Developing Talent and Addressing Underrepresentation In Creative and Digital Industries

**Stride Talent Development Fund - Second and Final Round**

1. **Introduction**
   1. Stride is a partnership with a vision to catalyse inclusive growth of the Creative and Digital Industries (**"CDI"**) across the boroughs of Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark and Wandsworth. The City of London Corporation has awarded Strategic Investment Pot (**“SIP”**) £8,000,000 to Stride to deliver Workspace, Business Support and Talent Development activities, with programmes running until September 2022 with the possibility of an extension.
   2. The Stride programme includes £1,000,000 revenue funding to support Talent Development activities that tackle the lack of diversity in the CDI labour market. Through this funding, Lambeth Council (in partnership with Lewisham, Southwark and Wandsworth Councils) is seeking to commission a range of projects addressing the underrepresentation of people from a Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic background, women, people with disabilities and people from lower income backgrounds in the Creative and Digital industries.
   3. A successful funding round was held in August 2020, which has resulted in six projects receiving funding. More can be found out about these via the [Stride website](https://stride.london/projects).
2. **Background & Context**

2.1 The creative and digital economies are vital to London, with employment in the creative sector growing by a third between 2011 and 2017 and 50% faster than the wider economy.[[1]](#footnote-1) These sectors provide higher than average earnings and a median hourly pay of £20.38 within the creative economy, a third higher than outside the creative economy. Creative workers are also more productive than the average London worker and account for 1 in 6 jobs in the capital. However, low pay in entry level positions persist and the gender pay gap is twice the London average.[[2]](#footnote-2)

* 1. Our boroughs are highly diverse, with a high proportion of residents from a Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic background, however, the UK’s creative and technology workforce does not reflect this diversity. Research by the Creative Industries Federation shows that people from a Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic background, women, people with disabilities and people from lower-income backgrounds are all under-represented in the creative industries. They are also likely to be in less senior roles.
  2. Barriers to entering and building a career within the CDIs include socio-economic status, a lack of understanding of education and career pathways, employer practices, informal recruitment practices, high levels of freelance/self-employment and the pervasive nature of unpaid internships as a route into the sector and building necessary experience. Underrepresented groups in particular face a lack of knowledge about the sectors and types of job roles. As in other parts of the economy, issues of unconscious bias within the CDI sectors also impact on the opportunities for underrepresented groups.

2.4 Stride seeks to increase the number of women and people from a Black, Asian and Multi-Ethnic background, participants in the Cultural, Digital and Tech sectors, by giving participants the skills that employers in these industries require. This will contribute to reducing inequality through training opportunities provided as result of courses commissioned on completion of the procurement exercise.

The current system is not delivering the diversity in these sectors that the partner boroughs are wanting to see. Therefore, we are seeking projects that have an aspect of innovation and system change to them, that will trial new approaches and seek to imbed these longer term.

2.5 It is recognised that whilst many businesses have been hit hard and are not currently hiring, opportunities are still available and the CDI sector is well placed to lead economic recovery. Young people are being hit hardest both through job losses and as they leave education and enter the labour market during the sharpest recession for decades. We are seeking innovative responses to these challenges that benefit those most in need who would otherwise be most likely to be passed over for opportunities, and support CDI employers to take advantage of their diverse local talent pool.

2.6 To tackle this issue, the Stride programme is inviting submissions for projects from a total funding pool of £350,000. With a maximum grant of £100,000 per project.

2.7 This will be the final funding round for the Stride Talent Development programme.

1. **Requirements**
   1. The Stride borough partnership is seeking proposals from a range of organisations, focussed on delivery against one or more of the Talent Development outcomes found at Appendix A (Stride Outputs document). It is anticipated that these projects will comprise:

* Existing projects that could be scaled up through Stride funding, to either increase capacity, expand the range of activities delivered, or expand the geographical footprint of the programme.
* Pilot projects proposing a new approach to delivering Talent Development outcomes. While the approach may be innovative, it is expected that proposals can speak to some form of evidence of effectiveness.
  1. We welcome the opportunity to match fund programmes particularly if they are extending, scaling, or bringing this programme to one or more of the partner boroughs. Organisations applying for the maximum grant of £100,000 should provide evidence of at least 50% match funding.

