

QUESTION		RESPONSE
1	I'm interested in making an application for this new round but am on holiday w/c 10 June for the week; this is the week planned for interviews. Does this rule me out	We recognise that in some cases potential applicants will have made prior arrangements that mean they are unavailable for the week set aside for the interviews. We will attempt to accommodate candidates as best we can, but you will appreciate that in the interests of fairness and objectivity we must have the same interview panel for all candidates. Please provide your availability in the week either side of the interview week and we can try and find a date that might be suitable for all involved; unfortunately we cannot guarantee that there will be a mutually convenient date.
2	Could you please provide a Word version so that I can complete and submit an application online?	A Microsoft Office Word version of the last five pages of the tender document (the application pages only) has been posted on the Business Ready website
	Thanks for sending this over I intend to submit an application. 🙏 Do you have a word version that I can complete and submit online? or do I need to direct that question to the procurementgs email?!	A Microsoft Office Word version of the last five pages of the tender document (the application pages only) has been posted on the Business Ready website
3	It would be good to have this as a Word Document please, rather than a PFD, so as to do the submission.	A Microsoft Office Word version of the last five pages of the tender document (the application pages only) has been posted on the Business Ready website
4	Can you please confirm where/to whom to submit this application. Is it to this e-mail address?	Please refer to the tender document. Your question is addressed on page 9. "Completed applications must be submitted no later than 4:00pm on Friday 3rd of May 2019 to the email address procurementgs@uwsp.co.uk - late submissions and postal submissions will not be considered."
5	Do you please have an editable version of the document entitled " Business Ready Growth Specialist Pool – Procurement"?	The editable version (Microsoft Word) of the Application Form is on the website Business-ready.co.uk/news. Please select the link to the Application Form. This will download a Word version of the document which is editable.
6	Is there still value for your clients if we apply for one of the specialisms when we can offer one fairly specific aspect within that specialism. Namely developing a business rationale and proposition as part of the specialism titled 'Market research, marketing strategy and planning.'?	Clients require support across the range of business disciplines. These requirements change as the business develops, and many clients have little expertise in Marketing. The Business Adviser will work with the client to understand needs. If the Specialism is niche then it will be the responsibility of the Specialist to ensure that the Business Adviser understands what questions to ask to uncover the need for the particular skills that the Growth Specialist may offer.

7	With respect to adding BR2 clients to our own database on page 6 – what if they are already on our database? If we did want to add them whose consent would we need?	If the client is already on a Growth Specialist's database then there will already be a permission in place. If the Growth Specialist wants to add the client to their own database they will need the written permission of the client.
8	As part of our response to the open tender Stage 1 – are we able to include a document including examples of work of a similar nature to similar clients?	Applications will be scored according to the criteria identified in the tender document. If you think that the inclusion of evidence to support your application is appropriate then you are entitled to do so.
9	Do you require all support between business owner and coach to be face to face? Or is there some flexibility to offer support via methods such as phone/Skype/Zoom?	Support for clients will be determined by the needs of the business owner. Interactions may be virtual if that suits the client. However, we would anticipate that the majority of interactions will be face to face. For the sake of clarity this tender is for Growth Specialists; we would expect applicants to act primarily in a mentor capacity rather than as a coach.
10	Your target indicates that you will support 107 companies with an average of 12 hours of support.	For the sake of clarity our target is to support at least 107 enterprises with at least 12 hours of support. 45% of clients will receive 2-5 days of support, 35% will receive 5 -7.5 days and 20% will receive 7.5 -10 days of support. There will be enterprises that we support that don't make it to 12 hours, for one reason or another, and these will not be counted in our analysis.
11	In the first version of this programme how many mentors were there, and how much work can a mentor expect to get?	We had 23 mentors/Growth Specialist on the first programme. There is no expectation that a mentor will receive any work. The work allocation will be determined by the needs of the client base. In the last programme the highest earner received approximately £15k. The budget for the programme is £80k.
12	How much notice is given to the Mentors for work	That depends on the client. Following the initial triage the Business Adviser will interrogate the Growth Specialist database to identify one or more mentors that would be appropriate to the client. The client may choose on the basis of a paper evaluation, or they may decide that want to speak face-to-face to gauge suitability. In some cases this process is fast and on other occasions it can drag on for several months.
13	What support is given to Mentors/Growth Specialists.	The Business Ready team are supportive. There is an induction meeting to get to know each other (Advisers and fellow Growth Specialists), and we organise additional meetings from time to time to catch up on progress, and to ensure that all paperwork is being completed properly. From time to time we will send out information appraising Growth Specialists of any changes in grant funding or other relevant local market information.

