



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Help to Grow: Management

Voluntary Mentoring – Grant Competition
Specification

February 2022



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1.0 Summary of Grant Funding

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) intends to grant fund an organisation(s) to deliver voluntary business mentoring for the Help to Grow: Management programme. The final selection will be made by an internal BEIS panel, using the evaluation criteria set out in Section 5.2 of this specification.

The purpose of the grant funding is to develop a national voluntary mentoring scheme that will enable Help to Grow: Management participants to access the experienced business mentors they require to support their training programme and equip them with the skills to improve their productivity and grow their business.

The grant funding will be for an organisation to supply and manage voluntary business mentors as part of Help to Grow: Management for the remaining three years of the programme. The first year of the agreement will pilot the feasibility of the new voluntary model and, dependent on the outcomes, will continue for the remaining two years. This will include a 3-month lead in time for the grant recipient to prepare operations. There will be regular review points throughout the first year of the agreement to test and evaluate the scheme, after which BEIS reserves the right to amend or bring the agreement to an end by giving three months written notice to the grant recipient.

Period of Funding Agreement

The Applicant(s) will be expected to commence building up their operations in May 2022 to begin delivering voluntary mentors by August 2022 at the latest, with exact dates to be agreed with BEIS.

The funding period will be from May 2022 (date TBC), with project delivery completed and funding claimed by March 2025 (date TBC subject to BEIS approval). Grant funding from BEIS for the grant period will be paid in arrears on a quarterly basis.

Grants cannot be paid out for any work undertaken by any applicant or the notified preferred bidder prior to May 2022.

The applicant will need to provide regular reporting on delivery and outcomes for the duration of the funding period, these are outlined in section 4.4. The grant is subject to ongoing compliance with grant terms and conditions and BEIS reserves the right to amend or terminate the funding agreement by giving three months written notice to the grant recipient if an applicant fails to meet key outcomes and/or provides unsatisfactory report[s], or should BEIS decide it no longer wishes to continue the programme for policy or operational reasons.

2.0 Introduction

The UK has a longstanding challenge with SME productivity. Although the UK is home to some of the world's most innovative firms, it has a larger proportion of less productive firms than in peer countries such as France and Germany. There is strong evidence that leadership and management skills and digital adoption are key drivers of firm-level productivity. Upskilling SME leaders through the Help to Grow: Management programme aims to address this productivity gap and boost the growth potential of the SMEs that participate.

Mentoring is a fundamental element of the Help to Grow Management programme and government's support for businesses. Through the delivery of a voluntary mentoring programme, you will be supporting SMEs to enhance their business performance and will be supporting the levelling up of productivity across the UK. This programme is closely aligned with the BEIS' priorities of supporting business through the pandemic and recovery, and enabling the nation to build back better.

2.1 The Programme

Help to Grow: Management has been launched to support SME leaders to grow their businesses

Help to Grow: Management is an executive development programme for SME leaders, led by the UK's leading business schools. The overall programme is facilitated by small business experts from the university business schools.

It is a 12-week course which combines a practical curriculum with 1:1 mentoring from a business expert, peer-learning sessions and an alumni network. The short, focused sessions allow delegates to complete the course alongside running their business.

The curriculum has been designed with support from industry, with key modules covering financial management, innovation, and digital adoption that use real-world case studies from UK businesses.

It is 90% government-funded and places are available for up to 30,000 businesses.

Aims of the programme:

- Support SMEs to enhance their business performance and growth potential, by developing a growth action plan that they can put into practice following the course.
- Promote opportunity and boost employment, supporting economic recovery from Covid-19.
- Unlock potential in SMEs and support levelling up of productivity across the UK.

Further details on the programme can be found here: <https://smallbusinesscharter.org/help-to-grow-management/>

2.2 Delivery Arrangements

The programme is designed and delivered by the UK's leading business schools, coordinated by the Chartered Association of Business Schools (CABS) our key delivery partner. The programme provides 50 hours of structured learning, mentoring and peer networking, through a blend of online and face to face delivery. BEIS has funded CABS to develop a national business leadership and management curriculum for the programme and to coordinate delivery of the programme through the UK business schools who are members of CABS.