3.3 As delivery must be completed by September 2022 (extensions are likely), we would expect proposals to begin delivery by late September/early October 2021.

3.4 We expect all bidders to be able to show a firm commitment from employers to the project. For projects of all sizes, bidders should be able to clearly demonstrate employer needs and insights have guided the design of the project.

3.5 Proposals should include but are not limited to:

* Who the target group(s) for the programme will be, with a focus on underrepresented groups identified at 1.2
* Stride funding will be used to achieve beneficiary outputs within the ‘Stride geography’ (Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark, Wandsworth) and bids must state the number of residents from the Stride geography that will receive support through the proposed services. However, we welcome bids from organisations and projects that seek to benefit a wider geography. Equally, we expect to see employer engagement within the Stride geography but welcome projects that are capable of connecting our residents to creative and digital employers elsewhere.
* How potential candidates for the programme will be identified, with a clear engagement strategy for underrepresented groups
* What support the programme will offer, and how it will contribute to the CDI skills development and employability of participants. The programme offer description should articulate how the project is innovative
* Will the provider themselves be providing apprenticeship/internship/work experience opportunities
* A description of how covid-19 implications have been taken into account in project design
* How the proposed programme will link to CDI career, employers and/or employment opportunities within the CDI sector
* The Talent Development outcome(s) (outcome type, and number) that the project is proposing to deliver and over what timescale
* A rationale, including evidence where available for the proposed approach to programme development and delivery
* Track record description of applicant and project partners
* Full costings for the proposed programme including any confirmed match funding
* An aspect of innovation in at least one of the following – delivery, scope, participants or subject

3.6 The types of programmes that this funding round would encourage are –

* A strong emphasis on job outcomes for graduates from the programme. Jobs must pay the London Living Wage as a minimum.
* Sustained employment and in work training
* Non-direct delivery programmes – working with employers to develop apprenticeships, developing strong relationships with employers within the Stride geography, developing strong relationships between employers and educational institutions within the Stride geography or securing an introduction for graduates from Stride programmes to employers within the Stride geography.
* Programmes and focus on the digital and tech sectors

1. **Reporting** 
   1. Projects will be required to use a bespoke CRM and or template to record project activity and outcomes, for which licenses and training will be provided.
   2. Quarterly reporting on outcomes will be required in line with the funders requirements – if successful a schedule of dates will be provided.
   3. Monitoring meetings will be required on at least a quarterly basis.
   4. The Stride programme and its funders will need adequate details of the participants for the programme for evaluation and outcome verification purposes. All GDPR must be clear that this is required in order to participate in programmes.
2. **Tender Process & Timetable**
   1. A timetable for submission process is detailed below. Submissions will be scored promptly. There may be the need for interviews. If required, these will be advised after 1 August 2021.
   2. Submissions should not exceed seven sides of A4 and should include as a minimum the points detailed Section 3 of this document.

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| Output | Target Deadline |
| Specification Published | 10 June 2021 |
| Final date for queries | 22 July 2021 |
| Submission deadline | 5pm 5 August 2021 |
| Funds awarded | On or before 24 August 2021 |
| Inception meetings (can be virtual) | September 2021 |
| Commencement of delivery | October 2021 |

