

Invitation to Tender

Liverpool City Region Local Growth Hub Broker Partners

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1. Growth Platform

Growth Platform is Liverpool City Region's economic enabler, designed to support people and businesses to realise their potential and generate growth. Our role is to strengthen and simplify our regional ecosystem, creating a sustainable economy that reflects the needs of all our business community across Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral. We exist to enable change and growth that makes our economy work for everyone; to provide guidance, inspiration and support for businesses, create opportunities for growth and foster resilience.

www.growthplatform.org

Through Growth Platform, we deliver a business support service known locally as 'Local Growth Hub'. This service provides advice, support and funding for businesses across Liverpool, Halton, Knowsley, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral. We currently have Broker Partners (contracted to 31/03/2020) in each of the boroughs in addition to a specialist broker for harder to reach groups, who help businesses at the thinking, starting, scaling and unlocking stages of growth. Our vision is a successful City Region built through successful local businesses. We believe that when local businesses grow, the local economy grows.

The Local Growth Hub Service is managed by Growth Platform and is part-funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). We're backed by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and run in collaboration with local public and private sector partners.

www.localgrowthhub.com

2. Local Growth Hub

The Local Growth Hub service, funded by BEIS, and ERDF was established in 2016. Its aim is to unlock barriers to business support and guidance across the City Region by increasing the awareness of the public and private sector support available to entrepreneurs, SMEs and scale up companies.

The Local Growth Hub Service is managed by Growth Platform and is delivered through a network of area based brokerage partners. Through these partners, businesses have access to face to face business diagnostic, brokerage and advice and mentoring, making access to support simpler and more joined up.

In the last 12 months the Local Growth Hub Service has worked with over 5,500 city region businesses to help them to gain access to practical business support and advice to help their businesses grow. Over 1,600 of these businesses were brokered into specific support including ERDF support programmes, commercial advice, property support and access to finance, all delivered through strategic partnerships.

3. Requirement

Growth Platform wishes to engage Brokerage Partners covering each of the 6 Local Authority areas of Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St Helens and Wirral. In addition, we are seeking a specialist brokers to engage harder to reach groups including women, BAME groups and social economy businesses across the City Region. Therefore, there are a total of 7 'Lots' that suppliers can bid for;

- Lot 1 Halton
- Lot 2 Knowsley
- Lot 3 Liverpool
- Lot 4 Sefton
- Lot 5 St Helens
- Lot 6 Wirral
- Lot 7 Harder to Reach Groups

Local Growth Hub Brokerage Partners are a primary access point for signposting and brokerage to a wide range of local and national business support. The Local Growth Hub Service website is kept up to date with these programmes and should be used as a resource by Local Growth Hub Broker Partners.

A major focus for Growth Platform going forward will be the engagement of businesses that have not been engaged with the Local Growth Hub Service or its services previously in order to increase the reach of Growth Platform. In addition, Local Growth Hub Brokerage Partners will be expected as a minimum to undertake the following;

- Mapping of business support services
- Provision of business information
- Business pre start, start up and growth diagnostic
- Identification on high growth potential/ scale up businesses
- Provision/ facilitation of business networks
- Promotion of Growth Platform services, in particular, ERDF funded projects and the Metro Mayor's £75m Growth Package
- Collaboration with local delivery and brokerage partners
- Maintain accurate and comprehensive records on the Growth Platform CRM Portal in 'real time'
- Provide weekly reports on activities including business numbers engaged, events delivered, issues raised, issues resolved and issues to be escalated
- Report the specific issues that businesses report as barriers to being ready for EU exit, identify emerging issues/trends in respect of potential economic shock
- Any other necessary required ancillary services

The above will be delivered under 2 levels of interventions, detailed below;

Light touch – transactional interactions with Growth Hub Brokerage Partners which do not consume significant dedicated resource. Examples:

- telephone enquiries and basic signposting
- face-to-face appointments (involving very light-touch diagnostics)
- web-based interactions (e.g. contact form, user registration to members area, use of live chat, online diagnostic tools, message through social media) Only interactive actions should be counted – not passive actions like web page views.
- Attendance at Growth Platform organised events, festivals, conferences or pop-ups etc. (NB these are large events that deliver high-level information around business support/advice options. They are not more intensive workshops.)
- Other contact medium not listed above

Medium intensity – interactions which use moderate resource (approximately 1-hour plus) and which broadly aligns with the point in the customer journey at which Growth Platform start collecting basic firm-level data. Examples:

- business diagnostic with a broker; business attendance at a support workshop (diagnostic will be provided by Growth Platform. Suppliers wishing to use their own will need prior authorisation from Growth Platform).
- referral to business support schemes and programmes (local and national)

Growth Platform is developing a high intensity Growth Service to support larger and High Growth SMEs* who would benefit from more intensive business support. Once this provision is in place suppliers will be expected to broker such businesses into Growth Platform for more high intensity business support. This is a required output that will be applied pro-rata to reflect the implementation of the function.