For Year 1, business schools carried out the sourcing and matching of paid mentors. CABS also worked with business schools to build and manage a flexible pool of paid mentors ensuring that they were suitable, matched specification requirements and captured feedback from their journey.

From 2022 the programme will be moving to voluntary model and the pool of paid mentors will be wound down. The grant recipient will be required to work closely with CABS and the business schools, to ensure that all participants have a quality business mentor to support them with their learning and development. You will need to recruit, train, match and manage a pool of voluntary mentors and work with CABS and business schools to ensure that they are well supported with any questions or queries which they may have and that all mentors meet the checking and vetting standards required. CABS will provide the grant recipient with a 3-month forecast of mentee numbers ahead of required match date, with a monthly update provided to give a rolling 3-monthly view of mentee demand.

2.3 Mentoring Background

Business mentors are critical to the success of the programme. Mentoring focuses on supporting SME leaders to put what they have learnt on the programme into practice, so that they can develop an actionable plan for growing and improving their business.

Mentor support typically begins at module 3 of the 12-week course and can be completed up to 4 weeks after the end of the course. The key requirements are that mentors:

- Have a minimum of five years relevant and demonstrable management experience (relevant experience involves working in a SME at a senior level or equivalent experience working closely with SME's).
- Strong leadership, management, and communications skills.
- Can support at least one student and provide ten hours of 1:1 mentoring and up to four hours of preparation/support required within the timeframe.

- Possess relevant mentoring skills and/or experience to support the mentees' growth action plan.
- Are willing and able to support mentees on a voluntary basis, on a remote basis and/or be willing to travel to visit mentees.

Year 1

The first cohorts of the programme launched in June 2021 and in Year 1 business schools carried out the sourcing and matching of mentors to SME leaders that are enrolled in the programme. Where a business school has identified a suitable mentor match, they communicated with the mentor to discuss the opportunity and next steps and provided payment per hour spent with the mentee. Mentors spend ten hours with each participant.

From Year 2 (voluntary model)

From year 2 mentors will be recruited on a voluntary basis. Over time you will replace the role of business schools to recruit, match and manage mentors. We expect that as you scale up, the voluntary mentoring scheme you are developing will run in parallel to some of the current business school activities until such time as it is at sufficient scale to completely deliver all the mentoring requirements of the programme. This will require you to work with CABS and business schools to ensure that you are meeting the numbers required for each cohort.

3.0 Voluntary Mentoring

3.1 Requirements of Voluntary Model

Organisational requirements

This competition is open to all UK based organisations who have a proven track record in delivering business focused mentoring at scale. The competition offers applicants considerable flexibility in their approach and methodology for meeting the key requirements outlined above and below and delivering the scale of voluntary mentors required. Applicants are encouraged to submit proposals that involve multiple organisations if necessary to meet the scale of mentors and the geographical spread required.

What do we require?

Our expectation is that you will provide high-quality experienced voluntary business mentors across the UK, in line with the requirements outlined in section 2.3, to provide 10 hours of bespoke one to one mentoring to SME leaders to put what they have learnt on the programme into practice, so that they can successfully develop a relevant, viable and actionable plan for growing and improving their business.

- You will need to recruit enough mentors to match the 3-month forecasts of mentee numbers that CABS will provide, and demonstrate considerable ability to scale up and down as required. Subject to satisfactory performance and results, we are likely to require up to 9,000 mentoring relationships in 2022-23 and up to 26,000 over the lifetime of the programme.
- Matching of mentors to mentees at scale in a way that takes accordance of interests and experience of participants. You will need to ensure you have a diverse pool of mentors in terms of sectors, experience, and geographical spread.
- Working with CABS and the business schools to ensure that you provide a sufficient number of mentors for each cohort as required. Liaising with CABS and business schools to ensure that we have adequate voluntary mentors to meet forecasted demand and supply.
- During the grant term, you will need to demonstrate an effective process for: recruiting, vetting, quality assurance, training and induction. As part of your onboarding process, you will need to ensure mentors are familiar with the HtG:M curriculum so they can adequately support participants.
- You will need to ensure that each mentor relationship has outcomes agreed between mentor and mentee and that a copy of this is kept on file and shared with business schools

- You will need to work with mentees and business schools to ensure that a smooth process is in place for monitoring mentoring relationships, whilst being able to identify issues quickly and efficiently – re-matching mentees as necessary
- You will work with BEIS, CABS and the programme evaluation partners to gather feedback from mentors and mentees, ensuring that this is documented and used to improve further services.

