

Community First

Self Confidence & Employability Skills Courses Specification

Deadline for submissions:
18th August 2023

Contact:
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Please complete the tender proposal form included with this specification document and return by email no later than 18th August 2023.

Background

The Building Bridges programme offers a holistic service that provides personalised support to people with significant barriers & challenges to help them build their independence and move towards education & employment outcomes.

It is funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund via Swindon Borough Council and Wiltshire Council and will run through to April 2025

A Support Worker will work closely with each participant to ensure they have strong consistent support from joining the programme through to leaving it - they will help the participant understand their barriers & challenges, develop & implement plans to deliver them and provide support to sustain outcomes. They will also assist participants when they engage with external services to ensure the engagement is as smooth and seamless as possible.

A personalised needs analysis, circles of support map and holistic support action plan will be developed with each participant. They will then be offered a range of one-to-one and group activities based on their individual needs as they progress through support.

The programme is happy to integrate existing support which participants have in place into their plans with Building Bridges if they would like us to.

In addition, Building Bridges also offers:

- Access to self-confidence building & employability skills courses
- Volunteering and work experience activities
- Debt & benefit advice
- Travel training
- One to one counselling, anxiety, and mental health support
- Access to functional skills and qualifications

Participants are supported to develop their CVs, job search skills and interview skills and have access to support for up to three months to help them sustain their education and employment outcomes.

Support In Wiltshire

In Wiltshire, the programme can support participants aged 16+, but those aged under 18 need to be NEET (not in education, employment & training) or at risk of becoming so.

Support in Swindon

In Swindon, we have a new holistic service Inspire Swindon which offers personalised support to young people in the following groups with significant barriers & challenges to help them build their independence and move towards education & employment:

- 15-18 years old At Risk of becoming NEET
- 15-18 years old NEET
- 15-18 Years old engaging with Swindon Youth Justice Service
- 18-25 years old Care Experienced
- 18-25 years old with an EHCP

Duration

The programme currently has funding to support participants through to the end of March 2025.

Additional Funding

The programme is also seeking additional funding to support adult participants in Swindon and if this is successful there may be a requirement to run additional courses through this contract.

Self-Confidence & Employability Skills Courses

A core part of the programme is the provision of self-confidence and employability skills courses, which participants on the previous version of the programme have fed back as being extremely valuable.

Many of the programme participants suffer from high levels of anxiety, some are also neuro diverse, some have Education, Health and Care Plans, some are care experienced and an increasing number suffer from selective mutism.

On our previous programme,

- 84% of participants were disadvantaged
- 59% of participants were disabled or had long-term health conditions
- 46% of participants lacked basic skills in maths & English
- 19% of participants were from areas of multiple deprivation
- 10% of participants were ex-offenders
- 5% of participants were homeless

We are looking for a provider who can engage with the challenging demographics of our participant cohort and deliver two distinct courses to help them build their self-confidence, independence and move towards education and work outcomes:

1. A self-confidence and independence development course
2. An employability skills development course

We split our participant cohorts into two principal groups:

- Young people 15-18 who are at risk of becoming NEET, are already NEET and/or are engaging with youth justice services
- Adults who are 18+

Draft specification:

We would like tenderers to submit proposals for the development and delivery of a self-confidence and independence development course and an employability skills development course to meet the needs of our participant cohorts.

Self Confidence & Employability Skills Courses Tender Specification



Our plan is to run each of the courses at least quarterly, potentially more often should the need from participants arise.

Our experience to date is that our participants learn best when course content is split into several sessions and each individual session lasts no more than two hours. We have found that attending more than two sessions per week is also challenging for many of our participants.

We would like tenderers to set out how they would meet the needs of the young people and adult cohorts that we support.

We would also like tenderers to propose how the courses could be delivered remotely via video conferencing (Zoom is our preferred platform, but others would be considered) and face-to-face throughout the Swindon & Wiltshire region.

We would like tenderers to provide a sample of typical course structure, content and materials to assist in our evaluation of bids.

Potential participants for the courses will be identified by the Programme Support Workers.

The Programme will provide administrative support to book participants onto the courses, distribute any required pre-reading and course materials, ensure the participants have internet access or transport as required and provide a member of staff on the day to help with the administration of the course. Where courses are delivered face-to-face, the programme will also provide a projector and screen as required.

The successful tenderer will be provided with a Community First email address for the secure transmission of all correspondence relating to the courses and contract.

We would like tenderers to include for a generic report from each course, including:

- The topics covered in each session
- The participants who attended
- Any learning for future courses

We would also like tenderers to provide successful participants with certificates of attendance, which can be delivered by the Programme team.

Where courses are delivered remotely, the Programme will provide the required video conferencing tool and where the courses are delivered face-to-face we will arrange a suitable venue.

We recognise that due to the learning from delivering the courses and also the emerging needs of our participants there may be an ongoing need to develop the content of the courses and we would like tenderers to submit pricing to undertake this work.

Whilst we would expect tenderers to be flexible in their approach to arranging courses to meet the needs of our participants, we recognise that there may arise the need to cancel courses at short notice due to unforeseen circumstances.

We would ask tenderers to include proposals for cancellation charges a month, a fortnight and a week before the planned course. If courses are cancelled with less than a week's notice, we would expect to recompense the provider in full for the course. We would not expect tenderers to charge the Programme for any travel costs or time not actually incurred as a result of cancellation.

Payment would be by invoice following the completion of each course.

Bids for the tender should include:

- A cost and overview of the proposed course content and structure for self-confidence and independence for both young people and adults, both remotely and face-to-face.
- A cost and overview of the proposed course content and structure for employability skills for both young people and adults, both remotely and face-to-face.
- A cost per hour and per mile for travelling to provide face-to-face courses.
- A cost per hour for amending and developing course content.
- Details of the tenderer's proposed cancellation fees, with suggested penalties for cancellation a month, a fortnight and a week before the planned course.
- Details of any other information the tenderer would like the programme team to consider.

Queries Regarding This Tender

Should tenderers have any queries regarding this tender, please contact the programme lead team on 01380 732821 or email hello@buildingbridgessw.org.uk.

Successful Tender Selection

The successful tender will be selected on the basis of value for money, course content, the flexibility to deliver both online and face-to-face and the tenderer's ability to work closely with the challenging demographic characteristics of our participant cohorts.

Tender Submissions

Tenderers should please complete the Tender Submission Form which accompanies this specification and return it to Dave Potts (Head of Employability Programmes) by email: dpotts@communityfirst.org.uk no later than 18th August 2023.