

## **Annex A**

### **Capital Expenditure Funding Application Form**

#### **Invitation to Tender (ITT):**

### **1. Purpose of the Programme**

The Thames Freeport Skills Programme aims to build the capacity of the local skills and employment system to respond to the specific skills challenges and opportunities within the Thames Freeport area. The programme supports innovation, collaboration and growth in skills provision that aligns with the Freeport's wider ambitions to enhance productivity, drive inward investment and support local people to access high-quality jobs and careers.

The fund is designed to support, improvement of existing facilities or development of new facilities in order to deliver innovative programmes to align with the Thames Freeport priorities. Applicants must clearly define the outcomes they intend to deliver as a result of the capex investment and explain how Thames Freeport Skills Programme funding will enable those outcomes to be achieved, as well as how other existing funding sources will be leveraged.

Projects funded through this fund will be known collectively as the Thames Freeport Skills Programme.

Following the recent procurement exercise ([Thames Freeport Skills Programme - Find a Tender](#)) no bids were successful for the for lot 3 – Capex investment to enhance local FE and HE capacity. We have therefore taken the decision to re-tender the lot as its own procurement using a Competitive Flexible Procedure (CFP).

We are seeking bids that will enhance delivery capacity in either Further Education (FE) or Higher Education (HE), and in the TFP priority sector of sustainable construction, which may include the use of modern methods of construction.

In your submission, please clearly set out:

- How this capital investment will enhance delivery capacity and capability.
- What new delivery programmes the capital investment will support.
- The number of additional students that will be engaged as a result of the capital investment.
- The intended outcomes that will be achieved before the end of March 2026, and in the subsequent three years from April to March thereafter.

### **2. Funding**

This funding has been made available as a direct result of the establishment of the Thames Freeport. It is intended to help develop or deliver proposals that will benefit the wider sector and help local businesses grow through improved skills supply and training provision.

Thames Freeport will provide up to 100% of total eligible project costs. The minimum bid size of £50,000 and a maximum limit of £500,000 for capital projects. Applicants may submit more than one proposal.

Each proposal will be evaluated on its own merits against the published evaluation criteria. Thames Freeport reserves the right to appoint more than one supplier where this is necessary to maximise impact and fully utilise the available funding.

All eligible tenders will be included in a pipeline of Thames Freeport Skills Programme projects. Projects in the pipeline will be prioritised on a regular basis. As funding becomes

available, Thames Freeport may provisionally allocate funds to projects on this list. The dates on which prioritisation will take place will be published in advance on the Thames Freeport website: <https://thamesfreeport.com>.

Thames Freeport reserves the right to decide which projects it will fund. Meeting the eligibility and assessment criteria does not guarantee funding.

### 3. Procurement Act 2023 Compliance

#### 3.1 Procedure

This procurement is being conducted under the Competitive Flexible Procedure (CFP) in accordance with the Public Procurement Act 2023. The CFP allows contracting authorities to design and apply a procedure that is flexible, proportionate, and tailored to the nature and requirements of the procurement.

The current process is structured as a single-stage ITT. However, the contracting authority reserves the right to introduce additional stages if considered necessary to ensure a fair, transparent, and robust assessment of bids. In particular, the authority may require:

- **Supplier Presentations** – to allow bidders to present their proposals, demonstrate capability, and respond to clarifications.
- **Dialogue / Clarification Sessions** – to explore specific aspects of the bids in further detail, address any uncertainties, and ensure that final tenders fully meet the stated requirements.

Should these stages be introduced, all bidders who have submitted a compliant ITT response will be invited to participate, and sufficient notice will be provided. The contracting authority will ensure that any additional stages are conducted in a fair and transparent manner, with all bidders treated equally.

Where further stages are introduced, the timelines and any score weighting adjustments will be communicated in advance and updated accordingly to reflect the revised evaluation process.

#### 3.2 Transparency

The ITT will be available through a central digital platform, as required under the Procurement Act 2023. This ensures transparency in procurement route and regulations applicable. The ITT will be published on the Find a Tender platform.

In accordance with the Procurement Act 2023, notices and award details will be published on the Find a Tender platform. Contract KPIs, award notices, and performance tracking will also be disclosed where applicable.

This procurement is being conducted by Matt Hamnett & Associates Ltd, trading as MH&A. Company number: 11197120. Registered address: 1a Kingsbury's Lane, Ringwood, England, BH24 1EL. MH&A will act as the Contracting Authority for the purposes of this procurement and will enter into contract(s) with the successful supplier(s).