Monitoring and reporting

The grant recipient shall work closely with BEIS to ensure the delivery and success of the new voluntary mentoring model throughout the funding period to ensure the requirements on the scheme are being met.

The grant recipient shall provide BEIS and anyone it requires with all reasonable assistance and co-operation in relation to any data, information and documents that BEIS may require in order to monitor and evaluate the delivery and outputs of the new voluntary mentoring scheme.

This includes the grant recipient providing BEIS with:

- Regular reporting of quality-assured data on mentor recruitment and matching (including on progress made towards achieving the agreed outcomes, as set out in paragraph 4.4)
- Assurance of appropriate data protection in collecting, storing and transferring data
- Assurance of data collection and reporting capability in employees and systems.

4.0 Competition Scope and Structure

4.1 Submitting Applications

Applicants are invited to bid in provided their proposal is in scope of the competition's objectives and meets the eligibility criteria detailed in paragraph 5.1 and the key requirements of the programme outlined in paragraph 3.1. Applicants have considerable flexibility in their delivery approach but are encouraged to be detailed in their application about their processes for recruiting, vetting, quality assurance, training and induction of mentors, and the matching of mentors to mentees.

To submit an application, you will need to complete the application form and financial form and return them to HTGMentoring@beis.gov.uk

4.2 Competition Timetable

The Competition will be open from the 21st February 2022. The full application for the competition must be submitted online by the deadline of 5:00pm on the 18th of March 2022. The competition will be closed for submissions after this time and late submissions will not be accepted.

- Competition Opens - 21st February 2022
- Applicant briefing event - 3rd March 2022
- Competition closes - 18th March 2022
- Applicants notified - 20th April 2022

4.3 Competition Budget

We have allocated up to £8 million to fund voluntary mentoring for Help to Grow: Management for the first year, however exact funding levels released will be dependent on the number of mentoring relationships required. BEIS will monitor and evaluate the feasibility of the voluntary model at the end of this first year pilot. Funding is available for subsequent years of the programme and the exact levels will be dependent on the outcome of the pilot and any efficiencies that are realised. Proposals are invited for any value up to £8 million for year 1 and applicants are also invited to provide draft plans and indicative budgets for subsequent years. Applications will be expected to demonstrate how they will achieve value for money whilst delivering a quality product.

4.4 Scope of Grant Funding Requirement

Eligible expenditure

The grant offered to the grant recipient can support certain expenditure where that expenditure is reasonably incurred in undertaking the mobilisation, recruitment, delivery, retention, monitoring and evaluation of a voluntary mentoring programme for Help to Grow: Management. The purpose of the grant is to improve productivity amongst UK SMEs by providing high quality experienced voluntary business mentors as part of the wider package of leadership and management training SMEs will receive through Help to Grow: Management.

Outcomes

BEIS will consider the grant recipient’s delivery of funded activities against outcomes set out below. The grant recipient will report to BEIS on progress against these outcomes at the frequencies stated in the table below. BEIS will work with the grant recipient to further develop or amend these outcomes and reporting metrics as necessary throughout the funding period to ensure performance is managed effectively.

Upon completion of the programme, participants complete a survey issued by the evaluation partner, Ipsos MORI, which will be used as part of BEIS’ evaluation process. It is the responsibility of the grant recipient to work with CABS, business schools, and the evaluation partner, to gather any additional feedback from mentors and mentees as required, ensuring that this is documented and can be used to report back to BEIS on the outcomes below:

Number	Deliverable:	Evidenced by:
1.	Number of mentoring relationships formed. Estimated: 9,000 mentoring relationships in 2022-23. Prove ability to scale up/down to meet demand as required.	Reporting monthly to BEIS on: Number of mentors recruited. Number of mentors matched. Regional spread and other diversity data of mentors recruited. How you will ensure that you are on target to provide business schools with a sufficient number of mentoring relationships. Target outcome: at least 90% of participants from each cohort is matched to a mentor within a month of starting the programme.
2.	Mentee satisfaction and mentoring quality	Reported quarterly to BEIS by Ipsos Mori.

