

JOB DESCRIPTION

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| JOB TITLE: | Regional Outreach Lead |
| MANAGED BY: | Project Manager (Skills Connect / Mayoral Priority Skills Fund) |
| GRADE: | Grade 9 |

BACKGROUND

The West of England Combined Authority is seeking to appoint a Regional Outreach Lead to join the People and Skills Service working across Skills Connect, the Mayoral Priority Skills Fund and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF).

This is an exciting time to join the West of England Combined Authority (CA). In the last year nearly three quarters of a billion pounds of new investment has been secured for the region. New plans are in place to deliver on Mayoral priorities to improve transport, skills and housing for our residents, take decisive action to tackle the climate emergency, and to support communities facing the cost-of-living crisis. There is a relentless focus on delivery to put the West of England on the map for regional, national and global success.

Led by the regional Metro Mayor, the CA brings together three local councils, the Local Enterprise Partnership and works with communities, other public services, and industry to deliver for the region.

You will be a key player in making the West of England the best it can be for jobs, training and inward investment. We are delivering on bringing secure and fairly-paid jobs to the region, supporting people to gain new skills, and businesses facing economic uncertainty. We are building on our reputation as a region of innovation and creativity.

Come and help shape the future of the West of England, a place so many people are proud to call home.

THE ROLE

Reporting into the Project Manager for Mayoral Priority Skills Fund (MPSF) and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), the Regional Outreach Officer will lead on a programme of critical engagement activities to support the delivery of MPSF/UKSPF, which together total over £5m.

The MPSF sits alongside Skills Connect (SC) and will fund agile responses to training and wider skills activity where gaps in provision or support for specific target groups are

identified through intelligence gathered through SC. The CA 'People and Skills' UKSPF allocation will fund skills programmes, initiatives and activities which address identified regional needs i.e. supporting the economically inactive, helping those who are in work to progress and/or other local skills requirements.

This role will be to autonomously lead on MPSF delivery partner relationships ensuring progressions are maximised through links with the wider skills system through Skills Connect and underperformance is managed quickly and efficiently.

A key focus of this role will be to gather intelligence on skills needs and gaps in provision across the skills system by convening a variety of skills stakeholders and be able to translate this intelligence to shape skills initiatives internally and externally through both shaping funded delivery and collaboration.

The Regional Outreach Lead role will:

- Lead on managing relationships with MPSF which includes UKSPF delivery partners to maximise achievement of outputs and outcomes through supporting successful delivery models, facilitating sharing of good practice and managing underperformance.
- Lead on the account management of a variety of stakeholders across the skills system, identifying critical links, partnerships and areas of shared interest which can help to address gaps in skills provision across the region. Stakeholders include but are not limited to: MPSF delivery partners, skills providers of all types (FE, HE, ITPs), voluntary and community sector, employers, Local Authorities, sector specific organisations, membership organisations and/or networks.
- Take a lead on intelligence gathering to build a strong and robust evidence base around gaps in skills provision. This will require the postholder to have (and continue to develop) an extensive knowledge of the skills system relating to both supply and demand, as well as understanding a variety of funding streams for example; UKSPF, Adult Education Budget, Skills Bootcamps and Multiply delivery.
- Play a key role in translating skills intelligence onto activity which fills progression pathways in the region; informing funding calls under MPSF (including writing specifications) and leading on non- funded activity through the right stakeholders to act on intelligence.
- You will play a leading role in the People and Skills Engagement Group (working alongside the Employer Engagement Officer) to create a shared intelligence base around gaps in provision to a wider forum to inform wider funding streams and support the development of Skills Connect. This will include working closely across wider teams and Directorates within the CA including the Growth Hub, Invest Bristol Bath, Environment Directorate, Innovation Team and Infrastructure.

The postholder will need to be dynamic thinker, able to identify common goals across an array of stakeholders and influence the formation of collaborations and communities of practice which can deliver under MPSF/UKSPF. You will provide a leading role in ensuring MPSF providers achieve against their outputs and outcomes targets by providing a high-quality professional support service.

Although your primary focus will be engaging with UKSPF/MPSF funding mechanisms, you will take an independent, impartial and objective approach, supporting stakeholders and organisations to access other funding opportunities when UKSPF/MPSF is not the best fit, therefore drawing on the collective offer of the West of England Combined Authority's Business and Skills Directorate and wider.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Key responsibilities of the role are as follows:

- Develop and strengthen professional and strategic relationships with a large variety of different stakeholders across the skills system both collecting intelligence and engaging them in skills initiatives including funding. Those stakeholders include; skills providers of all types, voluntary and community sector, employers, Local Authorities, and sector specific organisations and networks often at the most senior level.
- Translate intelligence around skills provision, gaps and opportunities to directly inform the work of the Project Manager (MPSF and UKSPF), LMI Team and other projects. Critically, this work will help to shape funding rounds, ensuring proposed skills initiatives address priority needs for residents and employers across the region.
- Lead on the account management of a variety of stakeholders and delivery partners under MPSF and UKSPF, identifying critical links, common goals and areas of shared interest to forge strong partnerships, thus maximising outcomes for individuals and join up progression pathways for residents.
- Linked to the above, you will lead on performance meetings with MPSF delivery partners and implement performance related processes where required including managing change requests, performance management action plans and revision to grant funding if required.
- Support the Project Manager in evaluating MPSF and UKSPF by gathering learning from delivery partners including data, intelligence, case studies, focus groups, stakeholder meetings and final reports. Independently creating and presenting reports on performance and learning.
- Increasing capacity and sustainability of the skills system by identifying and fostering partnerships which increase referrals and progressions of individuals and provide wrap around support to participants which increases their engagement and

completion of skills programmes and training.

