

Commissioning Specification

LAA 37-08 Oldham Business Support Simplification Phase II

1. Introduction

The Economic Development & Enterprise Block is committed to delivering its vision for the local economy.

'By 2017 Oldham will be thriving. It will be playing a dynamic role in the economic growth of a world-class Manchester City region'

One of its aims is to increase the entrepreneurial culture within Oldham, by developing young entrepreneurs, increasing new business start ups and increasing business growth. On behalf of The Economic Development & Enterprise Block, in October 2008; the Economy & Enterprise Board commissioned the Oldham Business Support Simplification Programme (OBSS). Its key strategic aims were to increase the number of businesses in Oldham by an additional 100 per year and to increase VAT registered businesses by an additional 10 per year.

Evaluation of the programme has shown that the activity was received with a positive outcome. Without the intervention of the programme many local residents would not have been able to establish their business and also develop the growth potential of their company.

It is however recognised that to ensure sustainability of Oldham's business stock in the current economic climate, an effective business support package is needed that offers a more client centric business support programme to companies that have been established for over 3yrs.

Therefore, the Economy & Enterprise Board on behalf of the Economic Development & Enterprise Block is seeking to commission:

LAA 37-08 Oldham Business Support Simplification Phase II

Expressions of Interest from potential Delivery Agents are now invited for delivery of the Commissioned Activity LAA 37-08 Oldham Business Support Simplification Phase II.

The Commissioned Activity will contribute to the achievement of targets under the following Local Area Agreement National Indicators:

NI 151 - Overall Employment Rate

NI 171 - VAT Registration Rate

NI 172 - VAT Registered Businesses in Area Showing Growth

N.B.

- **Up to £420,000** is available to cover the costs of undertaking this Commissioned Activity from July 1st 2009 – March 31st 2011

- The Commissioned Activity must commence on **July 1st 2009** and end on **March 31st 2011**
- The intellectual property rights of material, associated information and all reports resulting from this Commissioned Activity will belong to the Oldham Partnership.

2. Further Information

Services

It is expected that the business support activity to be delivered in Oldham through this Commissioned Activity will comprise the following two elements:

1. Mentor Programme.

The aim of this programme will be to offer a series of approaches on a one to one basis that will further develop the entrepreneur, their business and ensure sustainability. The entrepreneur will be profiled against set criteria to assess suitability onto the programme.

Providers will need to illustrate what activities are proposed and how they will be delivered to meet the objectives of the Mentor Programme.

Innovative, flexible and client centric approaches are encouraged.

The services to be provided, whilst not prescriptive; are expected to consist of the following elements:

- Public Sector Procurement. 1 to 1's and Workshops
- Sales and Marketing Support to generate Business Growth
- Planning for Business Growth
- Change Management Techniques
- E Commerce, such as search engine optimisation and pay per click to ensure that local businesses are getting the best out of their website.

2. Mentor Plus Programme

The aim of this programme is to assist businesses to build upon their inherent capabilities to achieve accelerated growth through a structured coaching programme, aimed at meeting short and medium term business goals within a strategic context.

The programme will be able to offer bursaries (50% of cost) to entrepreneurs who have demonstrated:

- High Growth Potential
- Innovation
- Potential to generate medium to high employment opportunities

Providers will need to illustrate what activities are proposed and how they will deliver the objectives of the Mentor Plus Programme. Innovative, flexible and client centric approaches are encouraged.

The services to be provided whilst not definitive; are expected to include the topics covered within the Mentor Programme. Additionally the following elements should be explored:

- Performance Benchmarking
- Market Understanding
- Innovation
- Intellectual Property
- Investment Readiness
- Skills of the Workforce
- Leadership and Management

Eligibility: Both programmes of activity are designed to maintain the stability and develop the growth potential of businesses over 3yrs old.

Delivery agents must ensure their programmes are designed to respond to individual business circumstances. The range of expertise needed will vary and potential delivery agents will need to demonstrate advanced business management knowledge, experience and expertise relating to managing the totality of a business in its drive for sustainability and high growth.

Both programmes of activity should demonstrate qualitative and quantitative support for businesses borough wide. Each business enrolled should receive at least 6 days bespoke support and activity from each programme on which they are enrolled. The support provided should clearly demonstrate its contribution towards the following key outcomes:

- Jobs creation
- Jobs safeguarded
- Increased sales
- Sales safeguarded

Expressions of Interest will be accepted from delivery agents who wish to deliver either or both elements of the programme

It is anticipated that in the financial year 2009/10 a total of 75 businesses will be supported on the Mentor Programme and 75 businesses on the Mentor Plus Programme. This should increase to 100 businesses on each programme in the financial year 2010/2011.

