

Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership

Digital Technology for Productivity Programme

Consultancy Brief

May 2024

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1. PURPOSE

Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has been awarded funds by the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) to provide a dedicated business support function for Dorset.

The purpose of this function is to be a free service offering advice and support for businesses within the county. This includes providing them with business diagnostics and signposting to the most appropriate commercial or public funded assistance available to help them grow.

We are seeking proposals from qualified and experienced organisations to act as a delivery partner for a Digital Technology for Productivity Programme aimed at SMEs in Dorset. The objective of this programme is to assist businesses in becoming more productive through the adoption of digital technology. Specifically, this initiative targets manufacturing businesses across all sectors within Dorset.

2. CONTEXT

Innovation in digital technology plays a crucial role in Dorset's business economy, driving increased productivity and fostering growth across industry. As a hub for SMEs, particularly in the manufacturing sector, Dorset stands to benefit significantly from advancements in digital technology.

By embracing digital innovations such as automation, data analytics and cloud computing businesses in Dorset can streamline operations, optimise processes, and enhance overall productivity. These technologies enable businesses to automate repetitive tasks, access real-time insights for informed decision-making, and adapt quickly to changing market demands.

Increased productivity not only leads to cost savings but also enables businesses to scale their operations efficiently, creating opportunities for growth and expansion.

By staying at the forefront of digital innovation, Dorset businesses enhance their competitiveness, attracting investment, talent and collaboration opportunities, ultimately contributing to the region's economic prosperity and fostering a culture of innovation and growth.

The Digital Technology for Productivity Programme aims to:

- Engage with SMEs in the manufacturing sector to assess their digital technology needs and challenges.
- Provide tailored support and guidance to businesses for the adoption of digital technologies to enhance productivity.
- Offer training and resources to equip businesses with the necessary skills to effectively utilise digital tools.
- Facilitate networking and collaboration opportunities among participating businesses to foster knowledge-sharing and innovation.

Benefits of digital technology adoption for businesses include:

Increased Efficiency

Digital technologies such as automation and robotics streamline processes, reduce manual intervention, and improve overall operational efficiency.

Cost Reduction

Automation and data analytics help in optimising resource utilisation, reducing waste, and minimising production costs.

Enhanced Decision-Making

Data analytics provides actionable insights, enabling businesses to make informed decisions and adapt quickly to changing market demands.

Improved Quality Control

Digital technologies enable real-time monitoring of production processes, leading to better quality control and fewer defects.

Scalability and Flexibility

Cloud computing allows businesses to scale their operations up or down based on demand, without the need for significant infrastructure investments.

Competitive Advantage

Adopting digital technology enhances competitiveness by enabling faster response times, customisation, and innovation in product offerings.

3. COMMISSION

The delivery partner will be responsible for:

- Conducting assessments of SMEs current technological capabilities and identifying areas for improvement.
- Developing and delivering workshops on digital technology adoption, focusing on specific technologies such as:
 - Automation and Robotics
 - Data Analytics
 - Internet of Things (IoT)
 - Cloud Computing
- Providing one-on-one advisory support to SMEs to develop digital technology adoption roadmaps tailored to their specific needs and objectives.
- Facilitating access to funding opportunities and resources for businesses interested in investing in digital technology.
- Establishing a peer-to-peer support network among participating businesses to encourage collaboration and knowledge-sharing.
- Monitoring and evaluating the impact of the programme on participating businesses' productivity and performance.

Interested parties are invited to submit proposals outlining their approach, methodology, relevant experience, and team capabilities. Proposals should also include a detailed budget and timeline for the delivery of the programme.

4. KEY STAGES & DELIVERABLES

The contract is to run from 8th July 2024 to 31st March 2025 with delivery expected to commence within one month of the contract start date.

The programme is expected to deliver a minimum of 12 hours of support to 25 eligible SMEs in Dorset.

The supplier will collect firm level data from all participants and will provide, in a secure and timely manner, this data to Dorset LEP to be recorded on the CRM system.

The supplier is expected to monitor and evaluate their programme to assess its success and to provide one overarching impact report (including case studies) of the programme to Dorset LEP.

The supplier will be required to use the Dorset LEP brand and comply with the associated brand guidelines.

