

# Open Tender Specification

<b>Title</b>	SEMLEP Business Survey 2019
<b>Description</b>	SEMLEP aims to continue its biennial survey of local businesses, which will identify the economic challenges and opportunities in the area to guide strategy.
<b>Procurement Process No.</b>	PR2007
<b>Issue of Specification</b>	26 June 2019
<b>Closing date</b>	23 August 2019

## About us

The South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) was set up in May 2011 as one of 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in England. LEPs play a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities that drive innovation, growth and the creation of local jobs. Our [Strategic Economic Plan](#) was refreshed in 2017 and SEMLEP is currently in the process of producing a Local Industrial Strategy, which is due to be published in July. More information can be found on our website [www.semlep.com](http://www.semlep.com).

We have a large number of partners including 13 local authorities, local businesses, business organisations and many other private and public organisations. In addition to the work that SEMLEP carries out we also have a business support arm: SEMLEP's Growth Hub.

SEMLEP is formed as a company limited by guarantee and is overseen by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

## Overview

Consultants are invited to bid to undertake a comprehensive business survey within the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) area. This encompasses the following local authority areas; Aylesbury Vale, Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, Corby, Daventry, East Northamptonshire, Kettering, Luton, Milton Keynes, Northampton South Northamptonshire and Wellingborough. Cherwell left the SEMLEP geography on 1 April 2019, as part of resolving an overlap with OXLEP, and so the appointed consultant will be required to work with SEMLEP to determine the best way to ensure comparability with the 2015 and 2017 surveys, while also accurately reflecting the new geography. The survey will need to identify the economic challenges and opportunities facing businesses in the area. This information

will be used to inform SEMLEP and local authority approaches to the development and delivery of economic development activities.

For this tender we are asking you to provide costs for undertaking the survey and appropriate reports for SEMLEP, with some breakdown at local authority level. Consultants must also provide costs for additional boosted surveys and analysis in councils who wish to take part.

## **Background information**

SEMLEP and its partners need to understand the needs of local businesses as part of developing a robust economic evidence base to inform strategic activity.

The findings of the survey will be a key tool in monitoring local economic conditions and in the development and delivery of economic development initiatives targeted to business needs.

SEMLEP and its partners undertook similar surveys in previous years which will form the basis of a questionnaire for this survey. Some changes will be made to the 2017 questionnaire in liaison with the chosen provider, SEMLEP and additional participating authorities; however, we still wish to ensure a high level of relevance and comparability to previous surveys, allowing us to use the information to develop policy.

## **Requirements**

SEMLEP seeks experienced professionals to undertake a robust business survey to identify business needs and conditions within the wider SEMLEP area, and to be able to extend this survey to provide additional detailed local analysis for individual councils who wish to take part, which may include specific survey questions for those particular areas.

The questionnaire used in the last survey is attached, although there may be some changes to the questions for 2019 following consultation with local partners, including scope for a reduction in the total number of questions.

The survey methodology should be comparable with the surveys undertaken in 2015 and 2017 to allow for comparison of core questions over time. The survey should be based on:

- A stratified sample of random businesses, stratified by sector, number of employees and postcode/area.
- A questionnaire of core questions across the area, with up to five extra questions specific to each additional participating authority.
- At least 100 interviews conducted over telephone for 12 of the 13 local authorities within the SEMLEP area (the thirteenth authority in the SEMLEP area is Northamptonshire County Council, which covers seven of the other authorities, and thus does not need separate interviews conducting. However, as Northamptonshire will be restructuring in due course into two unitary authorities, the interviews and survey analysis must be conducted in such a way as to allow easy aggregation of the individual district authorities into unitary groupings at a later date).
- In addition, an online version of the questionnaire should be made available to be promoted by all partners, for other local businesses to complete. This should be managed and hosted by the chosen provider.

The provider will be required to source a robust business database from which to select appropriate business contact details for telephone interviews.

It is currently expected that the new survey will need to achieve at least 100 completed interviews in each local authority area however, the consultant must be able to demonstrate the ability to increase the sample size where required. For reference, the 2017 Survey had over 2,300 respondents.

The provider is to advise on this response level, in terms of statistical validity, and recommend any alternatives, if necessary, to meet the objectives of analysis at the SEMLEP level and to provide a reliable baseline and comparison between its separate authorities.

The provider will be required to develop and host an online version of the questionnaire. SEMLEP's partners will promote the online survey to the wider local business community to enable all businesses to have their say. The provider will be required to integrate the findings of the online survey into any reports, ensuring statistical reliability is maintained.

