



Department  
for Education

# Strengthening the Supported Internship Programme

## Market Engagement Session

March 2022

# Agenda

10am – Welcome and introduction

10:05-10:30 – Background & overview of proposed investment activities

10:30-12:00 – Discussion groups (20mins per strand; plus comfort break)

12:00-12:45 – Commercial processes

12:45-13:00 – Questions

## Housekeeping:

- Please stay on mute and off video if you're not speaking
- In the group discussions and Q&A sections, please use the 'hand up' function to ask a question, and limit use of the "chat bar" which is inaccessible for some

# **Background**

**Katharine Davies – Policy Lead**

# Background

- **Supported Internships (SI)** are a work-based study programme for **16-25 year olds with an Education, Health and Care plan** – there are currently around 2,250 young people enrolled in SI placements across England, in a wide variety of sectors
- We know they work – the trial of SIs in 2012/13 resulted in a paid employment rate of 36%, with providers reporting much higher success rates in recent years
- We recently announced up to **£18 million investment (c. £8m for contracted services and £9.5m in grant funding to LAs)** over the next three years to build capacity of the SI programme across the country and help more young people with EHC plans to secure and sustain paid employment, in line with Levelling Up agenda
- Focus on both **quantity** (aiming to double the number of internships, to around **4,500 placements** by the end of the Spending Review period) and **quality**.

# Background

- Initial thinking for areas of investment triggered by research into models of SI delivery, conducted in 2019 by CooperGibson Research (CGR) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/approaches-to-supported-internship-delivery>)
- CGR identified several barriers and critical success factors to building the programme, which we think can be addressed within four strands of activity:
  - Role of Local Authorities (LAs)
  - Job coach training
  - Employer Engagement
  - Quality Assurance
- SIs will still be funded as a study programme – this investment funding aims to build capacity in the sector to effectively deliver more SIs
- Not planning to widen the scope of eligibility for SIs as part of this programme



# **Overview of proposed investment activities**

# Role of Local Authorities

## Context

- We intend to provide ring-fenced grant funding to all Local Authorities to support them to establish and/or develop SEND employment forums
- SEND employment forums should bring together key stakeholders including education settings, employers, supported employment agencies, young people, parents and carers, to drive focus on pathways to employment for young people with SEND – including commissioning and developing new SI opportunities, and how to prepare young people for these.

## Questions

- If you have a successful forum model, how did you achieve this? If things haven't worked well, what would have helped?
- What do you see as the role and value of SEND Employment forums?
- What support could we offer to LAs to enable them to develop effective SEND employment forums that support our aims to increasing and improving SI provision across the country?
- How do we reach those Local Authorities, and other stakeholders, that are reluctant to engage?

# Job coach training

## Context

- CGR showed that effective job coaching was one of the critical success factors for a placement, and we know we need to train more job coaches to support an increase in SI placements
- Training will need to be in line with the National Occupational Standards for job coaching, and also consider training in Systematic Instruction.
- Propose that we provide training to meet a ratio of one job coach to three Supported Interns to build sufficient capacity in the programme to meet our aims

## Questions

- Does this ratio sound about right?
- What are the barriers in your area to engaging and training potential job coaches?
- How can we get more people to train to become job coaches?
- How do we ensure we have the right number of job coaches across the different regions?



# Employer engagement

## Context

- We know that engaging employers and supporting them to offer high quality placements is crucial to the success of SIs. But there are challenges:
  - a lack of awareness among employers regarding SIs – particularly given demand for work placements across a range of study programmes
  - employers are unclear about the support available to them to offer effective placements – particular challenges in some specific sectors and amongst smaller employers
  - unclear on the benefits to them of welcoming interns

To tackle these challenges, we are considering activities across these areas;

- **National employer champions** – targeting specific employers to support them to embed SIs into their recruitment processes and engage them as champions for the SI programme.
- **Support and training for LAs/ education providers** on how to engage employers, drawing on expertise from those with sector experience
- **Support for employers** - to lead (regional?) employer events, raise awareness of SIs and the support available to employers (drawing for eg on Disability Confident networks)
- **A small budget, held at local or regional level**, to help small and medium enterprises meet the costs of hosting interns, where this is a specific barrier
- **Consideration of “follow-on support” for SI graduates** to ensure that employers feel supported to offer sustained employment (NB - links to proposed DWP “Access to Work Plus” proof of concept, due to roll-out in the 22/23 financial year.)

## Questions:

- Are we investing in the right areas to achieve our aims? Is there anything else we should be including?
- How do we broaden the range of sectors engaged with SIs? How do we engage more SMEs?
- What difficulties have you encountered in engaging employers? How did you overcome these?
- How do we support employers and build their confidence to offer high quality placements?

# Quality assurance

## Context

- Updated SI guidance published February 2022
- A Supported Internship Quality Assurance (QA) Framework has been developed by the Education & Training Foundation and will be published by the end of March 2022 – this is a self-assessment tool
- We want the QA framework to drive up the quality of SI provision and encourage providers to identify where they can make improvements and take action

## Questions

- How do we make sure that the QA Framework is used to drive improvements? How do we get providers and settings to engage?
- How do we use the QA Framework to build the reputation of Supported Internships with employers?
- Should/could we use the QA Framework to raise awareness of the SI programme amongst young people and their parents/carers?

