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Tender

Research related to the youth and apprentice rates of the minimum wage (2-year projects)

Low Pay Commission

UK4: Tender notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-085183

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-05fb03

Published 19 December 2025, 8:33pm

Scope

Reference

LPC 2025/07

Description

The Low Pay Commission (LPC) invites tenders for research into the impacts of recent increases in the youth and apprentice rates of the UK minimum wage.

This call for research is for projects that would deliver final results by September 2027 with interim results in September 2026. Researchers with projects that could be completed to a shorter timeframe are strongly encouraged to bid on LPC 2025/02 or LPC 2025/04, as appropriate.

The Low Pay Commission is a non-departmental public body that advises the Government about the National Minimum Wage (NMW), including the National Living Wage (NLW) and the minimum wage rates for young workers and apprentices. We are responsible for evaluating the effects of the NMW and NLW and making recommendations on future rates. To carry out these functions, our work involves:

- carrying out extensive research and consultation with employers, workers and their representatives and taking written and oral evidence from a wide range of organisations;
- analysing relevant data to understand the state of the economy and labour market and the impact of the minimum wage;
- commissioning research projects into these questions.

In recent years, we have recommended a number of large increases to the 16-17 Year Old and 18-20 Year Old Rates of the minimum wage. In addition, the current government has an ambition to move to a single adult minimum wage rate for all workers aged 18 and above. Our most recent remit asked the LPC to balance this ambition with the Government's concern about current levels of youth unemployment when making our recommendations on the 18-20 Year Old Rate.

As shown in analysis published alongside the LPC's consultation , reducing the age of entitlement to the NLW to 18 would require significant increases in the wage floor for 18-20 year olds. It is therefore vital that the LPC has a robust evidence base for understanding the impact of recent increases in the youth rates of the minimum wage as well as the potential future impacts.

The LPC carries out its own descriptive and econometric analysis of the youth labour market and the impact of minimum wage increases. However, some of the key data sources we rely on, including the Labour Force Survey, have suffered from data quality issues since the pandemic. We are therefore looking for research that would use alternative data sources and/or develop novel methods to provide robust quantitative estimates of the impact of increases in the youth rates of the minimum wage since 2020.

We have previously noted the importance of the interactions between the youth and apprentice rates of the minimum wage (see, for example, the LPC's Beyond 2024 Report) and are considering the full range of options for the future of the Apprentice Rate. We have also recommended considerable increases to the Apprentice Rate in recent years, but the data available to evaluate these increases are limited.

Projects focussing on the Apprentice Rate would support our understanding of the impacts of the Apprentice Rate of the minimum wage on employer and/or worker decisions and outcomes. They would complement the LPC's own analysis of apprenticeship starts, vacancies and pay.

The estimated maximum cost of the contract is £80,000 (exclusive of VAT; £96,000 including VAT). We recognise that proposed projects may vary significantly in their scale and resource requirements and anticipate bids in the range £40,000 to £80,000.

Total value (estimated)

- £80,000 excluding VAT
- £96,000 including VAT

Below the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 2 March 2026 to 31 December 2027
- 1 year, 9 months, 30 days

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 73000000 - Research and development services and related consultancy services

Participation

Particular suitability

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)
 - Voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE)
-

Submission

Enquiry deadline

12 January 2026, 2:00pm

Tender submission deadline

2 February 2026, 2:00pm

Submission address and any special instructions

Tenders should be submitted to tim.butcher@lowpay.gov.uk, copying LPC@lowpay.gov.uk.

Tenders may be submitted electronically

No

Award criteria

Tenders shall be evaluated using the Most Advantageous Tender (MAT) methodology. This is where the Authority assesses a Tender based on a combination of commercial, quality, and price elements. The Authority chooses to award the Contract, the Authority shall award the Contract to the Tenderer which submits the highest scoring Tender.

The MAT ratio for this Tender is as follows:

Commercial: Pass/Fail

Quality: 80%

Value for Money: 20%

Any non-weighted elements shall be evaluated as pass/fail and any Tenders which receive a 'Fail' will be excluded from further participation in the Procurement.

Quality will be assessed on three dimensions:

Understanding the requirements and context (A01): 25%

Methodology and approach (A02): 30%

Ability to deliver (A03): 25%

Value for money will be scored based on total contract price, the scale and quality of the proposed deliverables and the staffing resource required to complete the project.

Procedure

Procedure type

Below threshold - open competition

Documents

Associated tender documents

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/low-pay-commission-call-for-research-for-2026-and-beyond>

A detailed description of the project requirements is provided in the Invitation to Tender

(ITT) document published on the Low Pay Commission website.

The pricing schedule template can be found alongside the ITT document.

Note that there will be a short delay before the linked page goes live. If you are unable to access it initially, please try again on the next working day.

Contracting authority

Low Pay Commission

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PDDW-8983-PTPH

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Region: UKI42 - Tower Hamlets

Organisation type: Public authority - central government