

Business Adviser

Salary: £35,000 - £37,000pa (depending on experience) + 25 days holiday (pro rata) + bank holidays + 6% emp pension

Hours: 37.5 hours per week, Monday to Friday

Contract Type: This contract will initially be until 31 March 2023, extension will be subject to continued government funding.

Reports to: Business Adviser Team Lead

Location: Your normal place of work will be home based. You will be required to travel in to the SEMLEP office when required.

Recruitment timetable:

Closing date:	9am on Tues 30 August 2022
Interview date:	Tues 6 September 2022
Stage 2 interview:	Fri 16 September 2022
Start date:	As soon as possible

Job Summary

- To deliver one-to-one advice and guidance to Owners and Managers of SMEs based in the SEMLEP area including Bedfordshire, Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire.
- Business development – Identifying and engaging with local business who could participate in Growth Hub projects (including Growth Curve, the Growth Hub's flagship project for scale up businesses).
- Diagnostic and Action planning – working with clients to understand their business in terms of its opportunities, its scalability and any barriers to growth. This will involve using one or more diagnostic tools and developing customised action plans which are 'owned' by the business and its management.
- Account Management – Managing a portfolio of clients from within the Growth Hub services and programmes including Growth Curve. This includes building relationships with clients, taking a holistic approach to diagnosing their business needs, action planning including recommending appropriate support through appropriate programmes and maintaining on-going relationships with a portfolio of SMEs.
- Holistic approach – Engaging with clients to holistically determine their business situation, stage, issues, challenges and objectives by conducting an interrogative diagnostic process to help highlight needs and subsequently prioritise the action to be taken.
- To provide the clients with information, advice and guidance they need as and where appropriate; work with clients to determine their priorities and the next steps/action to be taken and introduce clients to delivery partners according to their business stage and needs.
- To help businesses within the SEMLEP area to be as resilient as possible and help them highlight any risks to their businesses and support them to take appropriate actions.

Key accountabilities for this role include:

- Promote SEMLEP and the Growth Hub and raise awareness within the local business community of the benefits of accessing external business support services including Growth Hub services and programmes e.g. Growth Curve.
- Identify and proactively follow up potential leads, including through attendance at networking events and to create new lead opportunities for supporting business within the Growth Hub.
- Actively network with businesses and intermediaries in an agreed territory or target business group, including making presentations to promote the Growth Hub and its support services, including Growth Curve.
- Deliver 1:1 support for a range of Growth Hub clients, across a variety of size and sector, either through core Growth Hub services, or through programme specific support e.g. Growth Curve scale up programme, Green Recovery and Innovation programme.
- Guide Growth Hub clients through an initial diagnostic process in order to identify their key needs including action planning to help SME clients identify and access the best support available to meet their needs to grow their businesses and understand their resilience to potential economic shocks.
- Formulate action plans that will address these needs and encourage growth and development of the business, ensuring the customer's full understanding of the analysis, diagnosis, priorities and options and their 'ownership' of their action plan.
- Provide clients with a professional, honest and high-quality consultative advice and guidance service.
- Refer clients to the best available support to meet their needs ensuring all suitable options are explained. Taking responsibility for the handover of clients to other business support providers as appropriate whilst maintaining contact with the client to monitor the effectiveness of third party support and to assist the client in reviewing their priorities and changing needs.
- Where required, deliver support in line with any funder or programme specific requirements, e.g. for Growth Curve in line with ERDF project parameters.
- Where required ensure that any programme / project documentation is correctly completed and submitted in accordance with project processes and procedures and in compliance with funder requirements (e.g. ERDF)
- Work closely with local businesses including on a longer term account management approach and provide assistance to help them access products and services to meet those needs.
- Develop on-going client relationships and work proactively with clients according to need, to include continual review of action plans and follow-up activities ensuring progression to a successful output.
- Record the customer's journey using SEMLEP's customer relationship management (CRM) system in a manner that enables others to fully understand the nature of engagement and service provided.
- Help the customer to identify and secure external funding, loans or grants, where available and refer them to other business support providers, as appropriate, to support delivery of the action plan.
- Promote the Midlands Engine Investment Fund (MEIF) to the wider business community and, where appropriate, refer eligible businesses to the relevant MEIF Fund Managers.
- Actively organise and/or support Growth Hub led workshops and deliver / facilitate workshops where appropriate.