14	Is the programme actively promoted to businesses	Yes. Referrals come in from a number of different routes. Growth Hub, Chamber, WCC or CCC, networking. We have a good social media presence and the website attracts enquiries from time to time. Growth Specialists are allowed to refer their own client/network for consideration for inclusion into the programme if they meet the eligibility criteria.
15	Do we still need to issue 3 reference if we've been a previous Business Ready Mentor?	This project is part funded by the ERDF and subject to procurement rules. To evaluate each application objectively, and on a like-for-like basis, the answers and information requested in the application form should be submitted. Specifically, to score the highest mark on that part of the evaluation 3 satisfactory references will need to be supplied; an application that includes less than 3 references will be scored accordingly.
16	Have you any targets in terms of how many businesses you would like to work with across the programme?	Yes. The targets for this programme are to support 107 SMEs with at least 12 hours of support, to create 66 jobs and to support the creation of 11 new enterprises. It is implicit that we will work with more businesses than that as some will not want 12 hours of support. Please note that our primary focus is on quality outcomes rather than quantitative outputs and we will support some businesses for up to 70 hours.
17	Are there any targets the programme needs to achieve? (For example some ERDF programmes have targets around helping businesses achieve income growth or creating jobs.)	Yes. The programme has targets for the number of organisations supported with at least 12 hours of support and the number of jobs created. For more details see the article 'Business Ready – The last 3 years' on the News page of the same website
18	In terms of capacity do you have any sense of how much support you might like from advisors? (I appreciate this is a framework with no guarantee but it would help us answer your capacity questions.)	Our target is to support at least 107 enterprises with at least 12 hours of support. 45% of clients will receive 2-5 days of support, 35% will receive 5 -7.5 days and 20% will receive 7.5 -10 days of support. There will be enterprises that we support that don't make it to 12 hours, for one reason or another, and these will not be counted in our analysis.
19	You mention the programme will also provide workshops. Is this something you would also like advisors to do as part of this tender?	The workshop programme is delivered by a separate team of facilities who have already been through the tender process.
20	On the specialisms on page 4 you list "strategic planning" and also "strategic planning for growth" - can I confirm this is a duplication?	You can interpret this as you think fit. We work with client organisations at all points in their life cycle. For example, this may be preparation for an exit or MBO, downsizing due to loss of a high value contract, or following the unexpected and tragic loss of the MD. These are not necessarily duplication.
21	Is it acceptable to deliver mentoring sessions via, say, Skype where it meets the needs/preferences of the SME?	Yes, but it is at the discretion of the client. It is what works best for them, and if they specifically request it rather than the Growth Specialist proposing it. In our experience face-to-face meetings work best for the client.

22	What has been the mode average length of mentoring sessions on this programme so far?	<p>Mode would be around 14 hours; equivalent to two days with a client. A client may have more than one Growth Specialist but they will also be working with the Business Adviser and other third parties that may support the SME (for example, in the case of a grant application). In some cases a Growth Specialist has been given additional hours where the client has a particular challenge and they have requested more time.</p> <p>The average would be longer. We expect to support 45% of the clients for between 14 and 35 hrs, 35% between 35 and 53 hrs, and 20% between 53 and 70 hours.</p>
23	Has it been your experience that, when face-to-face meetings are appropriate, mentors have been able to book more than one mentoring session back-to-back? We understand that this could not be guaranteed, but some guidance on your past experience would be helpful.	<p>A mentoring session may be anything between 1 hour and 7 hours. It is dependent upon the client, but experience suggests that between 2 and 4 hours would be the norm. Based on the identified needs of the client the Growth Specialist will propose a timetable and agenda designed to achieve the desired outcome.</p> <p>If the question means to back-to-back meetings with separate clients then this depends on the Growth Specialist and their capacity to be able to deliver a quality service to the clients.</p>