In addition to the core SEMLEP analysis, the provider should be able to boost surveys locally, in blocks of 50 up to 250 telephone surveys. This would be funded through individual local authorities who wished to increase the sample size locally. An additional local authority specific report should also be produced for participating authorities. There are several local authorities who have expressed an interest in surveying additional businesses in each of their respective areas and asking 5 unique questions to those businesses. The provider should also be able to show evidence of being able to target specific types of businesses for these specific reports, such as businesses in rural areas. Please include a price per additional report.

The provider will be required to demonstrate the ability to deliver the required service quality and to deliver within timescales. Please provide a timetable of key dates and a workplan showing the number of days required for each of the key tasks as set out below.

Please outline the resources and technical ability to carry out the service. This includes providing information on the workforce to be employed for performance of the service and level of experience and level of resources to be used.

The proposal needs to show the social value of the contract and how your business contributes to the society and community in which you operate.

## **Reports**

The successful provider will be required to collate and analyse responses from the telephone interviews and online questionnaire together.

Written reports including detailed analysis of the results from the survey should be provided to SEMLEP and each additional participating council. This will need to include:

- The results from the 2019 survey for each relevant authority
- Changes over time relative to previous business surveys, where applicable

- Comparison to any other comparable survey data (e.g. British Chamber of Commerce survey, BEIS England Business Survey, National Small Business Survey, UKCES Employer Skills Survey)
- Any issues facing differing types of business, such as by sector, size, or rate of growth
- Differences by geography, for example between local authority and urban and rural areas. These will be developed in agreement with the chosen provider.
- Breakdown of survey results by our four showcase sectors: High Tech and Innovation, Advanced Manufacturing, Logistics, and Cultural and Creative.
- Executive Summary of the Survey results highlighting the key findings.

The selected consultant should provide printable and web-based versions of the final report, as well as providing the underlying text, charts and data tables in an editable format. The selected provider must also supply all of the raw survey data in Excel format. SEMLEP will retain final editorial control, including over the design of the final documents. The provider should also be prepared to present the results of the survey, at interim and final stages, to SEMLEP and local authority colleagues.

The provider should also be able complete the work in line with this suggested timescale:

- Inception Meeting – Thursday, 5 September
- Scoping – early September
- Survey interviews – September and October
- First results – November
- Full report and presentation – December/January

SEMLEP and its local authority partners wish to retain any ongoing rights to any surveys developed and information obtained, including the supply of data collected.

## **Budget**

The budget for the SEMLEP Business Survey is c.£40,000 including VAT, and there is scope for the number of core questions in the survey to be reduced vis-à-vis the 2017 survey. If providers feel that they could only work to this budget with a reduced number of core questions, this should be clearly set out in their application, along with the number of core questions that they feel they could deliver. It is expected that if additional local authorities from the SEMLEP area wish to participate in the project this would be funded by the relevant local authority, a price is to be given by providers for these additional reports. In previous years, this has been around the £4,000 mark (inc. VAT) per local authority.

## Procurement Timescales

<i>Issue the open tender</i>	Wednesday, 26 June 2019
<i>Closing date for receiving quotes – 12.00</i>	Friday, 23 Aug 2019
<i>Compliance Check / Short listing of bidders</i>	w/c 27 Aug 2019
<i>Interview/Presentation (If required for clarification)</i>	Thursday, 29 Aug 2019
<i>Appointment of successful bidder</i>	Friday, 30 Aug 2019
<i>Inception Meeting</i>	Thursday, 5 Sept 2019

### Submission Requirements

Please submit electronically any relevant supporting information related to this brief with SEMLEP's Request for Quotation Application form to [procurement@semlep.com](mailto:procurement@semlep.com) and with the name and reference number of the tender in the subject header. Please note that we do **not** want hard copies to be sent in the post.

Our tender evaluation panel will assess received applications as per the selection and award criteria stated below.

### Selection and award criteria

The tender application has a two-stage process: Part A and Part B. The first stage will assess Part A in accordance with the Selection Criteria that assess the ability of the tenderer to perform a contract based on qualitative information related to the economic and financial standing of the applicant, suitability, equalities and insurance. If the application passes stage one that is Part A, it will be assessed under the Award Criteria "Part B", stage two.

### Stage One - Selection Criteria

Section 4 to 7 of the application form is Part A. Questions 1, 3, 5, 6 and 7 are pass / reject. If you fail any of these questions, your application will be rejected.