In addition we encourage targeted support for social enterprises (20% of business supported) and rural economy and tourism sector based businesses (20% of total businesses supported).

The Commissioned Activity Specification below shows details of how Expressions of Interest from potential Delivery Agents should be evidenced and supported.

Partnership Working	<p>The successful Delivery Agent will be expected to cooperate and collaborate, where appropriate, with other Delivery Agents undertaking activity commissioned on behalf of the Oldham Partnership and with stakeholders and other interested parties.</p> <p>Proposed partnership working arrangements must be specified in the Expression of Interest included existing and proposed engagement/referral methods.</p>
Duration of Commissioned Activity	<p>The Commissioned Activity must commence on July 1st 2009 and end on March 31st 2011.</p>
Prospective Delivery Agents	<p>Both stand alone and joint Expressions of Interest will be considered.</p> <p>Only Expressions of Interest with a SINGLE, identified lead Delivery Agent will be considered.</p> <p>Where the lead Delivery Agent wishes to sub-contract part/all of the activity, accountability will remain with the lead Delivery Agent.</p> <p>Any proposed sub-contract arrangements must be clearly stated in the Expression of Interest and will be scrutinised by the Assessment Panel.</p>
Strategic Context	<p>Proposals should clearly evidence the activity compliments, aligns and adds value to the National, Regional and Local Agendas.</p> <p>Further information may be accessed from the following web sites:</p> <p>www.oldhampartnership.co.uk www.nwda.co.uk www.oldham.gov.uk www.manchester-enterprises.com</p>
Deadline for receipt of Expressions of Interest	<p>Potential Delivery Agents are invited to submit Expressions of Interest for undertaking the Commissioned Activity by 4.00 pm on Friday 12th June 2009</p>
Maximum Fee for Delivery of the Commissioned Activity	<p>A maximum of £420,000 of Area Based Grant for the 21 month period has been allocated to cover the costs of the commissioned activity.</p>
Intellectual Property Rights	<p>The intellectual property rights of material, associated information and all reports resulting from this Commissioned Activity will belong to the Oldham Partnership.</p>

In formulating Expressions of Interest, potential Delivery Agents should bear in mind that the Assessment Panel, which will consider their submissions, will expect to see the following detail:

- Measurable, quantifiable Outputs, which demonstrate the effectiveness, scope and scale of the work undertaken
- A fully costed Expenditure Profile, which demonstrates value for money and effective use of financial resources and staff
- A work schedule, which shows clearly how the Commissioned Activity will commence and be completed within the designated time scale
- Contingency plans / risk assessments to cover eventualities such as the departure or sickness of key staff during delivery of the Commissioned Activity
- Evidence that equality and diversity issues have been taken into account in planning the delivery of the Commissioned Activity and an Equality Impact Assessment has been planned or undertaken

4. Submission Procedure

Where applicable, Joint Expressions of Interest will only be considered with a **SINGLE**, identified lead Delivery Agent.

Expressions of Interest should be submitted on the template provided. An e-mail version should be sent to dave.catherall@oldham.gov.uk

In addition, a hand signed, hard copy version of the Expression of Interest together with two references should be sent to the address below to arrive **no later than: 4.00 pm Friday 12th June 2009**. An official, with the requisite authority, of the organisation concerned, should sign the hard copy of the Expression of Interest.

It is the responsibility of each potential Delivery Agent to ensure that a hand signed, hard copy of their Expression of Interest together with TWO references has been received at Oldham Business Centre before the stated deadline.

Private and Confidential
(LAA 37-08 OBSS II)
Dave Catherall
LAA Commissioning Unit
Level 2
Oldham Business Centre
Cromwell Street
Oldham
OL1 1BB

5. Selection Procedure

The appointed Assessment Panel will meet during the week **commencing Monday, June 15th 2009** to consider all Expressions of Interest received within the stated deadline. Submissions will be assessed against the criteria detailed in the Expression of Interest Assessment Criteria, (see accompanying Commissioning Documents).

Delivery Agents shortlisted by the Assessment Panel may be invited to formally present their outline proposal for further consideration week commencing Monday 22nd June 2009.

The successful applicant organisation will subsequently be notified of the outcome and invited to participate in the next stage of the process, (the drawing up of an agreed, Delivery Schedule).

Unsuccessful organisations will be notified in due course.