INVITATION TO TENDER FOR THE PROVISION OF:

D2N2 PEER NETWORK FACILITATION AND ONE-TO-ONE SUPPORT SERVICES

Tender Ref: D2N2 Peer Networks 2020/21

Date: **Wednesday 25 November 2020**
Closing date: **Noon – Thursday 10 December 2020**

Register interest in the tender by emailing: Rubina.blackwell@emc-dnl.co.uk

East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire)
Commerce House
Millennium Way
Chesterfield
S41 8ND

0333 320 0333
www.emc-dnl.co.uk

1. OVERVIEW

Peer Networks is a national initiative that will be delivered locally through the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) network and their respective Growth Hubs. The programme's longer-term aims are focused on reducing the UK productivity gap by helping business leaders find practical solutions to strategic and operational challenges. It also forms part of the UK Government response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing EU transition, seeking to improve the resilience of SMEs, their capability to adapt their business models to the "new normal" and position themselves for future success, driving longer-term productivity gains.

The programme will see the creation of a series of peer networks (cohorts) through the Growth Hub network, with each group consisting of 8-11 owners or managers from the SME business community participating in each network. Led by an experienced facilitator, these peer networks will typically meet fortnightly as part of delivering 18 hours of action learning through 2-3-hour sessions.

Individual one-to-one support (coaching, mentoring, or advice) will also be provided – providing each participant with at least 3.5 hours of coaching / advice during the duration of the peer to peer programme. Active involvement in the peer network will enhance the leadership capabilities, knowledge and confidence of business owners and entrepreneurs within a local region. It will help build regional connectivity and strength within the SME business community.

The Peer Networks Programme is funded by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) in response to a commitment made in the 2019 Business Productivity Review.

The D2N2 Peer Networks Programme is managed by East Midlands Chamber (Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire) on behalf of Derbyshire County Council, Accountable Body for the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership.

The programme is governed by the D2N2 Growth Hub Executive Board (https://d2n2lep.org/d2n2-growth-hub-executive-board/).

2. PEER NETWORKS AND ACTION LEARNING SETS

Action learning is an approach to problem solving and learning in groups to bring about change in individuals, teams, organisations and systems. It is based on the principle that the most effective learning takes place in the context in which people are working.

A Peer Network is a private group of invited business leaders, formed to support its participants by working together to share challenges, solutions, knowledge, expertise and experience. Typically:

- Participants gather on a regular basis with the support of a facilitator to explore individual participants' challenge and to co-operate by sharing learning from each other's successes, setbacks and practices.
- The point is to realise opportunities, overcome challenges, develop themselves and their businesses.

- The conversation is structured and facilitated using action learning principles to ensure consistency, efficiency and effectiveness, leading to specific actions self-directed by participants.
- Participants reflect on the feedback and discussion and act on new thinking following the session, reporting the results back to their co-members the next time they meet. This helps everyone move forward on their challenges and learn from each other's progress. The fact that participants always report back to the group helps everyone hold each other to account for progressing with their issues and opportunities.
- The process is designed to deliver new insights for participant and result in tangible actions or solutions.

Participants will benefit from both access to a professional action learning facilitator and one-to-one support outside of the group sessions. Importantly, the content of the sessions is driven by the participants from a list of key themes (eg business development, marketing, people management, technology adoption, response to COVID-19, EU transition) and can be tailored to focus on their specific needs, including wider issues that may be affecting their sector, locality or business model.

3. **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

Peer Networks will form an important part of the Government's drive to improve productivity and deliver part of the economic response to the effect of COVID-19 on businesses. It will provide support to SMEs as they move into and through the Recovery phase of COVID-19 response. The aim is to improve SME's capability to adapt their business models to the "new normal", position themselves for future success and drive longer term productivity gains through improved leadership and management skills and tech adoption.

The Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (D2N2) Peer Network Programme will aim to deliver 23 cohorts targeting 250 participants locally by March 2021 and forms part of an overall national programme.

Success will be measured by:

- Firm survival
- Growth in value added as an indicator of recovery from COVID-19
- Improvements in labour productivity
- Participant views on the resilience of their SME
- Participant views on their leadership and management skills
- The SME's ability to recruit and retain staff where appropriate
- The SME's ability to access cash to continue trading
- Changes in the SME's adoption of technology

4. **TARGET AUDIENCE**

The programme invites leaders and senior managers from the D2N2 SME business community (who meet the national eligibility criteria) to participate in a local peer network (cohort) that will meet regularly from January to March 2021.

The project is aimed at SME leaders from high growth business and key sectors:

- Which have businesses that have been in operation for long enough for challenges to materialise;
- Which are managing the challenges associated with running a sizeable team of permanent staff;

- Whose business is well enough established to be generating a turnover;
- Who are motivated to learn from others to improve their business.

Essential SME criteria:

- In operation for 12 months+
- At least 5 employees
- An aspiration to improve
- A turnover of at least £100,000

Desirable SME criteria:

- Businesses that have the potential to scale up
- Businesses who already export, or who have the potential to become an exporter

5. DELIVERY MODEL

Participants will need to actively engage with the action learning process which requires them to openly explore business opportunities and issues within a group environment and contribute to the success of others. The D2N2 Peer Networks programme requires that businesses provide information at entry and exit points.