** High Growth SMEs are those businesses with the potential, expectation or ambition to grow by 20%+ year on year for the next 3 years.*

The supplier will be expected to signpost and broker businesses into the most appropriate support available from a wide range of local, national and commercial providers. It is then for the business to determine, from the information provided, which provider they select to provide services, using appropriate procurement and evaluation where applicable. It is the responsibility of the supplier to ensure they have sufficient knowledge of the business support landscape.

A Business Satisfaction Survey will be sent out after each business interaction to enable Growth Platform to assess and ensure the quality of the support being offered through our Brokerage Partners. This feedback forms part of the contract deliverables and will be fed-back at quarterly Monitoring Meetings.

The supplier will use the Growth Platform CRM Portal to record all business interactions and engagements. This must be done in real time, as the data is regularly used to report to BEIS to demonstrate the effectiveness of the Local Growth Hub Service and utilised by Growth Platform and Liverpool City Region Combined Authority to monitor performance, impact and to inform future funding priorities.

If suppliers directly deliver services to businesses, they must ensure and demonstrate to Growth Platform's satisfaction that these services have been considered equally alongside other support services on offer. Business must always be signposted and brokered into the most appropriate service for their needs. This is crucial to the continued success of the Local Growth Hub Service.

Suppliers are required to comply with the Local Growth Hub Broker Partner Handbook. The Handbook will specify standards required of the supplier, operating protocols, use of diagnostic tools and marketing requirements, including the use of Growth Platform, Local Growth Hub Service and ESIF branding, websites and communications and information uploads to Growth Platform and Local Growth Hub Service website.

4. Local Presence

Partners will not have access to Growth Platform's office and meeting space, so the supplier will need to ensure they can have a presence in the delivery area. This will be at their own cost and should be factored into the costings.

5. Growth Platform CRM Portal

The CRM portal is a secure web-based system that can be accessed remotely. Partners will not have access to all the data in the main CRM, they will have access to the portal only. The portal will enable a search of business data in the system and the facility to add information and run reports to aid delivery.

There are minimum company and contact information requirements, and these will be mandatory within the system. Such as; contact details, company name, company registration number, company VAT number, number of employees, company turnover.

Full training and support will be given to partners.

Diagnostics will be paper based but will need to be uploaded to the portal to count towards deliverable targets. We are currently looking into the possibility of moving to an online diagnostic tool in the future.

6. Deliverables

The following deliverables are required from each lot between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021. These will be profiled equally across 4 quarters – April – June; July – September; October – December and January – March.

Output		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
1	Number of unique businesses engaged	125	125	125	125	500
2	Number of unique businesses receiving light touch intervention	100	100	100	100	400
3	Number of unique businesses receiving medium intensity intervention	25	25	25	25	100
4	Number of unique businesses newly engaged (no previous Growth Hub enquiry on CRM system)	25	25	25	25	100
5	Number of unique businesses referred for Growth Platform Business Growth Brokerage Service *this figure will be prorated once the Scale Up function is in place.	10	10	15	15	50
6	Satisfaction rate of 90%	These will be monitored directly by Growth Platform via regular business satisfaction surveys.				
7	50% success rate of brokering into relevant programmes/ take up					

Numeric deliverables will be monitored purely through the CRM system and will be used to report to BEIS, Ministry for Housing and Communities and Local Government, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and Growth Platform.

Individual quarterly monitoring meetings will be held to ensure delivery is to profile and to ensure the service is being delivered as contracted.

7. Timescales

The contract is for an initial 12 month period to run from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021. There is a possibility of two 12 month extensions to the contract at Growth Platform's absolute discretion, subject to funding, performance and strategic alignment.

