



South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) Local Growth Fund 2016/17 Project Prioritisation support: Project Brief for Consultants

Introduction

1. SEMLEP is seeking to appoint Consultants to work with the in-house team and partner organisations to carry out an independent appraisal of project proposals submitted by our public and private sector partners in preparation for our bid to government for Local Growth Fund 2016/17 in November 2014.
2. SEMLEP is one of 39 LEPs covering England. It is a private company limited by guarantee with a Board of public sector and private sector directors with a private sector Chair. The geographical coverage is the following 11 local authorities: Milton Keynes Council; Bedford Borough Council; Central Bedfordshire Council; Luton Borough Council; South Northamptonshire District Council; Daventry District Council; Kettering Borough Council; Northampton Borough Council; Corby Borough Council; Cherwell District Council and Aylesbury Vale District Council.
3. The population of SEMLEP is 1.8m and there are around 75,000 businesses with a GVA of around £39bn.

Background

4. On 31st March 2014, SEMLEP submitted its Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) in order to bid for a share of the Local Growth Fund of £2bn in 2015-16. Prior to our submission, local authorities, universities and colleges were invited to submit their project proposals outlining how much Local Growth Fund 2015/16 they would need, what this would be used for, what would be the outcome in terms of new jobs and homes and level of match funding.
5. All projects provided detailed information in a pro forma and were appraised against nine criteria. These were determined with reference to the HM Treasury Five Case Model. These are: strength of strategic case; net impacts/ additionality; urgency; value for money; timetable assurance/ deliverability; project management team and processes; land ownership status; planning permission status; and feasibility and design status.
6. A report was produced that summarised the outcome of the appraisal and highlighted a number of weaknesses. Specific issues identified for some projects were lack of certainty of delivery arrangements, planning permission, private sector match funding, lack of clear project objectives and a weak evidence base.
7. On 7th July 2014, the government announced the allocation of Local Growth Fund for 2015/16 that had been awarded to each Local Enterprise Partnership. SEMLEP was awarded a Local Growth Deal of £64.4 million investment into the area – set to create over 4,200 new jobs and more than 3,800 new homes by 2020. South East Midlands have confirmed funding with an initial £19.9 million confirmed for 2015/16 and a further £23.9 million to be spent by 2021.



8. The government has also provisionally earmarked £20.6 million for two projects: a link road within SEMLEP's Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone (£0.6m) and improved access to London Luton Airport (£20m).
9. Local Enterprise Partnerships will be required to submit their bid to government in November for the next round of Local Growth Fund 2016/17.
10. At the beginning of September, we will be inviting our public and private sector partners to submit project proposals for the next round. With regard to the bids for 2016-17 timescales are tight.
11. We do not yet have any firm guidance from Government, but we should be ready to submit our bids in early November. It is not yet known how much funding will be available at a national level for 2016-17, but this is likely to be only a fraction of the total available for the 2015-16 round as the provisional allocations for 2016-17 (of which SEMLEP received £20.6m) will absorb a large share of what is available.
12. Our plan is to refresh some of the stronger projects that were not successful for 2015-16 and put them forward again. However, we have an opportunity to identify some new and innovative projects.

Requirements

13. We require consultants with the knowledge, experience and technical expertise of carrying out HM Treasury Green Book appraisal of capital and revenue projects to undertake an independent appraisal of project proposals submitted by our partners for Local Growth Fund 2016/17. Familiarity with the Local Growth Fund and some experience of supporting LEPs in submitting their Strategic Economic Plans would be preferable.
14. The consultants will be required to review the existing project pro forma used during the previous LGF round and make minor changes to make it more user friendly and to produce a short guide that supports our partners to complete each section of the pro forma.
15. During the appraisal process, the consultants will need to provide challenge and constructive feedback on individual project proposals to partner organisations via e-mail and/or face to face where feasible.
16. Where a project proposal has a strong strategic fit with SEMLEP's and government's priorities but requires further development, the consultants may be required to support the relevant partner organisation to strengthen their proposal for inclusion in our bid to government.
17. The consultants will be required to produce a report outlining the results of the appraisal with a set of recommendations for SEMLEP Board and CEO Group to consider.



18. In addition the consultants may be required to attend certain meetings of SEMLEP Board, CEO, Leaders and LGF Task Group.
19. We have a small in-house team. In particular you will be working closely with Hilary Chipping as Head of Infrastructure, who will steer this project and Victoria Dale, who provides analytical support and worked closely on the previous round of Local Growth Fund 2015/16.
20. The consultants would also work closely with a steering group that comprises Chief Executives of some of our local authority partners.

Timescale and Approximate Cost

Key task	By when
Deadline for ITT submission	cop 3 rd September
Interviews with each supplier	4 th September
Appoint supplier	cop 4 th September
Amend project pro forma and produce short guide to accompany pro forma	9 th September
Independent appraisal of all project pro formas	1st October to 15th October
Report on prioritisation process to Board and CEO Group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation to CEO Group - Draft report - Finalise and sign off report 	17 th October (tbc) By 17 th October By 21 st October

21. A provisional budget of £15k has been identified for this work.
22. In your submission please outline your proposed methodology, key resources and experience, past examples of similar work, number of days and costings. As we are unable to confirm yet how many project proposals we are likely to receive, please therefore include a breakdown of costs for appraising a set number of projects- 10, 20 or 30.

Submission of Invitations to Tender

23. Invitations to tender should be sent to Ellen Withey at SEMLEP ellen.withey@semlep.com by 5pm on 3rd September 2014.



24. For further information please contact Hilary Chipping at SEMLEP
HChipping@gmail.com mob 07703610791 or Victoria Dale
Victoria.Dale@semlep.com Tel 01234 436100