1. **Submission Scoring**
   1. Submissions will be measured against the following criteria:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria & Key Points 100%** | Score | Weighting out of 100% |
| * Understanding of, and ability to deliver against the brief – who are the targeted groups, where delivery will take place, ability to begin delivery quickly * Understanding of, and ability to address barriers to CDI employment for underrepresented groups (see 1.1.) * A communications plan – how will you reach under represented groups | 0 - 5 | 15 |
| * Demonstration of how proposed activity links to Talent Development outcomes, and opportunities in the wider CDI labour market | 0-5 | 15 |
| * Evidence of impact for proposed delivery * Proposals from the maximum grant should detail delivery in at least three of the four partner boroughs. * Proposals should detail apprenticeship/internship/work experience opportunities within their own organisations * Evidence of innovation * Evidence of links with employers | 0-5 | 15 |
| * Safeguarding and safer recruitment considerations * Supporting candidates through entering into employment * Understanding of the difficulties faced by candidates in the early stages of employment and how you will target these * Understanding of who is delivering training and safeguarding measures | 0-5 | 10 |
| * Value for money – * Level of resource, and project timescales in relation to proposed funding * Outcome type, and number of outcomes proposed for project delivery * Specialism within proposed provision e.g. sector/role specific skills training, access to ‘hidden’ labour markets * Inclusion of secured match funding | 0 - 5 | 45 |

**Scoring**

All criteria will be assessed using a 0-5 scoring system as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Score | Rating | Description |
| 0 | No Response | No proposal has been received  The response is unacceptable. |
| 1 | Unacceptable | A proposal at this rating:   * Builds very little or no confidence that the Tenderer can deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures; * Builds very little or no confidence that the Tenderer’s approach/solution will deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence or an inappropriate approach/solution. |
| 2 | Poor | A proposal at this rating:   * Raises reservations that the Tenderer can deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures. Raises reservations that the Tenderer’s approach/solution will deliver the requirements due to insufficient evidence or an inappropriate approach/solution. Note: a response at this rating includes reservations which cannot be easily resolved with the Tenderer pre-contract award (i.e. changes which would distort the competition) or during the contract term without impacting time, quality or cost. |
| 3 | Acceptable | A proposal at this rating:   * Confirms that the Tenderer can deliver the requirements through evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures; Provides an acceptable approach/solution to delivering the requirements utilising standard strategies, plans, tools, methods or technologies .Note: an acceptable response may include minor reservations that can easily be resolved with the Tenderer pre-contract award (i.e. changes which would not distort the competition) or during the contract term without impacting time, quality or cost. |
| 4 | Good | A proposal at this rating:   * Builds confidence that the Tenderer can deliver the requirements through evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures; Provides a good approach/solution to delivering the requirements utilising appropriately tailored strategies, plans, tools, methods or technologies. Note: a good response may include a small number of minor reservations that can easily be resolved with the Tenderer pre-contract award (i.e. changes which would not distort the competition) or during the contract term without impacting time, quality or cost. |
| 5 | Excellent | A proposal at this rating:   * Builds a high level of confidence that the Tenderer can deliver the requirements through evidence of relevant ability, understanding, skills, resources and quality measures; Provides an exceptional approach/solution to delivering the requirements utilising appropriately tailored and at times innovative strategies, plans, tools, methods or technologies. Note: an excellent response should not include any reservations. |

A minimum score of 18 will be required in order for the grant to be awarded.

* 1. The council reserves the right to award grants based on:
  + most economically advantageous submissions
  + geographical spread
  + scope of activity

6.3 The council reserves the right to not award all funds in any of the identified rounds if no suitable projects are bought forward.

1. **Responses & Key Contacts**

7.1. Please return submissions by 5pm 3 August to:

Nicola Whyte

South London Innovation Corridor Programme Manager

[nwhyte@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:nwhyte@lambeth.gov.uk)

0207 926 0953

1. GLA Culture Strategy <https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/culture_strategy_may_2019.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. At £18.13, full-time median hourly pay for women in the creative economy was 20.4 per cent or £4.66 lower than for men employed in the creative economy (£22.79/hour) in 2016. [GLA Economics](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/working_paper_89-creative-industries-2017.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)