		<p><i>Below outputs are currently recorded in the Participant completion survey:</i></p> <p>At least 80% of SME leaders should report overall satisfaction with the mentoring offer</p> <p>At least 80% of SMEs should report that their mentor helped them develop their Growth Action Plan</p> <p>At least 70% of SME leaders should report that they believe their mentor is a good match for their business</p> <p>At least 80% of SMEs should report satisfaction with the level of mentor engagement, i.e., frequency and duration of mentoring sessions.</p> <p>At least 80% of SMEs should report that their mentor helped them identify new opportunities and identify potential productivity enhancing measures that they could adopt in their businesses</p>
3.	Mentor satisfaction	<p>Reported to BEIS quarterly.</p> <p>At least 80% of volunteer business mentors should report satisfaction with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Onboarding process ii. Initial training provided iii. Ongoing mentor development initiatives iv. Quality of the match v. Mentor engagement, i.e., duration and frequency of mentoring sessions

5.0 Assessment and Award Process

5.1 Eligibility Criteria

Mandatory requirements:

To lead an application your organisation must

- Be UK based.
- Have a demonstratable track record in delivering voluntary mentoring services at scale.
- Demonstrate an understanding of and ability to work with the mentoring and business sector, particularly with SMEs and educational institutions.
- Sufficient technical, financial, human and logistical capacity to deliver against the agreed outcomes.

Applicants should take the form of sole legal entities. The successful applicant will be expected to be the sole signatory of any grant agreement with BEIS. BEIS will however consider proposals under which the applicant would have authority to distribute portions of the capital grant to other entities if they feel that alone they do not have the capacity or capability to address the size and scale of the Department's requirement. Applicants will not be penalised for proposals that involve multiple entities as BEIS want to ensure there is sufficient geographical spread in any new scheme. Applicants are responsible for determining the most appropriate approach to delivering their proposal. However, in the case of proposals involving multiple entities the applicant would be expected to be responsible for managing, monitoring and ensuring performance of any associations, consortia or partnerships and to demonstrate appropriate arrangements for ensuring that collaboration partners abide by BEIS' terms and conditions.

5.2 Assessment Criteria

All applicants will be required to submit a Help to Grow: Mentoring application form which can be found on the landing page. The form is split into two key parts, Section 1 will allow you to provide details of your organisation to allow us to conduct necessary due diligence and overall viability checks; Section 2 will allow you to provide answers to the key assessment sections outlined below. All sections will be subject to strict word counts which must be adhered to.

Approach and methodology

Applications must demonstrate an appropriate methodology and delivery plan, and describe how the programme's outcomes will be monitored and delivered. Sufficient detail must be provided to allow the assessors to understand what work is proposed and the likelihood of success.

Questions:

1.1) How will you provide a voluntary mentoring service to meet the requirements as set out in section 3.1? (1000 words) *This should include details on how you will identify, recruit, assess and onboard mentors and work with partners on the scheme, as well as how you will ensure that a quality service is delivered with mentees matched to appropriate mentors to meet the objectives of the scheme. Please provide details of whether your processes will be supported via a specific team within your organisation, automation and/or algorithmic supported.*

1.2) Please provide details of how you will monitor and evaluate the delivery and success of the scheme/the services you provide. (500 words) *This should include details of how you will meet the outcomes in section 4.4., how you will work with the evaluation partner, as well as how the impacts of the scheme will be communicated to BEIS.*

1.3) Please attach a suitable project plan/Gantt chart that outlines the activities/workstreams planned in detail for the duration of the pilot period, as well as providing a draft plan for the subsequent 24 months of the scheme. (Attachment, 3 sides of A4) *This should include details of mobilisation timeframes showing how you will set up the delivery infrastructure and commence recruitment to go live.*

1.4) Please provide a risk plan, including a summary of at least the three biggest risks you see and how you intend to mitigate them. (500 words)

Capability and experience

Applications must demonstrate that the organisation has sufficient technical, financial, human and logistical capacity. Applicants must provide a description of recent work undertaken to provide confirmation that the applicant has the ability to deliver the project as described above.

