



## Expression of interest

### Title: Technical Education Work Placements Pilots Project Evaluation

**Project reference: EOR/SBU/2017/013**

**Deadline for expressions of interest: 12:00, 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

### Summary

Expressions of interest are sought for an evaluation of the work placements pilots scheduled for implementation from April 2017.

This expression of interest was posted on 24<sup>rd</sup> March 2017

### Background

The Department for Education intends to commission an evaluation of work placements pilots for post-16 learners on classroom-based technical education routes. The provision of work placements will be an integral part of the new reforms outlined in the Skills Plan and 2017 Budget announcements. Work placements will be critical to ensuring that young people on predominately classroom-based courses can develop the range of knowledge, skills and behaviours required for skilled employment in their field of study.

These technical reforms represent a major shift in practice for the post-16 sector and employers. Whilst work experience, typically a few days or 1-2 weeks in duration with a focus on gaining 'soft' employability skills is common, work placements of 1-3 months, which are aimed at developing technical skills relevant to specific occupations, as proposed in the Skills Plan, are not mainstream. Education providers will be expected to increase the availability of work placements for a large proportion of their learners as well as offer longer duration placements. Employers of all sizes and from all industries will need to be encouraged to engage with the Further Education (FE) sector and provide sufficient numbers of placements to meet this increased demand.

The Department has commissioned organisations to support the implementation of work placements in the post-16 sector. An external body is currently being commissioned to recruit employers and providers to design work placement models and coordinate this design phase. These models will be trialled along with differing aspects of support for providers and the recruitment of work placement liaison officers. This recruitment is also being commissioned to an

external organisation. A wide range of employers and providers, from across England, are expected to be involved in the work placement pilots. We are seeking an organisation to undertake an evaluation of the technical education work placement pilots.

## Evaluation aims

The purpose of this evaluation is to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the work placement pilot models and the impact of the support on offer and to document challenges to offering these placements across different technical routes and effective ways of overcoming these. We also wish the evaluation to maximise the data collected by the external body or other available data to capture information on the impact of work placements, such as the destinations of learners following a placement. In particular, we are seeking to understand:

- How the pilot models were designed and implemented and learn lessons for future rollout of this policy which becomes live from 2019.
- Which models are most effective for different occupations and technical education routes and why this was the case.
- How additional funding was utilised by providers to offer work placements.
- What role the work placement liaison officer should play in supporting providers and employers to offer placements, and what, if any, added value there is to this role.
- If, and how, employer attitudes to offering work placements have changed.
- What challenges, if any, there are to offering work placements for providers and employers, whether this varies by geographical area, employer size /type and by occupation, and the most effective ways of overcoming these.

## Methodology

At full tender stage bidders will be invited to submit appropriate and innovative approaches for undertaking this evaluation. We anticipate this will largely be a qualitative study, although the contractor will be expected to collect numeric data on the numbers of learners and employers involved in work placements, for example.

## Sample

The appointed contractor will be expected to draw a sample of providers, employers and learners involved in the work placement pilots. This will be determined by the organisation that the Department has commissioned to deliver the projects/pilots and staff recruited to the project lead and liaison officer roles. The sample should include, but is not limited to:

- Different types of technical education routes
- Different types of work placement pilots
- An appropriate balance between different geographical areas
- SMEs and large employers involved in the work placement pilot design and those involved in work placement provision
- A range of providers – to include schools with sixth forms; general FE and specialist FE colleges
- Learners, male and female, from all backgrounds, and by level
- Personnel recruited to the project lead and work placement liaison officer roles
- Personnel from organisation coordinating design of work placements

We encourage bidders to be creative in their proposals, however, the approach to this evaluation should be in-depth and ensure thorough coverage of all participants involved in the pilots.

## Timing

- Deadline for EOIs – 12pm, 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017
- ITTs issued - 13<sup>th</sup> April 2017
- Deadline for proposals – 12pm, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2017

## Assessment criteria

Expressions of interest will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Evidence of success of evaluation of pilot projects
- Evidence of experience of research with young people aged 16-19 years; undertaking research with a range of education delivery professionals and employers;
- Evidence of delivering large-scale evaluations to timescale and technical ability to undertake the research; and
- Evidence and experience of post-16 and technical education policy.

Each of the above criteria has equal weighting. CVs and references should not be submitted. Expressions of interests submitted must be no more than 1,000 words overall, this includes any website links. Anything longer will be disregarded.

**Closing date for EOIs: 12pm, 5<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

**Send your EOI form to: [Michelle1.Harrison@education.gov.uk](mailto:Michelle1.Harrison@education.gov.uk)**

## How to submit an expressions of interest

You must submit an expression of interest (EOI) in order to be considered to be invited to tender. To do so, please complete the Expression of Interest Research template found on the Department's research website. A submission of an EOI does not guarantee an invitation to tender and the Department does not routinely advise organisations that they have not been successful in being invited to tender. Feedback is however available on request.

In order to express an interest you must be registered with us and you will need your ID number. If you need to register then please do so using the online supplier registration form. If you have already registered and have forgotten your ID number, please send an email to [Enquiries.RBU@education.gov.uk](mailto:Enquiries.RBU@education.gov.uk)

All contracts are let on the basis of the [Department's Terms and Conditions](#). You are encouraged to check these before submitting your expression of interest, as these form part of your contractual obligations.