

# Lots More to Offer

## Tender Brief

### Lots More to Offer – An Introduction

The Lot's More to Offer project (LMTO) is a 3-year project and is part of the Building Better Opportunities (BBO) programme funded by The National Lottery and European Social Fund. The LMTO project started on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017 and will end, December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2019.

Social Enterprise Kent (SEK) are a not-for-profit, Community Interest Company, with a track record in delivering bespoke, sector specific training, and working within the Employability sector. We are proud to be the grant holder and lead delivery organisation for the LMTO project. The project is operating across Kent and East Sussex, with SEK delivering in East Kent, and Partners delivering the project in Swale and Medway (Swale Community and Voluntary Association), and in East Sussex (Sussex Community Development Association).

The LMTO project aims to bridge the confidence, skills and employment gaps for those over the age of 45. Our participants may have become distanced from the labour market for a number of reasons (e.g. bereavement, ill health, divorce, redundancy etc), and may also be left socially isolated. We understand the barriers often faced by those who may have become distanced from the labour market, but we also know the value those individuals can bring to the workplace once barriers are removed.

Participants come to the project through various referral routes (e.g. the Job Centre, charities such as Citizens Advice Bureau and Porchlight, and/or other health or community-based services). We do also have self-referrals and those who are referred through word of mouth and friends and family. Our funding means that we have eligibility requirements that participants must meet in order to join the project, specifically, they must be aged 45 or over, and either Unemployed (i.e. registered as a Job Seeker and in receipt of a job-seeker benefit), or Economically Inactive (i.e. not registered as Job Seeker and/or unable to evidence other forms of Employment related benefits, or it may be that they are a student, or in receipt of a pension). Participants must also be able to evidence their right to work in the UK before they are able to register onto the LMTO project.

Once registered on the LMTO project, each Participant will work with a dedicated Employment Support Adviser, who is able to offer them bespoke support in the form of personalised one-to-one sessions; help with motivation and self-confidence; support with identifying the right voluntary and employment opportunities; training in Employability skills, CV writing, money management, computer skills; self-employment guidance for those wishing to start-up by themselves; and also, an opportunity to meet new people within the community.

As well as providing a personalised, one-to-one support package for those individuals over the age of 45 who are looking for fulfilling work, the LMTO project will engage with local employers to promote the benefits that older workers can bring to businesses; identifying the skills, attributes and cost savings that can be realised by those businesses who employ older workers. SEK will be producing an Employer Toolkit during year two of the LMTO project (2018) to help disseminate these messages to Employers.

In addition to the production of an Employer Toolkit, SEK are planning to develop an online tool which will introduce a slightly different approach to job searching, and make the process more fun, and less intimidating for those who have been out of the work market for a long period of time, and



which can form the basis of an introduction between an employer and a prospective job seeker. We initially had hoped for this to be a native App, but we are open to suggestions regarding what solution will work best for this product.

### **The Tool – Our Aim:**

Many of the Participants we meet through the LMTO project have been out of work for months, if not years, and they may have struggled to find work because their skills are perhaps out-dated, they have been ‘in the system’ a long time, they have lost confidence, and/or they may have health conditions that have further serve as a barrier to employment. The process and formalities involved in job searching, creating a CV that ‘sells’ oneself, and subsequently interviewing for a job can be overwhelming to some of our Participants.

SEK would like to develop a tool which meets the LMTO project aim of helping people over the age of 45 to gain fulfilling, sustainable work. Our vision is to develop a tool that facilitates the introduction between a job seeker and a prospective employer based initially on practical skills and personal attributes that are matched. An Employer can advertise a position that requires certain skills or attributes, and the tool can match the Employer to a job searcher in the local area who has those skills/attributes.

Research conducted prior to the development of our partner, Ageless Thanet’s App suggested that many older people still use older smartphones that have been passed on to them by family members. With this in mind, we would expect the tool to be compatible with latest operating system standards, but to ideally also be compatible with iPhone 4 and Android 4 upward. We would expect the chosen supplier to advise in this regard.

The tool should be very light touch, engaging, quick and fun to use. It should be designed to meet the needs of our end-users and enable them to give short and succinct answers.

