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Planning

Sector-Led Improvement Partners for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

Department For Education

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2021/S 000-021741

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-02dc5c

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Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

Department For Education

London

SW1P 3BT

Contact

Angela Overington

Email

SENDBAEA.Commercial@education.gov.uk

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

UK - United Kingdom

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-education>

I.3) Communication

Access to the procurement documents is restricted. Further information can be obtained at

<https://education.app.jaggaer.com/web/login.html>

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Body governed by public law

I.5) Main activity

Education

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Sector-Led Improvement Partners for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 80000000 - Education and training services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

Our vision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) is the same as for all children and young people - that they achieve well in their early years, at school and beyond; they find employment where that's appropriate; and lead happy, healthy and fulfilled lives, in which they have choices and control over the support provided to them.

Supporting local areas, delivery partners and providers to meet the needs of children and young people with SEND continues to be a high priority for government, with a clear line of sight to key government commitments on the levelling up agenda, economic growth and employment, and the recently published national disability strategy.

However, increasing demands on SEND services have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 Pandemic, which has disproportionately impacted children and young people with SEND and their families, and key challenges remain in delivering SEND services that are in line with our vision.

Sector-led improvement (SLI) is about local authorities (LAs) helping one another to improve their services by working collaboratively, sharing good practice and providing constructive challenge. Since 2016, under the Partners in Practice (PIP) Programme, the strongest performing LAs in the country have provided SLI support to other authorities to improve practice and outcomes for children and families across the children's social care (CSC) system. In July 2021, the Department launched a new programme for SLI Partners wishing to deliver holistic packages of improvement support across both CSC and SEND.

The Department now wants to build on the success of the previous SLI programme by grant funding a small number of SLI Partners to deliver packages of support focused solely on improving the quality and impact of local area SEND services. This may include, but is not limited to, support for strategic planning and leadership, effective financial management, SEN place planning, workforce development, joint working and commissioning, EHC needs assessments and reviews, and co-production with parent carers, children and young people.

The SEND SLI Partners programme will run for 15 months in the first instance, with the option to extend grant funding and activities for up to one further year, subject to budgetary approvals and successful delivery of measured objectives.

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 80340000 - Special education services

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

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The maximum grant funding for the SEND SLI Partners programme for the period from 1 January 2022 to the end of March 2023 is up to £518k. Further funding may be available from 1 April 2023 to the end of March 2024, subject to budgetary approvals.

Applicants should cost their proposals according to the number of days they are able to devote to SLI activity during the whole of the funded period, based on a minimum of 7 hours for each working day.

As a general guide, SEND support packages offered to each recipient authority should run for no fewer than 40 days. Smaller packages of support may be considered however, and all proposals will be assessed by the Department on their merits before delivery. Since LA performance issues are subject to change throughout the year, the support offered by SEND SLI partners needs to remain flexible and responsive to demand.

The day rates for delivery of sector led improvement for SEND are set at:

- Executive level (e.g. Chief Executive/Director) - up to £800 per day
- Management level (e.g. Assistant Director/Service manager) - up to £600 per day

The term 'day rate' refers to the cost per person carrying out improvement work, per day. This incorporates all elements of project delivery including:

- Preparatory work and administrative support
- Diagnostic services
- Travel time and travel expenses
- Delivering all elements of the support package (as agreed by DfE)
- Follow up work including report writing, feedback and reviews

If applicants can evidence that they will incur additional overhead costs and provide an itemised breakdown, we will consider these up to a maximum of 15% of the actual costs incurred. Overhead costs refer to the costs associated with the overall running of the improvement service, which will differ from one LA to another depending on the delivery model and scale of the service. Overhead costs should include, but are not limited to, completing quarterly progress reports and providing performance and impact data.

Potential SLI Partners for SEND will be asked to identify - and evidence - the strengths of their SEND services as part of the application process. They should use this analysis to develop the menu of support options they would like to offer to recipient LAs - for example, strategic planning and leadership, effective financial management, workforce development, joint working and commissioning, needs assessment, place planning, Education, Health and Care Plan processes or co-production with parent carers, children and young people.

Applicants will also be asked to provide examples of current and previous peer support initiatives in which they have participated and should be ready to describe the tangible impacts they have achieved as a result of their partnership working.

II.2.14) Additional information

LAs wishing to be an SLI Partner for SEND must be high performing LAs who are already well-led, are delivering excellent SEND services to children and young people and are able to support other LAs to improve.

As a minimum, LAs bidding to become SEND SLI Partners must meet the following requirements. Either:

- they have had a joint Ofsted/CQC area SEND inspection which did not require them to produce a Written Statement of Action (WSOA); or,
- they were required to produce a WSOA following inspection, but have been found to have made sufficient progress in all areas of significant weakness at a subsequent revisit; or,
- they have not yet have had a SEND inspection but can provide compelling evidence of the overall quality of their SEND services, and their capacity to provide SEND support to another local area.

In addition, SEND SLI Partners must not be part of the DfE Safety Valve programme or have a DSG deficit of 1% or more.

We are unable to accept applications from local authorities which are currently rated Inadequate for Children's Social Care.

We cannot accept applications from local authorities which are already joint SLI partners for SEND and Children's Social Care.

All mandatory requirements must be met throughout the lifetime of the grant. Should successful SLI Partners for SEND fail to uphold these requirements during the funded period, the Department reserves the right to terminate any live and pending work.

Successful SLI Partners for SEND will be required to provide progress updates on their SLI

work to the Department on a regular basis.

The Department may at its absolute discretion engage LAs to carry out SEND improvement work outside of the SLI partners group at any point.

Grant funding will be paid under powers available to the Secretary of State under Section 14 of the Education Act 2002.

To access the application form and submit a completed version, applicants must first register with Jaggaer (the Department's e-procurement system) at <https://education.app.jaggaer.com/web/login.html>.

Any queries regarding the application process should be emailed to the Department via Jaggaer at <https://education.app.jaggaer.com/web/login.html>, quoting the Jaggaer reference, 'project_5369 - Sector Led Improvement Partners 2022'.

Applications should be returned via Jaggaer using the template provided by midday on 1 November 2021.

This notice does not constitute a call for competition to procure any services for the Department. The procurement of any services will be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The purpose of this PIN is to stimulate market interest.

II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice

3 September 2021

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.3) Additional information

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