# **Discussion groups**

## Discussion groups

- We will randomly allocate you into a breakout room
- Each room will be led by a DfE colleague
- Each room will be asked the same questions, and will cover all four strands of proposed activity
- We will spend approx. 20 minutes on each strand
- This session will last from 10:30-12:00, including a comfort break
- If you experience any technical issues, please contact [Tom.Baker@education.gov.uk](mailto:Tom.Baker@education.gov.uk)

# **Commercial**

**Tom Baker – Commercial Lead**



# Purpose of the Session

1. To brief potential providers on the services required and the proposed procurement approach
2. To seek confirmation that there is a market willing and able to deliver
3. To clarify the practicalities of participating in the planned procurement approach
4. To invite your comments and feedback to help inform that final procurement approach



# Commercial Requirements

A budget of up to a maximum of circa £8million available to deliver:

- 1 Support to Local Authorities to establish and develop SEND employment forums, including administration of grants
- 2 Delivery of accredited job coach training programmes
- 3 Engaging and supporting employers to offer high quality work placements
- 4 Establishing a sustainable audit process, to measure the quality of supported internship provision against a Quality Assurance framework



# Planned Approach

1. Contract(s) to be awarded to deliver requirements at a national level
  - To achieve consistency of service, reduced duplication and a manageable number of contracting arrangements
2. Award a single contract to a lead provider for the provision of all four service lines as a single lot
  - We will consider dividing the requirement into lots if this makes sense to improve coverage, or increases market appetite
3. An open procurement process to be undertaken advertised through Contracts Finder and Find a Tender Service
4. Contract(s) will be awarded for up to the next three financial years





# Commercial Timeline

## Estimated Timeline

01

Publication of the  
Invitation to Tender:  
1st April 2022



02

Application window open until:  
6<sup>th</sup> May 2022 (35 days)



03

Contract awarded:  
15<sup>th</sup> July 2022



04

Contract mobilisation  
commences:  
1<sup>st</sup> August 2022



# Participation Criteria

The Lead Provider must:

- Be capable of meeting the requirements of the Standard Selection

Questionnaire:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/procurement-policy-note-816-standard-selection-questionnaire-sq-template>

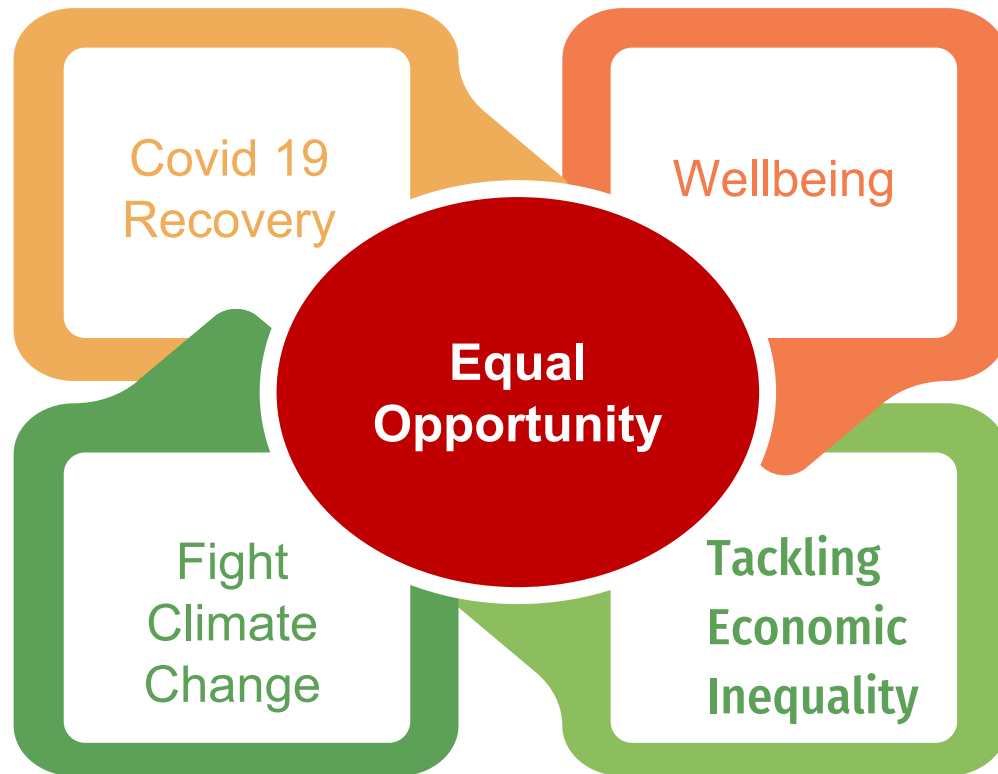
- Demonstrate their capability to meet the full service specification through their responses to a series of quality questions on each service element.
- Deliver within the stated affordability thresholds.
- Consortium bids are encouraged where your organisation is unable to meet the full requirement alone



# Tips for completing your Bid Response

- If you are unable to meet the requirement in full, start reaching out to relevant sub-contractors or partners early so that you are prepared for the bidding period.
- Make sure that you are able to meet ALL qualification and selection criteria prior to submitting a bid.
- Read all questions in full and ensure that all required points are addressed.
- Do not exceed word limits, words and attachments over and above the word limit will not be evaluated.
- Please do not attempt to submit your bid at the last moment. Late bids may be rejected.