### Job Seekers:

We envisage the job seeker will create a profile by responding to a series of questions that relate to their various personal attributes.

These requirements and attributes could include – for example:

- Interested in: (i.e. full-time paid; part-time paid; apprenticeships; volunteer positions...)
- Personality traits (i.e. energetic, sociable, honest, meticulous, etc...)
- Working preferences (i.e. physical, non-physical, evening, daytime, ability to travel, etc)
- Skills (i.e. Technical, Creative, Numeric, Reading/Writing, Communication etc...)
- Experience (volunteering experience; ‘x’ years employment experience; recent training...)

We intend to further validate and explore other potential options during the delivery of Focus Groups and at User testing stages.

## Employers:

Employers will be required to create a Company profile which can include brief information about their type of business, location(s) of operation, staff size, company ethos, etc.

Once the Employer Profile is set-up, they can create vacancies (these could be paid full-time or part-time posts, or – if they have them – apprenticeships or volunteering positions), highlighting the relevant skills and attributes relevant to each post. We are conscious a mobile interface may not be most practical for this purpose, and so we need to explore this – both through discussion with Employers, and through discussion with the Supplier we appoint to deliver the product.

Once a vacancy is created and published, the vacancy will be ‘matched’ with job seekers that meet the criteria. Our online tool will alert any matched job seekers about the role. If the job seeker chooses to view the role(s), they will be presented with the vacancy details on their mobile screen and, we envisage, will have the ability to swipe left (to discard) or swipe right (to notify the employer that the seeker is interested, and subsequently forward their contact details).

Once a job has been successfully filled, the employer needs to return to the tool to remove the vacancy, and ideally, confirm if the post was filled via our LMTO product.

We are realistic that larger companies may be unlikely to adopt this method of selecting prospective candidates. But we do feel there could be a market for engaging with smaller, local businesses, and capturing those local job roles that might not readily be available elsewhere online.

## User Engagement

We plan to hold two focus groups representing Employers and Jobseekers, in order to gather information that will further inform the development.

## **Businesses:**

Our aim is to gain a smaller and/or local business perspective; those businesses that might not readily advertise online, who may struggle to fill vacancies locally, and/or who may be more open to a softer approach to recruitment, which begins with an initial introduction online. SEK already have strong links with local Employers; both through the training provision arm of SEK as an organisation; through contacts nurtured through our partner project, Ageless Thanet; and through our own Employer Engagement and referral route working in the Building Better Opportunities programme.

We would want to find out from the Employer Focus Group:

- What are the recruitment challenges they face?
- What will make our tool attractive to small businesses/employers?
- What information would employers want to know up front?
- How flexible would they be to try a new approach (e.g. no CV up front, for example?)
- What would make them use our product instead of or as well as using their current method – be that advertising through Jobs in Kent, or simply putting an advert in a window.
- Mobile Vs Desktop preferences.

## End Users:

The Focus group with project Participants will take place *after* the Employer Focus Group, taking a steer from what we learnt from Employers, to find out how user requirements might be the same/different.

We are able to recruit from existing participants on the Lots More to Offer project for the purpose of the Focus Group.

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## Hi-Level Technical Specifications:

- Must work for Android and iOS
- Device responsive - Ideally compatible with Android/iPhone 4 upward (Supplier to advise)
- Preferably using MySQL database
- Interface for:
  - Employers to input their details, and job offerings
  - Employers to review 'matches' with prospects
- Interface for:
  - End users to input their details and preferences
  - End users to review 'matches' with prospective Employer(s) in their area
- To include:
  - notifications and settings,
  - upload function (for supplementary information, if required)
  - ability to set profiles and search by post code locality
  - basic feedback function (once positions have been filled)
  - ability to work offline and store in cached data until mobile data connection is made
  - profanity checker/prevention to be included; possible plugin solution
- If a web solution is advised over a native App solution, our preferred Content Management System would be WordPress.

