

Procurement Q&A

1. Q. Could we combine an apprenticeship awareness-raising event with a careers event we had already planned to run?

A. In theory, there is no reason why this couldn't work, so long as you could be certain that your combined event would meet our requirements for the apprenticeship awareness-raising event as set out in the Invitation to Tender document.

2. Q. We will struggle to run an event before the end of August. Is there any scope to hold something in September or October instead?

A. We are committed to running events over the next three months (before end of August), and if we receive bids which can deliver in that timescale they will be at a significant advantage in the competition for tenders. With that in mind, I'm afraid that a tender for the autumn is only likely to succeed in the absence of alternative options for earlier in the year. We are advertising these opportunities quite widely, so we do hope to get a fairly good response.

3. Q. Is the deadline for full applications 17 May? In which case, is there a form or something to be completed?

A. Yes, proposals must be submitted by 5pm on Friday 17th May. There are full instructions on what we expect to see in your proposal in the Invitation to Tender documents, which can be found: http://www.inspiringthefuture.org/media/8981/itf_awareness_raising_events_itt_final_draft_07_05.pdf

4. Q. Are all the companies who put forward expressions of interest with last Friday's deadline automatically going forward to the next stage of the bidding process with the deadline this Friday? Or will you be creating a shortlist of companies for the second stage?

A. Anyone who submitted an EOI by the deadline is free to develop their proposal and submit it to us by the 5pm Friday deadline this week.

5. Q. We are considering delivering multiple events in our chosen location, due to the size and geographical diversity of the county. Can you clarify if the funding (£6,000, £8,000 or £10,000), would apply to each event depending on target numbers, or would be split across each event?

A. We are only looking to fund one event in any one location. However, if you were to be successful for your chosen location, and you find that it makes more sense to split the funding between a number of smaller events, rather than one large one, then that would be considered within the tendering process.

6. Q. Would the level of funding we receive change if more young people attended our event than planned? For example, if we planned an event for approximately 200 young people and applied for £6,000, would the level of funding we receive increase to £8,000 if 420 young people attended?

A. If you bid for a sum of money, but then exceed the targets, we would pay the appropriate sum linked to the actual number of attendees as per the funding section in the ITT.

7. Q. The instructions advise proposals to include an indication of which level of funding (£6,000, £8,000 or £10,000) applied for and a justification for this. Does this mean that a detailed breakdown of our costs in e.g. an excel spreadsheet is required or does this mean simply indicate how many young people our event will attract, justify this and put down the corresponding level of funding (£6,000, £8,000 or £10,000)?

A. It means the latter: an indication of the budget you are applying for, and a justification due to the numbers you would confidently expect to be able to recruit to attend.

8. Q. You have asked for a risk assessment – can you clarify how you see this looking – do you mean in case of fire etc?

A. We are looking for a basic risk assessment: something that demonstrates that you have considered the risks that may be associated with running an event of this type, and that you have appropriately considered the appropriate mitigation for each risk. Your example could indeed be included in something like this, but would be more likely to relate to availability of premises and action required to secure attendees.

9. Q. Are we able to run the event on our own college or school premises?

A. So long as your premises have sufficient capacity to safely accommodate the number of young people you plan to recruit for your event, and so long as it has suitable disabled access, then yes, you are welcome to use your own school or college.

10. Q. If less than 200 16-18 year olds are recorded as attending the event, is it correct to assume that no funding will be forthcoming?

A. As per our Invitation to Tender, the funding is intended to be paid in two parts. Upon signing the contract with the Taskforce, a successful contractor would receive 25% of the total sum for which they bid. The remaining 75% is to be paid after the event, upon reporting back to the Taskforce. If the contractor then did not hit the minimum target, no further funding would be forthcoming. If, however, a contractor exceeded their expected attendance levels, higher levels of resource (as per the ITT) would be provided. If a contractor bid for a higher number of attendees but ultimately attracted the lower number of attendees, the lower level of funding would be provided.

11. Q. Is there any flexibility on the funding per student as it looks like the same amount is available for each location yet some areas i.e. Manchester are much bigger and therefore would be able to recruit a larger proportion of students. Our main concern is the number of students in our location would be limited so we could only recruit a smaller number. It is the same amount of work involved to recruit 400 as it would be 600. Are you able to clarify this?

A. We have outlined in the ITT the levels of funding that will be available, and this is relative to the volumes of young people who are recruited to and engaged in the event. There is no scope for us to make changes to the ITT at this point.