

Request for Quotation: Race Equality Positive Action Review

Growth Platform

The activity outlined below will be delivered through Growth Platform, the Liverpool City Region's Growth Company which has been established by the Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the Combined Authority (CA) to deliver the City Region's business growth and investment priorities, incorporating delivery of the Local Growth Hub service, working in partnership with business, the constituent Local Authorities, Universities, Colleges and third sector partners.

Background

On the 25th May 2020, news spread of the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, USA, during the height of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The Pandemic, and its disproportionate impact on disadvantaged groups and ethnic minorities, and the Black Lives Matter Movement, give social and racial justice a new level of urgency. There is strong expression of the need for change.

This context, and the global focus on racial injustice and inequalities mean we must act now to tackle race equality and work together to create an anti-racist culture through the elimination of bias, discrimination and injustice across systems and institutions.

Every person, regardless of background or ethnicity should be supported to fulfil their potential. Despite this, there is evidence that structural and institutional racism is affecting the outcomes of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic residents. This is demonstrated through labour market indicators: in the Liverpool City Region, Black residents are less likely to be in employment, and are more likely to be paid lower wages, with lower wage growth.

The Liverpool City Region LEP and Growth Platform are committed to emerge from the current crisis with a fairer, more socially just economy. However we recognise that there is significant work to do to ensure the Liverpool City Region economy is fair and open to all.

Growth Platform is working as a key stakeholder alongside the delivery of the CA's Race Equality Programme and is uniquely positioned to support the diversity and inclusion agenda through its business support commissioning and service delivery.

Before we take the next steps on our journey, we want to commission a review to gain an objective view of our current position, to act as a baseline for change. Our intention is this review sets recommendations around how the LEP and Growth Platform can take steps to close the ethnicity employment gap in the Liverpool City Region by increasing the diversity of organisations in the private sector and by helping businesses led by people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds to start, stabilise and grow.

Requirements

We are looking for a consultancy partner to take an objective look at the way we do things, focussing on the LEP and Growth Platform from the following perspectives:

- 1) **As an employer (Growth Platform):** we are a major employer and hold a responsibility to ensure equality of opportunity for all. We want to enable appropriate representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people at all levels of our organisation and foster a sense of belonging for all staff to be their authentic selves.
- 2) **As a commissioner (Growth Platform):** we provide business support services to organisations operating across the Liverpool City Region and need to ensure our services are fair and accessible to all. We want to target our commissioning activities and take positive action to change the ethnicity employment gap in the Liverpool City Region.
- 3) **As a leader and facilitator (LEP and Growth Platform):** we have a responsibility to set the standard for organisations operating in the Liverpool City Region and want to encourage others to embrace good practice in relation to diversity management.

The objectives of the consultancy commission are:

As an employer

- 1) To audit our employment processes and procedures and make recommendations around how Growth Platform should take positive action to achieve an ethnically diverse and fully inclusive working environment.

As a commissioner

- 2) To review the current approach to commissioning and delivery of business support and social value through Growth Platform contracts and make recommendations around how this our purchasing activity might be strengthened through positive action, to ensure we are properly meeting the needs of our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities.

As a leader and facilitator

- 3) To review the diversity of LEP Boards and how these can be further strengthened through increased diversity and confirm how Growth Platform can support businesses operating in the Liverpool City Region to improve performance through diversity and how we can remove barriers to success for businesses led by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people.

Approach

Within the scope of the commission the supplier should:

- Work collaboratively with Officers from Growth Platform to understand the current position and opportunities for development.
- Undertake an objective assessment of current Growth Platform employment policies and procedures and identify whether these are fit for purpose to foster an ethnically diverse and inclusive workforce.
- Review good practice for delivering business support services and confirm the critical success factors for engaging the business ecosystem to improve ethnic diversity and to enable Black,

Asian and Minority Ethnic people to have a level playing field when it comes to establishing and growing their own business.

