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Tender

Rural Growth Deal (RGD) Business Skills and Leadership Programme

Highlands and Islands Enterprise

F02: Contract notice

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-075647

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05e56f

Published 20 November 2025, 12:57pm

Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

Highlands and Islands Enterprise

An Lòchran, 10 Inverness Campus

Inverness

IV2 5NA

Email

hieprocurement@Hient.co.uk

Telephone

+44 1463245245

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

UKM6 - Highlands and Islands

Internet address(es)

Main address

<http://www.hie.co.uk>

Buyer's address

https://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/search/Search_AuthProfile.aspx?ID=AA00313

I.3) Communication

The procurement documents are available for unrestricted and full direct access, free of charge, at

www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

Tenders or requests to participate must be submitted electronically via

www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Regional or local Agency/Office

I.5) Main activity

Economic and financial affairs

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Rural Growth Deal (RGD) Business Skills and Leadership Programme

Reference number

FTS044

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 79410000 - Business and management consultancy services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

HIE requires a suitably qualified and experienced supplier to deliver a Business Skills and Leadership Programme specifically for Argyll and Bute Council area. This programme is fully funded by the Argyll and Bute Rural Growth Deal (RGD) and will be available to participants within this geographic area.

Award of this contract depends on securing RGD funding, which is not yet confirmed. Approval is expected by March 2026, with a potential contract start in April 2026. HIE may cancel the process or not award the contract if funding is not approved.

HIE's service requirements are divided into 3 strands. 1 Young and Emerging Leaders Programme; 2. Leadership for Growth/Strategic Leadership Programme and 3. Mentoring Programme. Strands 1 and 2 will be delivered to cohort of participants through a series of modules, delivered via workshops. Delivery should be a hybrid model i.e, a blend of on-line and face-to-face delivery. The mentoring programme will be mainly online apart from the first session that must be face-to-face.

It is anticipated that the contract will be let from April 2026 for 3 years unless terminated in accordance with the provisions of the Contract, with HIE having the option to extend for two periods of one year each (3+1+1) together not exceeding 5 years following the Initial Term.

The 3-year budget currently available to deliver these services is between GBP 260,000 and GBP 280,000 (excluding VAT). The total estimated contract value for the maximum

5-year contract period is between GBP 390,000 and GBP 474,000, VAT excluded. This is the figure used in the Contract Notice.

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £474,000

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 80400000 - Adult and other education services
- 80500000 - Training services
- 80570000 - Personal development training services
- 80521000 - Training programme services
- 80522000 - Training seminars
- 80532000 - Management training services
- 72224000 - Project management consultancy services
- 79400000 - Business and management consultancy and related services
- 79410000 - Business and management consultancy services
- 79411100 - Business development consultancy services
- 79411000 - General management consultancy services
- 80210000 - Technical and vocational secondary education services

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKM63 - Lochaber, Skye & Lochalsh, Arran & Cumbrae and Argyll & Bute

Main site or place of performance

Argyll and Bute

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

Key tasks are:

1. Programme design
2. Stakeholder engagement and participant recruitment for strands 1 and 2.
3. Programme delivery
4. Programme administration and monitoring.

Please refer to the Scope of Requirement and Guidance document for full details.

II.2.5) Award criteria

Quality criterion - Name: Management & Delivery Methodology / Weighting: 25%

Quality criterion - Name: Management & Delivery Team / Weighting: 20%

Quality criterion - Name: Reporting Requirements / Weighting: 5%

Quality criterion - Name: Monitoring and Reporting of Community Benefits / Weighting: 5%

Quality criterion - Name: Fair Work Practices / Weighting: 5%

Quality criterion - Name: Prompt Payment Standard Clause / Weighting: Pass/Fail

Quality criterion - Name: Cyber Security / Weighting: Pass/Fail

Quality criterion - Name: Payment of the Real Living Wage / Weighting: Pass/Fail

Price - Weighting: 40%

II.2.6) Estimated value

Value excluding VAT: £474,000

II.2.7) Duration of the contract, framework agreement or dynamic purchasing system

Start date

20 April 2026

End date

19 April 2031

This contract is subject to renewal

Yes

Description of renewals

The option to extend for two periods of one year each (3 + 1 +1) together not exceeding 5 years following the Initial Term.

II.2.10) Information about variants

Variants will be accepted: No

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: Yes

Description of options

In accordance with Regulation 72(1)(a) of the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015, HIE reserves the right to make changes to the volume and/or scope of the Services to be supplied under the Contract following a review of the Services by HIE, particularly with regard to demand and budgetary availability.