The following outputs, outcomes and service levels are required by Dorset LEP by 31st March 2025:

- Successful delivery of a Digital Technology for Productivity Programme to 25 businesses;
- Impact case studies detailing the support and outcomes of two businesses that received support;
- One overarching summary report on the programme outcomes and business support provided;
- Liaising with Dorset LEP around potential high-growth, investment ready businesses; and
- Minimum 80% satisfaction from businesses receiving support as evidenced by a survey carried out by the provider.

5. BUDGET

The budget allocated is up to £25,000 per annum, exclusive of any VAT charges that the supplier might occur.

Tenders should be submitted clearly setting out, individually for each member of the proposed team, the hourly rate at which they will be charged (exclusive of VAT).

Tenders should also show the proposed hourly rates once the total value of work charged exceeds £25,000. Tenders should be valid for six months.

6. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT & MONITORING

The work will be overseen by Dorset LEP's Head of Business Growth and Inward Investment (HoBG&I).

The supplier must nominate a dedicated point of contact to act as Contract Manager to oversee the work and liaise with and report into the HoBG&I. This will include some face-to-face meetings (either virtual or online), and updates in writing, including advising of any service delivery issues.

Dorset LEP requires a high level of accuracy in this piece of work, particularly in relation to the data and management information provided. The Contract Manager is responsible for ensuring the quality of the work and the accuracy of the information provided.

The supplier must be able to demonstrate that they have proven experience of working with businesses in an advisory capacity. In doing so, they must show examples of good customer engagement and feedback.

7. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Dorset LEP may exclude the Supplier if there is a conflict of interest which cannot be effectively remedied. The concept of a conflict of interest includes any situation where relevant staff members have, directly or indirectly, a financial, economic or other personal interest which might be perceived to compromise their impartiality and independence in the context of the procurement procedure.

Where there is any indication that a conflict of interest exists or may arise then it is the responsibility of the Supplier to inform Dorset LEP, detailing the conflict in the Supplier response to this tender.

8. TIMESCALES

Activity	Date
Invitation to Tender	w/c 27/05/24
Deadline for submissions	23/06/24 midnight
Assessment of responses received	05/07/24
Interviews	w/c 05/07/24
Inception meeting	w/c 05/07/24
Contract start date	08/07/24

The LEP reserves the right to cancel the tender process. No work is guaranteed to be awarded under the tender process and Dorset LEP is not responsible for any costs incurred as part of the bidding process.

The deadline for any Tender Clarifications is 23rd June 2024.

9. ASSESSMENT

Tenders will be assessed using the following criteria and weightings and the weighted scores within each sub-criteria will be added together to arrive at the total score for this piece of work.

Question	Weighting
Understanding of requirement	20%
Experience of similar work and credibility with stakeholders	20%
Proposed approach to this work	20%
Proposed team	20%
Pricing	20%

Tenders will be scored according to the below scheduled; scoring and comments are confidential and will not be shared with any applicants.

Score	Comment
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	Significantly fails to meet required standard or does not provide the relevant answer

Clarifications may be sought in writing from the suppliers and scores adjusted accordingly. Full or partial proposals that in the opinion of the Dorset LEP are unrealistically low or not reasonable sustainable (in terms of Quality or Price) may be rejected.

Dorset LEP reserves the right not to make any appointment.

10. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

In order to be considered for selection, proposals to this tender must be received by 23rd June 2024 midnight. Any individual or organisation responding to this tender must submit its response via email to the following:

Shelley Collins-Trevett
Head of Business Growth & Inward Investment
scollinstrevett@bournemouth.ac.uk

Please note that submissions not received via the means identified in this document may not be accepted or considered. Any tender submitted and/or received after the time specified may not be considered and the Bidder will be advised of this.

11. GUIDANCE

- Take the time to read and understand this document. In particular, develop a strong understanding of the Commission section.
- In structuring your proposal, consider how it will be evaluated.
- Bidders are advised to allow adequate time for uploading documents and to dispatch the electronic response well in advance of the closing time to avoid any last-minute problems. Failure to submit the tender submission as required may result in the relevant Bidder being excluded from any further participation in this procurement.
- If you require clarification or you have any questions please direct these to: dorsetlep@bournemouth.ac.uk