### Stage Two - Award Criteria

If your application passes on "Part A" it will progress to "Part B" that is the Award Criteria. The applications will be scored under the Award Criteria set out below:

## SECTION 4 : AWARD CRITERIA EVALUATION

Criteria	Score	Score	Score	Score	Weighing (%)	Weighted Score
<b>Price:</b> It is necessary to illustrate the value for money in the proposal and how your proposal will deliver the best value per £ of public funds.	Exceptional, covered thoroughly, prices are very good and better than other suppliers. Score 8-10	Average. Brief covered adequately; Prices are reasonable. Score 4-7	Bidder meets or does not meet requirements of brief. Score 0-3		40%	
<b>Ability to deliver the required service quality and within timescales:</b> Please provide details of how you would provide the service based on the "Requirements of the Brief". Outline what is to be delivered and how it will be delivered	Exceptional, covered thoroughly, Score 8-10	Average. Brief covered adequately, Score 4-7	Bidder meets or does not meet requirements of brief. Score 0-3		20%	
<b>Methodology : Overall quality of submission:</b> Outlines what will be delivered; Give clarity of offer and structure of proposal.	Exceptional, covered thoroughly, have provided a very good response, covered the structure of proposal and have provided 2 referees. Score 8-10	Average. Brief covered adequately, haven't provided 2 referees or have not provide a good structure proposal. Score 4-7	Bidder meets or does not meet requirements of brief. Score 0-3		20%	

<p><b>Quality of delivery:</b> Provide details about the quality of delivery team indicating key members of the team that will be working on the project and relevant experience</p>	<p>Exceptional, covered thoroughly, have provided a satisfactory information of the key members that will be involved on the project delivery and their relevant experience compared to the requirements of the brief. Has provided very good response, covered the structure of proposal and 8-10</p>	<p>Average. Has provided adequate / fair information regarding the key members that will be involved on the project delivery and their relevant experience compared to the requirements of the brief 4-7</p>	<p>Poor, have not provided satisfactory information 0-3</p>		<p>15%</p>	
<p><b>Social Value:</b> The proposal needs to show the social value of the contract and how your business contributes to the society and community in which you operate.</p>	<p>Exceptional, covered thoroughly, providing apprenticeship and placements, helping local charities and other community work. Score 8-10</p>	<p>Average. Brief covered adequately, Do community and charity work but do not provide apprenticeship/ placements or vice versa. Score 4-7</p>	<p>Does not meet requirements of brief. Score 0-3</p>		<p>5%</p>	
			<p><b>Total</b></p>		<p><b>100%</b></p>	



**Please note:**

The Quotation response must include:

- SEMLEP's Open Tender Application Form fully completed
- All prices quoted shall be fixed and firm and shall apply for the full duration of the contract.
- Following that period, any requests for the price changes must be accompanied by a written summary and supported by evidence to justify the proposed price change.
- No quantity or continuity is guaranteed to successful suppliers and this should be taken into account when completing the price schedule.
- All costs are deemed to include expenses and any other on-cost.
- All prices quoted shall be exclusive of Value Added Tax (VAT)
- The quotation response must be on SEMLEP's Request for Quotation Application Form
- Any queries regarding completion of the response please email [procurement@semlep.com](mailto:procurement@semlep.com) or contact us on 01234 436100
- Please send your completed forms and any supporting information electronically to [procurement@semlep.com](mailto:procurement@semlep.com) with the name of the tender in the subject header. Please note we **do not** want hard copies to be sent in the post.
- We only accept submissions in Word or PDF of less than 10mb
- All tender submissions may be subject a credit check.
- All the questions received will be answered and published at SEMLEP website under the recruitment and procurement page.
- SEMLEP's Terms and Conditions are attached.

**SUMMARY OF INELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS**

- a) is bankrupt or is being wound up, where his affairs are being administered by the court, where he has entered into an arrangement with creditors, where he has suspended business activities or is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure under national laws and regulations;
- b) is the subject of proceedings for a declaration of bankruptcy, for an order for compulsory winding up or administration by the court or of an arrangement with creditors or of any other similar proceedings under national laws and regulations;
- c) has been convicted by a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* in accordance with the legal provisions of the country of any offence concerning his professional conduct;
- d) has been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authorities can demonstrate;
- e) has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which he is established or with those of the country of the contracting authority;
- f) has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which he is established or with those of the country of the contracting authority;



- g) is guilty of serious misrepresentation in supplying the information required under this Section or has not supplied such information;
- h) has been the subject of a conviction for participation in a criminal organisation, as defined in Article 2(1) of Council Joint Action 98/733/JHA;
- i) has been the subject of a conviction for corruption, as defined in Article 3 of the Council Act of 26 May 1972 and Article 3(1) of Council Joint Action 98/742/JHA3 respectively;
- j) has been the subject of a conviction for fraud within the meaning of Article 1 of the Convention relating to the protection of the financial interests of the European Communities;
- k) has been the subject of a conviction for money laundering, as defined in Article 1 of Council Directive 91/308/EEC of 10.6.1991 on prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering. Statement confirming that items (a) to (k) do not apply.

Please remember to email this response to [procurement@semlep.com](mailto:procurement@semlep.com) before the deadline specified in Timescales.

**END OF REQUEST FOR QUOTATION BRIEF**