Due to administrative limitations, the procurement notice is being published via the Thames Freeport (TFP) buyer account on the UK Government's Find a Tender platform. This is to ensure compliance with public procurement regulations, as the funding for this contract is grant-funded and subject to public authority oversight.

However, all procurement activities, including supplier engagement, evaluation, and contract award and any prevailing contracts are being administered by MH&A. Bidders should direct all communications, clarifications, and submissions as instructed in this notice and the procurement documents.

#### **4. Geographic coverage**

Projects must be delivered within the Thames Freeport area, specifically in the boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Thurrock. Within this, there is flexibility for applicants to focus their activities on specific neighbourhoods or communities depending on the project design.

#### **5. Who can apply**

Applications are welcomed from colleges, higher education institutions, independent training providers and others in the Thames Freeport area or prepared to operate within it. All proposals must involve collaboration between at least two organisations. This could be a combination of training providers, employers, FE or HE institutions, or third sector organisations.

#### **6. Strategic priorities**

The sector in focus for the Skills Programme is sustainable construction. The project(s) that you include in the tender should demonstrate how they support the strategic aims of Thames Freeport, these include:

- Improving the supply of labour and skills in core sectors, enabling innovation and trade.
- Enabling inward investment through skills and talent with special focus on the overarching themes of Sustainable Construction.
- Delivery of new employment and skills pathways.
- Addressing persistent barriers in the local skills market.
- Enhancing new curriculum development.
- Providing 'skills escalators' for retraining and reskilling.
- Encouraging the growth of apprenticeships and work-based learning.
- Strengthening leadership and coordination across the local skills system.
- Utilising and maximising existing skills assets within the FE & HE system.
- Facilitating collaboration across institutions, employers and sectors, including through international alliances.
- Targeted interventions to support young people, particularly those entering apprenticeships, with the goal of improving retention and ensuring successful completion.

#### **7. Project requirements**

Projects must be outcomes focused. Applicants must clearly articulate the specific challenges they are seeking to address, and what measurable difference their programme will make. They must show:

- A strong rationale for the proposed investment
- Clear and measurable outcomes, linked to local economic and skills needs.
- What existing funding sources are being leveraged alongside Thames Freeport Skills Programme funds.
- Value for money, including a high-level breakdown of how funding will be used and disclosing how delivery partners will maximise funding granted by Thames Freeport
- A plan for sustainability or legacy beyond the funding period
- Projects should clearly demonstrate why they require investment

## 8. TFP Skills programme Scoring

### 8.1 Scoring Matrix (0-4)

Score	Evaluation	Description
0	Unsatisfactory	The response does not meet any of the requirements or no response has been provided. An unacceptable and / or non-compliant response with serious reservations, demonstrating no understanding of the requirement.
1	Poor	The response has met some, but not all elements of the requirements, which poses a risk that the proposal will not meet the deliverables required.  The response does not demonstrate a full understanding of the requirements posing major concerns.
2	Good	The response is acceptable and meets all the basic requirements. However, the response is not sufficiently detailed to minimise risk and / or the proposed approach may require additional support.
3	Very good	The response fully meets all requirements with detail provided minimising risks to delivery.  The response is comprehensive and unambiguous, demonstrating a thorough understanding of the requirements and provides details of how the requirement will be met in full.
4	Outstanding	The response exceeds all requirements with detail provided minimising risks to delivery.  The response is comprehensive and unambiguous, demonstrating a thorough understanding of the requirements and provides details of how the requirement will be met in full. The response also demonstrates an outstanding standard of added value and innovation.

All bid submissions will be independently evaluated by appropriately qualified individuals to ensure objectivity, fairness, and consistency. This will be followed by a consensus process to agree final scores and outcomes, enabling a balanced and transparent evaluation that reflects a shared assessment of each proposal

## 8.2 Scoring criteria (80%)

Each criterion has a weight - representing its importance to the overall success of the programme:

Criteria	Weight
Project rationale, outcomes and strategic alignment with Thames Freeport objectives	25%
Delivery capability and relevant track record	25%
Budget and value for money*	20%
Delivery plan	20%
Social value	10%

\*The 20% budget and value-for-money score will be calculated as follows:

## 8.3 Budget and value for money (20%)

### Combined commercial score (20%)

Component	Weight	Calculation
Budget (total cost) score	10%	(Lowest cost / bidder cost) × 10
VfM narrative score	10%	(Raw score / 4) × 10
<b>Total commercial</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>Sum of above two elements</b>