Questions:

2.1) How does your organisation meet the mandatory requirements outlined in section 5.1? (500 words)

2.2) Provide a summary of similar voluntary business mentoring programmes which you have provided.(500 words) *Please provide detail of how you recruited for the programme(s) as well as how you've been able to provide mentors at short notice where required.*

2.3) Please provide brief summaries of any key staff that will be involved in delivering this service including their roles and experience. (500 words) *This should include their current position in your organisation.*

Cost Effectiveness

Applications should present a budget which includes all project costs and presents good value for money and efficiency in project delivery for the duration of the pilot period. Applicants are also invited to provide indicative estimates of costs for subsequent years if possible. Applicants should outline costs in the financial template provided.

Questions:

3.1) Please complete an attached financial plan, including a breakdown of the budget for key elements of the programme. (Attachment)

3.2) How will you ensure that lessons are learnt throughout the scheme and cost efficiencies materialise to reduce the overall costs to the taxpayer? (400 words)

Scoring

Each question response will be evaluated and marked on a scale of 0-4 where:

- 0 – Serious concerns: e.g. does not meet requirements, and/or raises serious concerns
- 1 – Minor concerns: e.g. meets some requirements but with gaps and/or some minor concerns
- 2 – Adequate confidence: e.g. meets most/all requirements, but lacks sufficient detail or evidence in some areas
- 3 – Good confidence: e.g. meets all requirements and provides a detailed response but lacks evidence in minor areas
- 4 – Excellent confidence:** e.g. meets all requirements, provides a detailed response and evidence which demonstrates a particularly strong understanding of the requirements

Each section will then be weighted based on the following allocation:

Criteria	Weighting %
Overall viability	Pass/Fail
Approach and methodology	35
Credibility and experience	35
Cost effectiveness	30
Total	100

5.3 Assessment of Applications

All applicants will be subject to a background check to ensure they meet the mandatory requirements detailed in paragraph 5.1. Following a successful background check applications will be reviewed by an internal BEIS panel and scored against each individual pre-defined assessment criteria outlined in paragraph 5.2. BEIS then reserves the right to invite applicants

to interview if BEIS deem necessary. Selected bidders will be notified in advance if interviews are to be undertaken. The successful application will then be notified and issued a Grant Funding Agreement.

5.4 Successful Applicants: Grant Funding Agreement

The successful applicant will be issued a Grant Funding Agreement. The value of grant funding will be agreed through the signing of these documents. These should be signed and returned to BEIS within the timeframe set out in the Grant Offer Letter. The applicant will need to ensure compliance with conditions contained in the Grant Funding Agreement to receive grant funding.

The terms of the Grant Offer Letter and Grant Funding Agreement will be sent to the successful application for their review. A Privacy Notice will also be issued in conjunction with the Grant Funding Agreement so you are aware of the ways in which we will use and store your personal data. If an applicant refuses to agree to the terms of the Grant Offer Letter or Grant Funding Agreement, or unduly delays the signing and returning of these documents, BEIS reserves the right to withdraw the grant offer letter and/or grant funding agreement. The application will be deemed to have been rejected/disqualified from the process. The issue of grant will also, if necessary, be subject to subsidy control assessment.

BEIS will not be responsible for, nor make any commitment in respect of, costs incurred before the signature of any Grant Funding Agreement. Any grant award will be subject to BEIS being satisfied that the arrangement is compatible with the UK's international obligations and domestic law governing the use of subsidies and will, if necessary, be subject to a subsidy control assessment. The Grant Recipient will be required to ensure that the ongoing delivery of the funded activities does not breach international or domestic subsidy control requirements

If you are collaborating with other project partners you will be asked to provide a collaboration agreement. BEIS reserves the right to review the collaboration agreement before issuing the Grant Offer Letter.

This publication is available from: www.gov.uk/government/publications/help-to-grow-management-grant-funding-to-develop-a-voluntary-mentoring-scheme

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