# Social Value



## Social Value...

Is considered as the wider benefit gained by a local community from the delivery of public contracts. This can be the community as a whole, disadvantaged individuals, minorities, businesses and VCSEs, as well as the environment through the better spending of public money.

**Social Value applies to all procurements covered by The Public Regulations 2015**

**A minimum weighting of 10% of the total score will be applied for Social Value in these procurements**

## Useful Links:

- [PPN 06 20 Taking Account of Social Value in the Award of Central Government Contracts \(3\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Social-Value-Model-Edn-1.1-3-Dec-20.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/940827/Guide-to-using-the-Social-Value-Model-Edn-1.1-3-Dec-20.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/940827/Guide-to-using-the-Social-Value-Model-Edn-1.1-3-Dec-20.pdf)
- [Social-Value-Model-Quick-Reference-Table-Edn-1.1-3-Dec-20.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)



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# Jaggaer

<https://education.app.jaggaer.com/web/login.html>



Open Procurement under  
Public Procurement  
Regulations 2015.

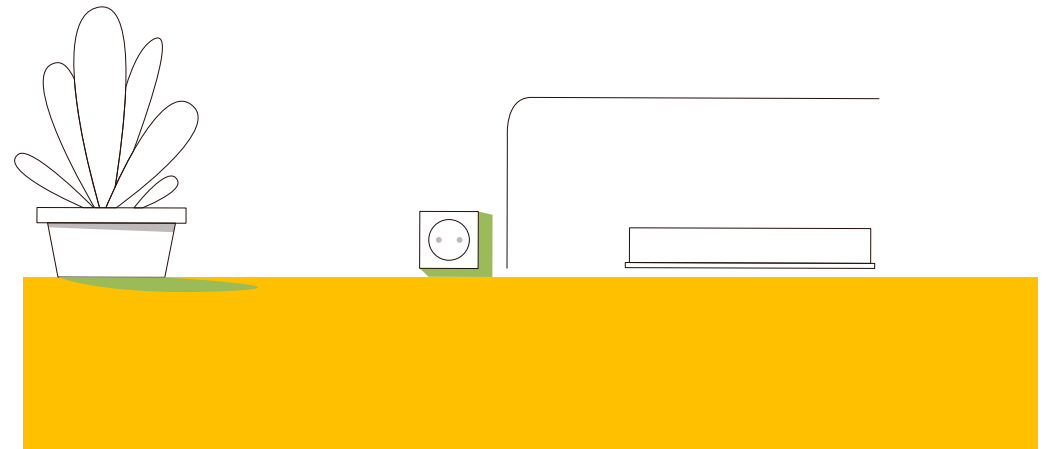
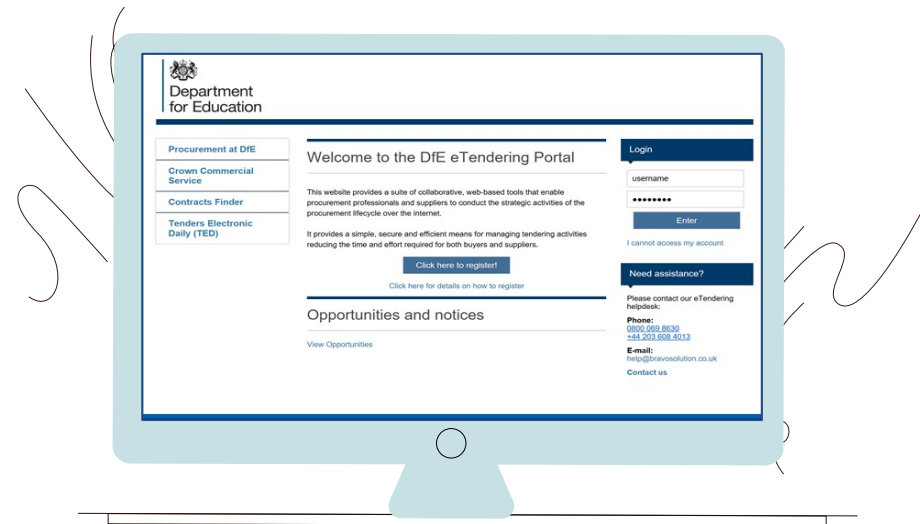


All potential bidders  
registering on Jaggaer  
using the above link.



All clarification questions  
must be raised through  
Jaggaer

# Procurement Tendering portal



**Any further questions?**



# Thank you!

We will circulate the slides.

If you have any further questions or  
feedback, please direct them to:

[SendBaea.COMMERCIAL@education.gov.uk](mailto:SendBaea.COMMERCIAL@education.gov.uk)