- Provide business focussed input into SEMLEP's four Showcase sectors: High Performance Technology, Manufacturing & Advanced Technology, Logistics and the Creative and Cultural Sector.
- Meet personal KPIs and targets and/or contribute to team / project KPIs and targets set in relation to the role and agreed with your line manager.
- Undertake personal development to improve performance and maintain knowledge for the benefit of advising and supporting businesses, for example in using information sources or understanding legislative issues.

The above is not an exhaustive list of duties and you will be expected to perform different tasks as necessitated by your changing role within the organisation and the overall business objectives of the organisation.

Person Specification

Attributes	Essential	Desirable
Education & qualifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Support Qualification or equivalent • A minimum of two years' recent experience in either General Management or in a specialist business function (marketing, skills, ICT, manufacturing, HR or finance) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued professional development
Experience & Abilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 2 years' experience gained running an SME business or in a management role in a corporate business. • At least 2 years' experience working in a busy work environment involving: face-to-face sales and/or customer service contact or similar. • Experience of delivering growth support to businesses – including in-depth diagnostic and coaching support. • Understanding of the issues faced by larger and high growth businesses and the challenges they face with growing at pace. • Awareness of aspects of business support available from local, regional and national business/enterprise support providers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of data manipulation and the ability to utilise new programs quickly • Demonstrable experience of delivering business support or able to demonstrate a good understanding of the role.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive and practical understanding of the needs and dynamics of established and growing SMEs. • Direct experience and specific knowledge in at least one of the following areas: business innovation, running your own business or management within a commercial environment • Working under pressure and delivering to tight timescales • Knowledge of business issues and the opportunities and difficulties faced by SME's • Experience of conducting face-to-face and telephone interviews with customers • Experience of developing effective relationships with customers, business support providers and other stakeholders 	
Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of using IT / CRM, data entry and recording of client details. • Excellent organisational skills • Able to empathise with customers • Strong problem-solving skills • Good Influencing, persuading and facilitation skills • Ability to communicate effectively with people at all levels 	
Personal Qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A team-player with good interpersonal skills; the ability to diplomatically, competently and effectively engage/communicate with people at all levels (internally and externally). • Proactive and creative • Flexible and adaptable in a rapidly-changing organisational and project environment 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to communicate effectively by telephone and/or webcam, face-to face and in writing. • Able to question clients effectively with the ability to interpret needs. • Empathetic and able to develop rapport with clients and colleagues. • Self-motivated, collaborative, organised and able to manage time effectively. • Client focussed recognising that clients are both internal and external. • Ability to handle multiple client and internal demands in both quality and timely manner. 	
Other Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentable and professional at all times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A full, clean UK driving licence with access to a car

About us

Set up by government in 2011, the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) has a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities that promote strong and sustainable economic growth and job creation.

We are a public-private partnership, working in collaboration with organisations from across the South East Midlands area to steer investment into business growth and innovation, building a talent pipeline of skilled people and, growing successful, connected places for people to live and work. For more information, visit www.semlep.com.

One of the functions of SEMLEP is to deliver business support to the South East Midlands area in the form of a Growth Hub. The Growth Hub helps businesses realise their ambitions through free impartial information, advice and guidance. The focus is on connected business support and connecting businesses with the most appropriate local and national provision. Key aspects of the Growth Hub include a team of dedicated business advisers, workshops for businesses and face to face business advisers. A key element of the Growth Hub is the GrowthCurve project – a project focussing on providing support to businesses who want to grow and have the potential to scale up and grow at a rapid rate. The project is part-funded by ERDF.

How to Apply

Application is by CV and a cover letter outlining the reasons for your interest in this position and why you believe yourself to be suitable in line with the person specification. To assist us with effectively monitoring Equality and Diversity, please also complete our Equality and Diversity form which can be found on our website <https://www.semlep.com/work-with-us/>. These should be submitted by 9am on Tues 30th August 2022. Please submit your application by email to growthcurve@semlep.com



We are committed to attracting, recruiting and developing a diverse workforce that reflects the diversity of the South East Midlands population our work is aimed at. Our vision is to embed equality and diversity into our day to day business and create an inclusive working culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity and feels valued. We recognise the value of having a diverse workforce to achieving SEMLEP's vision and the need to promote equality of opportunity in all aspects of employment in order to support each individual to achieve their full potential. We welcome applications from all backgrounds regardless of age, disability, faith, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race or sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and we would consider applications on a part-time, compressed hours or job share basis.

If you would like a confidential discussion about the role, or if you would like further information or have any specific access requirements to enable you to complete the application process, please contact us on 01234 436100 or email growthcurve@semlep.com