Published in OJEU	11 th February 2020
Deadline for supplier questions	21 st February 2020
Deadline for Growth Platform response to supplier questions	24 th February 2020
Deadline for tenders to lisa.duddridge@growthplatform.org	12 th March 2020 @ 11.59pm
Supplier notified of award of contract (10 standstill begins)	20 th March 2020
Contracts issued	31 st March 2020
Contract Start date	1 st April 2020

8. Supplier Questions

Any questions should be directed to Growth Platform's Point of Contact Lisa Duddridge, via email lisa.duddridge@growthplatform.org, on or before the 'deadline for suppliers questions' date stated in the above timeline.

All questions and answers will be made anonymous and disseminated to all potential suppliers on Growth Platform's tender page;

<https://www.growthplatform.org/tenders/>

It will be the responsibility of suppliers to monitor the site for latest activity.

We will not be able to answer questions in relation to Section 1 of the Response Form 'Standard Selection Questionnaire'. This is a mandatory element of OJEU procurement designed by the UK Government. There are links within the document to support completion.

9. Indicative Budget

The allocated budget per Lot is £50,000 for the initial 12 month period. A similar budget is expected in following years, should there be an extension.

10. Submission

When developing your tender;

- Use the Response Form provided; tenders received in any other format will not be scored.
- Keep to the word count on the Response Form.
- Ensure you complete and sign the Conflict of Interest Declaration.
- A signed scan of your tender should be submitted via email to lisa.duddridge@growthplatform.org with the email title 'Local Growth Hub Broker Tender' before the Deadline for Tenders Date above.

- Take the time to read and fully understand the requirements.
- Ensure your answers directly relate to the **delivery** of these requirements and not experience.
- When constructing your answers, consider how they will be evaluated and tailor your answers as such.
- If you have any questions, ensure they are directed to our point of contact before the deadline in the Timescales section.
- Tenders may be submitted at any time before the deadline but will not be opened until after the deadline has passed.
- Any submissions received after the deadline will not be considered.

11. Supplier Response Form

The Supplier Response Form is a mandatory requirement for procurement at this level and should be fully completed. Failure to complete the whole document will result in your tender being disqualified from consideration.

The document is split into 4 Parts;

Standard Selection Questionnaire (Part 1 and Part 2)

The standard Selection Questionnaire is a self-declaration, made by you (the potential supplier), that you do not meet any of the grounds for exclusion. If there are grounds for exclusion, there is an opportunity to explain the background and any measures you have taken to rectify the situation (we call this self-cleaning).

A completed declaration of Part 1 and Part 2 provides a formal statement that the organisation making the declaration has not breached any of the exclusions grounds. Consequently, we require all the organisations that you will rely on to meet the selection criteria to provide a completed Part 1 and Part 2. For example, these could be parent companies, affiliates, associates, or essential sub-contractors, if they are relied upon to meet the selection criteria. This means that where you are joining in a group of organisations, including joint ventures and partnerships, each organisation in that group must complete one of these self-declarations. Sub-contractors that you rely on to meet the selection criteria must also complete a self-declaration (although sub-contractors that are not relied upon do not need to complete the self-declaration).

Supplier Selection Questionnaire (Part 3)

The procurement document will provide instructions on the selection questions you need to respond to and how to submit those responses. If you are bidding on behalf of a group (consortium) or you intend to use sub-contractors, you should complete all of the selection questions on behalf of the consortium and/or any sub-contractors.

If the relevant documentary evidence referred to in the Selection Questionnaire is not provided upon request and without delay, we reserve the right to amend the contract award decision and award to the next compliant bidder.

Consequences of Misrepresentation

If you seriously misrepresent any factual information in filling in the Selection Questionnaire, and so induce an authority to enter into a contract, there may be significant consequences. You may be excluded from the procurement procedure, and from bidding for other contracts for three years. If a contract has been entered into you may be sued for damages and the contract may be rescinded. If fraud, or fraudulent intent, can be proved, you or your responsible officers may be prosecuted

and convicted of the offence of fraud by false representation and you must be excluded from further procurements for five years.

Award Questions (Part 4)

To enable Growth Platform to evaluate the quality element of the Award Criteria we require Suppliers to provide a response to the delivery of the Scope of Works outlined in the OJEU Notice and the Requirements section of the Invitation to Tender.

There is a 700 word limit on each of the questions; anything beyond this will be disregarded.