## Metrics:

We will require the ability to access/review Google Analytics:

- Number of:
  - job seekers using the tool
  - employers using the tool
  - jobs advertised via the tool
  - matches made via the tool

### Hi-Level Design Specifications:

- Lots More to Offer does not have a branding-specific budget,
- The tool *must*, however adhere to SEK, ESF and Big Lottery's guidelines in terms of logo usage.
- SEK will provide organisational and funder logos.
- SEK will provide guidance on design/look/feel in consultation with the successful provider.
- Backgrounds, font sizes, colours and styles to be easily read and device-responsive.

### Accessibility:

The tool should meet basic web accessibility standards ensuring:

- Control over headings to ensure correct structure of content
- Use of appropriate font styles, sizes, colours
- Visual accessibility through use of colour palette
- Alt text for any imagery
- Forms are labelled appropriately, and accessible alternatives to CAPTCHA are used in order to keep forms free of spam submissions
- that design features and/or on-screen interactions don't hinder the user journey.

### Hosting and SLA:

- SEK plan to host the product in-house.
- Details of SLA to be provided by the Supplier.

## Proposed Delivery Timescales:

### By end of May:

- SEK propose to conduct Focus Groups with:
  - Local Employers (with whom, we already have good connections)
  - End-users (Lots More to Offer Project Participants who are over the age of 45 and already engaging with the employability Project)

### June/July:

- Supplier appointed mid-June.
- Employer Engagement: SEK gather data from local East Kent Employers who wish to trial the prototype; begin populating database that will sit behind the online tool.
- Supplier and SEK: design and development discussions; finalising wireframes and spec.

### August:

- Supplier: Development of prototype.

### Mid-September:

- Testing of prototype
- Post-testing updates/changes

End October 2018 – soft launch locally (East Kent)

## Budget:

- Available budget will depend on the level of detail outlined in the tender responses received. We are looking for developers to indicate what their costs will be. However, we are anticipating that tenders will be in the region of £15 - £20k has been made available for this work.
- SEK are a not-for-profit, Community Interest Company, receiving funding to run the LMTO project. As such, we ask that quotations represent best value for money within the given requirements.

## Tender Submissions:

We are looking for written submissions outlining how your organisation would approach this work. When compiling your response, please do consider the questions/issues outlined below. Scoring criteria will be established and each tender we receive will be assessed against these criteria.

1. Please tell us about previous experience you have in developing similar online tools that require more than one user interface (web or mobile) and:
  - a. provide up to three examples of similar work you have undertaken,
  - b. at least one of these examples should demonstrate your ability to work to basic accessibility standards for desktop and mobile.
2. While we had originally envisaged our product being a native App that end users can engage with via their smartphones,
  - a. we do not wish to deter Employers from using the product by restricting data input to mobile-only, therefore
  - b. we would welcome your recommendations with regards how to achieve best functionality, and usability for both Job Searchers, and for the Employers.
3. Please comment on our requirements in relation to a need for the tool to work on older devices, and how you would support this.
4. Please comment on how your development will ensure Employer and end-user data will be securely stored in line with GDPR.
5. How will the product be tested, and quality checked to ensure it is robust, before proceeding to final launch?
6. Funding for delivery of the LMTO project ends December 2019, and we shall therefore need to factor in ongoing maintenance costs for the tool. Please detail for our consideration/interest your offering in terms of:
  - a. annual hosting costs
  - b. standard SLA
  - c. extended SLAs (for future development) if applicable
7. Please outline your team and what roles they will play within this project.
8. Please respond to the Delivery Timescales we have proposed:
  - a. outlining a clear timeframe of how you intend to deliver in order to meet our requirements. This should include suggestions of any additional input you feel you can bring that might benefit the process: for example, if you have expertise in User Engagement, User-testing, etc.
  - b. provide a breakdown of costs for each phase of the work

## Tender Submission Deadlines:

- This work will be out to tender from Friday 27th April 4th, 2018, to Monday 21st May 2018.
- The deadline for written response to tender is **10:00am on Monday 21st May 2018.**
- Your response to tender should be submitted to **Helen Webster (Operations Supervisor)** via email: [h.webster@sekgroup.org.uk](mailto:h.webster@sekgroup.org.uk), by the May 21st deadline.
- SEK expect to hold interviews the week commencing 4th June.
- If you have any questions about the specification, please contact **Helen Webster** on 01227 469972.