This may result in amendments to requirements under the contract, including but not limited to:

-The Scottish Government routed via Argyll and Bute Council will provide funding to HIE on an ongoing annual basis. HIE reserves the contractual right, at its sole discretion, to adjust the scope of services under Strands 1, 2, and 3 to align with the available budget. This may include, but is not limited to, reducing activities, pausing delivery, or terminating the programme.

-Following the initial 3-year contract term, HIE reserves the contractual right, at its sole discretion, to vary the scope of services under Strands 1, 2, and 3. This may include, but is not limited to, reducing activity, pausing or terminating one or more of the Strands. This contract modification option will be also available for potential year 5 of the contract.

-If additional funding becomes available, it may be allocated to expand the number of participants. Bidders' rates will apply to any increases.

-If the anticipated number of participants cannot be recruited, service volumes and requirements may be adjusted accordingly.

II.2.13) Information about European Union Funds

The procurement is related to a project and/or programme financed by European Union funds: No

II.2.14) Additional information

Economic operators may be excluded from this competition if they are in any of the situations referred to in Regulation 58 of the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015.

Section III. Legal, economic, financial and technical information

III.1) Conditions for participation

III.1.2) Economic and financial standing

Selection criteria as stated in the procurement documents

III.1.3) Technical and professional ability

Selection criteria as stated in the procurement documents

III.2) Conditions related to the contract

III.2.2) Contract performance conditions

Refer to the Scope of Requirements and Guidance document.

III.2.3) Information about staff responsible for the performance of the contract

Obligation to indicate the names and professional qualifications of the staff assigned to performing the contract

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Open procedure

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

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

IV.2) Administrative information

IV.2.2) Time limit for receipt of tenders or requests to participate

Date

23 December 2025

Local time

12:00pm

IV.2.4) Languages in which tenders or requests to participate may be submitted

English

IV.2.6) Minimum time frame during which the tenderer must maintain the tender

Duration in months: 4 (from the date stated for receipt of tender)

IV.2.7) Conditions for opening of tenders

Date

23 December 2025

Local time

12:00pm

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.1) Information about recurrence

This is a recurrent procurement: No

VI.2) Information about electronic workflows

Electronic ordering will be used

Electronic invoicing will be accepted

Electronic payment will be used

VI.3) Additional information

Tenders must be submitted via the PCS postbox and must be received by the published deadline. Late tenders will not be accepted and HIE will reject any submissions received after the deadline. Email or hard copy responses will not be accepted.

It is estimated that the total value of the contract will be GBP 474,000 (excluding VAT). This is the figure which has been used in II.1.5 & II.2.6.

Where bidders rely on the capacity of other entities in order to meet selection criteria they are required to provide information relating to these entities with the relevant supporting SPD documentation being submitted.

SPD 3D.12 Bidders should refer to the "Conflict of Interest" Section within the Scope of Requirements when completing this question.

The Award criteria Questions 4-9 will be marked according to the following criteria - refer to the tender documents for the evaluation criteria for Questions 1-3 including the minimum threshold for Qs 4 to 6.

0 - Unacceptable - Nil or inadequate response which fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement.

1 - Poor - Response is partially relevant but generally poor. It addresses some elements of the requirement but contains insufficient/limited detail or explanation to demonstrate how the requirement will be fulfilled.

2 - Acceptable - Response is relevant and acceptable. It addresses a broad understanding of the requirement but may lack details on how the requirement will be

fulfilled in certain areas.

3 - Good - Response is relevant and good. It is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a good understanding and provides details on how the requirements will be fulfilled.

4 - Excellent - Response is completely relevant and excellent overall. It is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrate a thorough understanding of the requirement and provides details of how the requirement will be met in full.

NOTE: To register your interest in this notice and obtain any additional information please visit the Public Contracts Scotland Web Site at

https://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/Search/Search_Switch.aspx?ID=810046.

The buyer has indicated that it will accept electronic responses to this notice via the Postbox facility. A user guide is available at

https://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/sitehelp/help_guides.aspx.

Suppliers 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.

Community benefits are included in this requirement. For more information see:

<https://www.gov.scot/policies/public-sector-procurement/community-benefits-in-procurement/>

A summary of the expected community benefits has been provided as follows:

See Scope of Requirements and Tender Guidance for full information.

(SC Ref:810046)

Download the ESPD document here:

https://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/ESPD/ESPD_Download.aspx?id=810046

VI.4) Procedures for review

VI.4.1) Review body

Inverness Sheriff Court and Justice of the Peace Court

The Inverness Justice Centre, Longman Road

Inverness

IV1 1AH

Email

inverness@scotcourts.gov.uk

Telephone

+44 1463230782

Country

United Kingdom

Internet address

<https://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/the-courts/court-locations/inverness-sheriff-court-and-justice-of-the-peace-court>