]</p>
<p>Please enter your answer here</p>	