- Develop and provide specialised expertise and understanding of gaps across the skills system and in relation to specific priority target groups. Use this knowledge and expertise to address skills gaps across a variety of funding mechanisms working with project managers across the People and Skills team and delivering to the Employment and Skills Plan.
- Manage databases of skills stakeholder contacts and utilise these (working with the marketing team) to develop effective communications plans to engage stakeholder in skills initiatives including Skills Connect and market engagement activity around funding rounds.
- Must be willing and able to travel within the West of England Combined Authority region in order to embed effectively within local authority teams and work directly with delivery partners and wider stakeholders.
- Deputise for the Project Manager as and when necessary and appropriate and undertake other such duties and responsibilities commensurate to the grade.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL (MUST HAVE)

Qualifications and Knowledge

- Educated to degree level (with a strong analytical component) or with equivalent relevant experience. This could be around areas of project management, community engagement or local government.
- Knowledge of the skills environment as it applies to the West of England and the barriers faced by some groups in engaging with skills and employability support.

Experience

- Demonstrable experience of project management.
- Experience of strategically managing external relationships at a senior level to gain purposeful engagement with programmes and initiatives.
- Experience of working in a large public sector organisation or complex organisation structure.
- Experience of leading the design and facilitation of engagement events to gather intelligence and gain buy in.
- Experience of communicating (written and oral) with a wide range of people, particularly external stakeholders, and of explaining technical/complex information in an easy-to-understand manner.
- Experience of working in a funding environment managing delivery partner performance and specific experience in managing underperformance.
- Experience of account managing delivery partners to ensure high quality

delivery, including demonstrable examples of making links between organisations to ensure impact is greater than the sum of its parts.

- Experience of effectively evaluating and analysing data to report on programme performance and building strong robust evidence bases.

Skills and Competencies

- Highly organised with the ability to prioritise and focus on what is important and the ability to proactively plan to address foreseen challenges.
- Able to represent The West of England Combined Authority effectively with external stakeholders and build strong working relationships.
- Ability to work individually with minimum supervision and as part of a multi-disciplinary team.
- Proficient numeracy skills with the ability to analyse skills supply and demand data from a variety of sources, identifying key trends, gaps and issues.
- Ability to communicate complex information to a range of stakeholders with the ability to provide succinct messages and gain buy in. This should include through a variety of methods including presentations and written reports.
- Proficient in the use of standard Microsoft Office products with some knowledge of current software which supports engagement of audiences through online or hybrid events.
- Ability to quickly interpret complex regulations/legislation/guidance, specifically funding and eligibility rules.
- Knowledge of effective records management process specifically managing large amounts of contact details and relationship data.
- Highly self-motivated with demonstrable experience of setting high expectations for themselves and others.
- Strong people skills. Showing confidence in dealing with underperformance with demonstrable experience of positively managing challenging situations with funded programmes.
- Strong project management skills, including a sound understanding, and demonstrable use of project controls and key performance indicators.

DESIRABLE

Qualifications and Knowledge

- Experience of working in a public sector organisation that commissions programmes, allocates and awards grant funding
- Knowledge of data governance protocols including adherence to data quality standards and data protection legislation
- Experience of writing reports based on LMI and wider skills data
- Knowledge of previous funding similar to UKPSF for example European Social Funding.
- Experience of local and central government working practices.

REWARDS AND BENEFITS

Alongside a competitive salary, we offer an excellent benefits package including:

- 26/31 days annual leave plus bank holidays (from 1st April 2023)
- Generous Employer-Contribution Pension Scheme through the Avon Pension Fund
- Cycle to work scheme and secure bike parking
- Free eye tests for all display screen equipment (DSE) users
- Discounted monthly bus tickets
- Hybrid working to split your week between the office and home to help you achieve the best work/life balance and career goals.

We have recently moved into a new bright, airy, modern office space, with all the latest technology, under a 10-minute walk from Bristol Temple Meads Train Station. We offer flexible and hybrid working options too if you would rather work from home, or another suitable location.

As an equal opportunities employer, we invite applicants to contact us to identify any additional support they may need during the recruitment process.

WE PAY THE LIVING WAGE

We're proud to have been accredited as a Living Wage Employer

Living Wage accreditation means that everyone working at The West of England and Combined Authority receives a minimum hourly wage of £14.21 - higher than the government minimum for **over 23s, currently £10.42 per hour**



It also means that anyone who provides services to, or has contracts with us, must pay the Living Wage, setting the bar for good employer practices in the region. This includes those who provide services to The West of England and Combined Authority, such as cleaning and facilities management contracts, as well as those who have contracts with us - such as IT providers.