### Commercial evaluation -10% for Budget (total cost)

Lowest compliant total cost submitted will receive the full allotted weighting. Other bids scored proportionally using:

- $\text{Lowest cost} / \text{bidder's cost} \times 10$

Example:

Bidder	Total cost (£)	Calculation	Weighted score (out of 10%)
A	£80,000	$(£80,000 / £80,000) \times 10 = 10.00$	10.00%
B	£100,000	$(£80,000 / £100,000) \times 10 = 8.00$	8.00%
C	£120,000	$(£80,000 / £120,000) \times 10 = 6.67$	6.67%

### Commercial evaluation - 10% for value for money narrative

As part of the commercial assessment (20%), bidders are required to submit a written Budget and Value for Money statement (max 300 words) to explain how their proposal delivers strong economic value, efficient use of resources, and maximises impact per pound spent.

Evaluated against a 0-4 qualitative scale:

0 - No evidence of value for money.

- 1 - Limited explanation or feasibility concerns.
- 2 - Acceptable explanation but lacks specificity.
- 3 - Clear, credible cost-benefit justification.
- 4 - Outstanding demonstration of cost-effectiveness and innovation.

Score calculated as:

(Raw Score/4) × 10	Narrative Score (0–4)	Calculation	Weighted Score (10%)
A	4	$(4 \div 4) \times 10 = 10.00\%$	10.00%
B	3	$(3 \div 4) \times 10 = 7.50\%$	7.50%
C	2	$(2 \div 4) \times 10 = 5.00\%$	5.00%

#### 8.4 Process for calculation:

##### To calculate the weighted score

Multiply the score (out of 4) by the weighting for those criteria

##### Example calculation

A provider scored as follows:

Criteria	Score (0-4)	Weight (%)	Calculation	Weighted value
Project rationale, outcomes and strategic alignment with Thames Freeport objectives	4	25%	$(4 \div 4) \times 25$	25%
Delivery capability and relevant track record	3	25%	$(3 \div 4) \times 25$	18.75%
Delivery plan	3	20%	$(3 \div 4) \times 20$	15%
Budget and value for money	3	20%	$(3 \div 4) \times 20$	15%
Social value	2	10%	$(2 \div 4) \times 10$	5%
<b>Total</b>				<b>78.75%</b>

*This provider would have scored 78.75%.*

In justification for distribution of funds:

- Each partner is scored against the same criteria for consistency
- Decisions can be justified for transparency
- Evidence can be provided against the scoring matrix to show what mattered to the overall decision-making process

## **9. Disclaimers**

To ensure a fair, transparent and compliant procurement process, the following safeguards apply to this tender:

### **9.1 Right to Amend or Cancel**

MH&A reserves the right to amend or cancel this procurement process at any time without prior notice. Participation in this process does not create any obligation on MH&A to award a contract.

### **9.2 No Obligation to Award**

MH&A may, at its sole discretion, choose not to award any contract or may award fewer contracts than the total number of Lots available. Submitting a proposal does not guarantee selection.

### **9.3 Bidder Costs**

MH&A will not reimburse any costs incurred by bidders in preparing or submitting a proposal or in participating in any part of the procurement process.

### **9.4 Confidentiality and Data Handling**

All information provided by MH&A in relation to this procurement must be treated as confidential. MH&A will treat all submissions confidentially but may be required to disclose information under applicable data protection or freedom of information legislation.

### **9.5 Abnormally Low Pricing**

MH&A reserves the right to investigate any bid it considers to include abnormally low pricing. Bidders may be required to provide justification, and failure to do so satisfactorily may result in disqualification.

### **9.6 Conflict of Interest**

Bidders must declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest. MH&A reserves the right to disqualify any bidder where, in its reasonable opinion, such conflicts may compromise the integrity of the procurement.

### **9.7 Anti-Collusion and Anti-Competitive Behaviour**

Bidders must not engage in any collusive, anti-competitive or unlawful behaviour. MH&A reserves the right to disqualify any bidder suspected of such conduct and may report the matter to relevant authorities.

### **9.8 Right to Clarify or Reject Submissions**

MH&A may request clarification or additional information from bidders. Incomplete, unclear or non-compliant submissions may be rejected without further consideration.

### **9.9 Changes to Evaluation Approach**

MH&A reserves the right to adjust the evaluation methodology or weighting prior to the submission deadline, with appropriate notice to all bidders.