- Confirm whether equality management procedures across our employment and commissioning activities are robust.
- Evaluate whether we are being sufficiently proactive around supporting Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people through the business support provision we deliver and commission.
- Determine whether there are opportunities to improve practices in relation to procurement and ensuring social value when issuing contracts.
- Review of the continuum of business support programmes already in place in the City Region identifying what works well / less well together with recommendations for positive action/improvement.
- Review the diversity of LEP Boards and Advisory Groups and make recommendations on how these can be improved building on the gender diversity work already undertaken
- Undertake engagement with the business community to understand how well they are served by current business support provision and whether there is more we can do to support businesses operating in the Liverpool City Region to improve the ethnic diversity of their workforce.
- Assess whether business support services delivered and commissioned by Growth Platform (and our partners) are seen as being relevant and available to the many diverse communities resident in the Liverpool City Region.
- Identify whether methods of communication to advertise and promote our business support services is sufficient to attract a diverse cohort of users/applicants.
- Undertake sector specific research and analysis to understand diversity and under representation and potential growth opportunities in the COVID-19 economic recovery.
- Set out a series of principles/ways of working which the LEP and Growth Platform can adopt to guide partners and contractors to adopt strong diversity management practices.

Project Timetable

RFQ Advertised	05/01/2021
RFQ Questions Deadline	15/01/2021
RFQ Responses	18/01/2021
RFQ Submission Deadline	26/01/2021
Appointment Decision	29/01/2021
Contract Commencement	08/02/2021
Phase 1 Completion – presentation of interim findings	08/03/2021
Phase 2 – draft report available	22/03/2021
Phase 3 Completion – final report	29/03/2021
Contract Completion	31/03/2021

Deliverables

There is one presentation and one written deliverable required as follows:

1. **Presentation of interim findings to Race Equality Working Group:** This presentation will set out the emerging outcomes of the engagement and desktop research, the current baseline across the LEP and Growth Platform and opportunities for change. The session should detail both essential and preferred recommendations that should be considered by the LEP and Growth Platform.
2. **Final report on all findings, recommendations:** The final report will collate all of the findings to date, set out good practice which should be retained and identify recommendations for change. Our expectation is this commission will identify cost and resource implications arising from any recommendations.

Indicative Budget

The total budget for this work will be up to £20,000 inclusive of expenses (exclusive of VAT).

Evaluation Criteria

Quotations will be assessed and scored on the following criteria:

Quality/ Technical Merit (60%)

Supplier must demonstrate they have the technical & professional capability to deliver the requirement.

Delivery Timescale (20%)

Supplier must demonstrate they can deliver the requirement to timescales above.

Cost/Value for money (20%)

Does the supplier offer value for money and what additional social value will be generated as a result of the commission. This will not necessarily be the cheapest quote.

Scoring Methodology

4 Excellent	Proposal meets and, in some places, exceeds the required standard
3 Good	Proposal meets required standard
2 Acceptable	Proposal meets the required standard in most respects, but is lacking or inconsistent in others
1 Poor	Proposal falls short of expected standard
0 Unacceptable	Completely or significantly fails to meet required standard or does not provide the relevant answer

Deadline and Submission

Questions related to this commission should be raised via email to Julie.Simons@Growthplatform.org by **12:00 on Friday 15th January 2021**. Responses to final queries will be issued by the Growth Platform Project Team by **12:00 on Monday 18th January 2021**.

Final submissions should be submitted via email to Julie.Simons@Growthplatform.org by **12:00 on Tuesday 26th January 2021**.

Responses must include:

- The proposed project team and experience.
- An overview of the approach you will take to deliver this work.
- The workplan for this piece of work, including any key delivery risks and how you propose to overcome them.
- A breakdown of costs for delivering the work.
- Your approach to generating Social Value in the City Region through award of this contract. We are particularly interested in how you will deliver Social Value for BAME residents.

Conditions of Tender

- Please be aware that due to the relatively low indicative budget for this work (i.e. less than the current OJEU limits) there is no regulatory obligation for us to provide feedback if you are unsuccessful.
- We reserve the right to discontinue this tender process at any time and not award a contract.
- All creative work, new images, video and interface procured through this tender will become the property of the procuring organization
- You will not be entitled to claim from us any costs or expenses which you may incur in preparing and/or submitting your Tender at any stage of this exercises. This applies whether or not your organisation is successful.