Suppliers should refer to Sections 12 and 13 contained within the Invitation to Tender document as to the relevant weighting of each question and the scoring framework that will be used within the evaluation.

Please ensure your answers outline how you will deliver the requirement only, do not focus on work previously delivered or previous experience as this will be disregarded.

12. Award Criteria

In the interests of an open, fair and transparent assessment, this document sets out how the tender responses will be evaluated. It outlines the evaluation criteria and respective weightings, as well as the evaluation methodology to be applied.

Contracts will be awarded on the basis of the overall Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) submitted in each Lot.

The contract will be awarded to the highest scoring bidder in each Lot.

In the instance that there is only one submission in any lot a minimum overall score of 65 will need to be achieved in order for the contract to be awarded.

Quality 80% made up of;	Weightings
Please give details how you will ensure you will meet the light touch and medium intensity targets. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please demonstrate what methodology you will use to reach these targets. 	20%
A key objective of the Growth Platform is to introduce new businesses to the service. It is vital that the Local Growth Hub service is reaching new companies. How do you propose to engage businesses who have not previously been engaged with the Local Growth Hub service previously and how will you ensure you meet the contracted target? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each supplier will be required to engage with 500 businesses and 100 of these must be new i.e. companies who have not previously engaged with the local growth hub broker service • You must demonstrate the methods you will use to reach new companies and how you believe this will help you reach the targets specified. 	20%

<p>It is essential that the Local Growth Hub CRM Portal is utilised in 'real time'.</p> <p>Can you explain how you will ensure the Portal will be used on a day to day basis and how you propose to record interactions in real time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please indicate how many users you anticipate will use this portal from your team. 	20%
<p>How will you deliver the variety of Local Growth Hub services listed in the <u>requirements</u>. Please give details of how you intend to resource the successful delivery of this contract.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Please include individual staffing details in your response. Please indicate how you will ensure companies will be informed of all available support services and not just those of your own organisation. 	20%
Price	20%

Quality Scoring Methodology

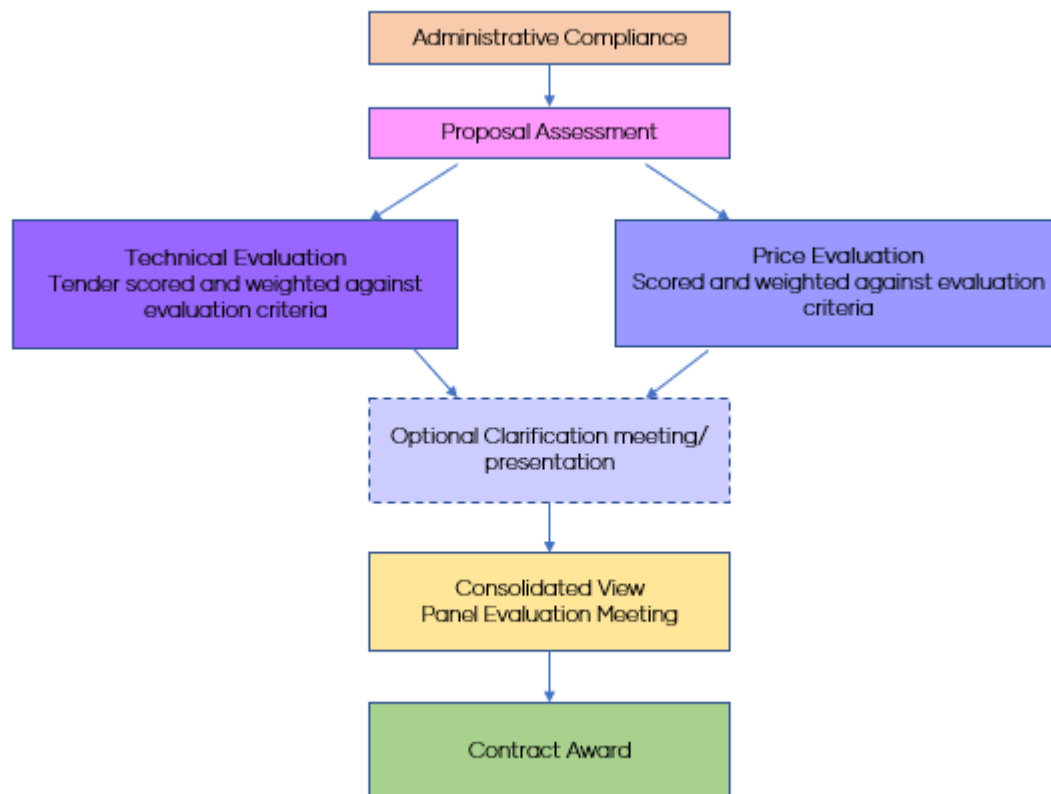
Score	Response Rating	The tenderer gives a response which in the opinion of the evaluator
5	Excellent	Addresses all of the requirements and provides a highly detailed, robust and unambiguous response with relevant supporting evidence where no weaknesses are identified, giving the Authority complete confidence that the requirements will be met in full.
4	Good	Addresses all of the requirements and provides a comprehensive response with relevant supporting evidence, where no weaknesses are identified, giving the Authority high confidence that the requirements will be met.
3	Satisfactory	Addresses all of the requirements and provides a response with relevant supporting evidence but contains minor weaknesses or lacks clarity in some areas, giving the Authority reasonable confidence that all the requirements will be met.
2	Partial	Partially addresses the requirements and provides a response with some relevant supporting evidence but contains weaknesses which lack explanatory detail or clarity, giving the Authority some confidence that the requirements will be met.
1	Poor	Fails to address most of the requirements or provides supporting evidence that is of insufficient detail or contains multiple and/or significant weaknesses, and therefore gives the Authority low confidence that the requirements will be met.
0	Inadequate / No response	An inadequate response which gives the Authority no confidence that the requirements will be met. Or nil response.