#### 9.10 Subcontracting and Consortia

Where bidders intend to use subcontractors or form a consortium, this must be clearly stated in the bid. MH&A reserves the right to request further information and to approve any subcontracting arrangements post-award.

#### 9.11 Intellectual Property

All intellectual property rights in submitted proposals shall remain with the bidder. MH&A may use the content solely for the purposes of evaluating the submission and administering the procurement.

#### 9.12 Tender Validity Period

Proposals must remain valid for a minimum period of 90 calendar days from the submission deadline unless otherwise agreed in writing.



## Application form

### Section 1: Lead applicant details.

Organisation name:

Organisation type:

Address:

Contact name and role:

Email and phone number:

Lot being bid:

### Section 2: Project summary

Project title:

Description of project including delivery plans of what the cap ex will support with and predicted outcomes (max 300 words):

Outcomes may include but not exclusive of: number of apprenticeships starts, learners into employment, upskilling opportunities, etc

Anticipated participation numbers:

Cost per learner:

Funding requested:

### Section 3: Project rationale, outcomes and strategic alignment to Thames Freeport objectives

Rationale for capital expenditure (max 250 words):

*(Explain why this capital investment is necessary and cannot be funded through other means, and what other programme outcomes this enables)*

Expected outcomes / benefits (max 250 words):

*(How will this capital expenditure support the overall objectives of the delivery and alignment with the overall Thames Freeport Strategy)*

Risks if capital expenditure is not funded (max 250 words):

*(What would happen if this funding were not granted?)*

### Section 4: Delivery capability and relevant track record

Please provide details of up to two previous contracts where you were responsible for delivering capital expenditure projects of similar scale and complexity (200 words max).

Your response should include:

- Description of the project
- Total value of the capital expenditure
- Your role and responsibilities
- Outcomes achieved, including whether the project was delivered on time and within budget

- Lessons learned and how these inform your current approach

## Section 5: Capital expenditure implementation plan

Procurement plan (including timeline and suppliers) (max 300 words):

Expected delivery dates for capital expenditure items (max 150 words):

Installation / deployment plan (if applicable) (max 150 words):

## Section 6: Budget and value for money

Total amount of capital expenditure funding requested (£):

Total project cost (including other funding sources):

*a – Cost breakdown:*

Your organisation contribution (£):

Funding (specify sources) (£):

Item description	Purpose	Quantity	Unit cost	Total cost	Supplier

(add rows as needed)

*b – Value for money statement:*

Provide a summary of anticipated costs and explain how your project offers value for money.

Your response should include commentary on cost-effectiveness, efficiency of your chosen approach, and how you will maximise the impact of Thames Freeport funding.

Provide a summary of anticipated costs and explain how your project offers value for money.

Provide a breakdown of the overall project cost.

Provide a cost per participant, e.g. how many people do you expect to benefit from the investment.

(max 300 words)

## Section 7 Social value (and sustainability)

Maintenance plan and associated costs (post-deployment, max 150 words):

Lifecycle and depreciation considerations (max 150 words):

Sustainability measures (energy efficiency, environmental impact, max 150 words):

Long term benefits (legacy, max 200 words):

### **Declaration**

I confirm that the information provided is accurate and that the requested capital expenditure funding will be used solely for the purposes outlined above.

Signature:

Name:

Position:

Date:

### **Required attachments:**

- 3 x quotes or estimates for capital items
- Procurement policy/procedure (if required)
- Capital expenditure budget forecast or business case
- Project delivery timeline including Cap Ex elements

**Please submit your completed application form to [skills@thamesfreeport.com](mailto:skills@thamesfreeport.com) by**

### **Additional information**

- Incomplete submissions may not be considered.
- Please complete this form using Arial font, size 10.5, and return it in Microsoft Word (.docx) format.
- Additional attachments (e.g. quotes, policies, supporting documents) may be submitted in PDF format.
- This capital expenditure form will be scored against the same scoring criteria noted in the original ITT.

### **Timeline**

Stage	Indicative dates
ITT launch	3 Oct 25
Clarification question deadline	10 Oct 25 Noon (1200hrs)
ITT close date	17 Oct 25 Noon (1200hrs)
Evaluation and moderation	17 Oct 25 - 22 Oct 25
Award notification	12 Nov 25
Contract mobilisation	19 Nov 25
Programme delivery start	19 Nov 25