Price Scoring Methodology

5 Excellent	Less than £49,999
3 Satisfactory	£50,000
1 Poor	More than £50,001

13. Evaluation Process

The diagram below summaries the process that will be used to select an appropriate supplier and award the contract for this procurement.



Administrative Compliance

The Growth Platform Programmes and Compliance Manager will check each submission for completeness and compliance with the tender instructions. Growth Platform reserves the right to reject any tenders it considers substantially incomplete, or non-compliant.

Technical Evaluation

The technical evaluation will be carried out by suitably experienced people from Growth Platform Business Growth Team and LCR CA Programmes Team, using supplier responses to Section 2 of this ITT, using the scoring methodology provided above.

Each evaluation area is weighted to show the relative importance / significance of the criteria specific to this evaluation. The table above provides further information to assist in understanding the evaluation criteria and the relevant weightings that will be used in assessing proposals.

Optional Clarification Meeting

Suppliers will be contacted if panel members require clarification on any elements of the submissions.

Consolidated View

Following collation of scores, a moderation meeting will take place to allow discussion and ratification of the scoring submissions. At the moderation meeting the evaluators come together to agree their final scores. Once final scores are agreed they will be ranked from highest to lowest, with the highest score being the winning bid.

Example Scoring

Example of Quality Criteria	Question Weighting	Supplier 1			Supplier 2			Supplier 3			Supplier 4		
		Score (out of 5)	Score as a Percentage	Question Weighted Score	Score (out of 5)	Score as a Percentage	Question Weighted Score	Score (out of 5)	Score as a Percentage	Question Weighted Score	Score (out of 5)	Score as a Percentage	Question Weighted Score
How will you ensure you will meet the light touch and medium intensity targets?	20%	4	80%	16.0	3	60%	12.0	5	100%	20.0	4	80%	16.0
How do you propose to engage businesses who have not previously engaged with the Local Growth Hub and how will you meet the contracted target?	20%	2	40%	8.0	1	20%	4.0	3	60%	12.0	4	80%	16.0
Explain how you will ensure the Portal will be used on a day to day basis and how you propose to record interactions in real time.	20%	4	80%	16.0	2	40%	8.0	4	80%	16.0	4	80%	16.0
How will you deliver the variety of LGH services listed in the requirements section.	20%	3	60%	12.0	3	60%	12.0	4	80%	16.0	3	60%	12.0
Price	20%	5	100%	20.0	1	20%	4.0	3	60%	12.0	5	100%	20.0
Total Score				72.0			40.0			76.0			80.0
Price				£46,000.00			£55,000.00			£50,000.00			£49,500.00

Ranking

Supplier	Score	Ranking
1	72.0	3
2	40.0	4
3	76.0	2
4	80.0	1

Supplier 4 is the winning bid.