In summary, the delivery model is:

Target cohort size:	8-11 business owners or senior decision makers per cohort.
Number of sessions:	Led by an experienced facilitator using the action learning methodology. Each cohort must meet for a total of 18 hours (ie 6 sessions x 3 hours or 9 sessions x 2 hours).
Frequency of sessions:	Typically, fortnightly (determined by local needs). All sessions must be completed by 31 March 2021.
Location:	Given current social distancing restrictions and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic the sessions will be delivered virtually using the D2N2 Growth Hub licensed *GoToTraining* platform
Topic selection:	Topics could include but are not limited to: ▪ Finance ▪ HR ▪ Sales and Marketing ▪ Adjusting to social distancing ▪ Business Model Innovation ▪ Change Management ▪ Embedding formal management processes and systems ▪ Digital (including adoption and implementation of technology, cyber security) ▪ Use of data to drive value in the business ▪ EU transition ▪ Net zero.
Methodology:	Each session must be facilitated according to action learning principal which provides a common framework to ensuring national consistency across all the local groups.
Added support:	Individual one-to-one support relevant to identified businesses needs must also be provided. This must be a minimum of 3.5 hours and will be met from within the programme. This support must also be completed by 31 March 2021.

6. DELIVERABLES

The key deliverable of the project is to support the development and delivery of a D2N2 Peer Networks Programme by 31 March using the defined facilitated peer network model.

Key deliverables for the D2N2 Peer Networks Programme include:

Engagement:
- 250 participants entering the programme
- 23 cohorts built
- 250 participants receiving a minimum of 18 hours facilitation

Results:
- 250 participants who have received both – 18 hours of action learning sessions and a minimum of 3.5 hours one-to-one support
- Commitment to report a summary of participant support received, and signposting and referral details

Provision of Facilitators
Key regional deliverables for the Peer Network Programme include:
- Provision of experienced facilitators with the necessary levels of flexibility and availability that can deliver a minimum of 18 hours action learning facilitation per cohort, pre-cohort participant familiarisation, in-cohort insight gathering and reporting, and post-cohort review and handover activities
- Undertake programme orientation
- Meeting programme quality assurance requirements to be set out in a quality assurance framework
- Percentage of participants remaining on programme
- Completion of the facilitator notes post session

Provision of One-to-One Support
Key regional deliverables for the Peer Network Programme include:

- Provision of experienced coaches, mentors, or business advisors with the necessary levels of flexibility and availability that can deliver a minimum of 3.5 hours one-to-one support per participant, and provide post support handover
- Undertake programme orientation
- Meeting programme quality assurance requirements to be set out in a quality assurance framework
- Completion of the session/handover documentation

7. DETAILS OF REQUIREMENTS

7.1   Contract Lots

East Midlands Chamber is seeking to appoint up to 11 providers to facilitate the defined peer network cohort Lot(s) detailed in Table 1 and deliver one-to-one support to participants.

Table 1		
LOT	**Peer Network Theme**	**Cohorts**
1	Manufacturing	2
2	Hospitality and Visitor Economy	2

3	Creative Industries	2
4	Life Sciences	1
5	Retail	1
6	Construction	1
7	Food and Drink	1
8	Social/Healthcare	1
9	High Growth Women-owned businesses	1
10	High Growth BAME-owned Businesses	1
11	High Growth businesses	5

Note:
Providers are required to specify which Peer Network Theme and the number of cohorts they are bidding for at the beginning of the application form. A maximum of two cohorts will be awarded per provider regardless of the number of Themes applied for.

If a provider wishes to deliver two different Peer Network Theme Lots they must complete a new applications for both. We would expect the application to reflect the relevant knowledge and expertise required to deliver these effectively.

7.2   **Marketing and Management Responsibilities**

The marketing and recruitment of participants to the programme and the management of the week-to-week cohorts will be supported by a dedicated D2N2 Peer Network Management and Marketing team funded centrally by the D2N2 Growth Hub. This team will liaise with the successful provider(s) to perform the following tasks:

- Provide a robust marketing and application process for recruiting appropriate participants
- Schedule cohort sessions
- Set up all sessions on the D2N2 Growth Hub licensed *GoToTraining* Platform
- Send participant invites and manage reminders
- Record attendance at each session
- Notify the Facilitator and participants if a session is selected for observation
- Producing monthly monitoring, reporting, including the population of the national programme microsite for network KPI capture

7.3   **Providers Responsibilities**

The programme will be supported by a 'playbook' – a user handbook to aid the successful roll-out and implementation of the programme. It aims to provide a common resource to support local delivery partners and will help ensure there is a suitable level of national consistency in how the programme is delivered, whilst allowing for a degree of local flexibility as appropriate. The relevant information will be provided to the successful provider(s).

The role of the facilitator is critical to the successful management and optimisation of an individual peer network – supporting the rapid building of trust and collaborative relationships between participants within the peer group (the cohort), providing strong leadership and direction, and driving the in-session action learning process to deliver tangible actions and solutions for each member of the group.

The facilitator has three main strands of responsibility:

1. Management and direction of their individual peer network(s) and its successful facilitation using the principles of action learning
2. Individual one-to-one communication with each participant to support reflection and provide signposting to the most appropriate local support
3. The capture of Information, data, and insight to help inform the contract manager and programme about frequent hot topics for delegates

The Peer Network Programme provides additional one-to-one support for each participant. This begins once the formal peer network set is complete and requires the provision of one-to-one follow-on business-focused coaching/mentoring/support to individual participants through a mixture of consultations and signposting.

Annex 1 (page 11) details the role and requirements for the facilitator and one-to-one provision and identifies the key skills, qualifications, experience and characteristics to successfully deliver the Peer Network Programme.

Proposals are invited in respect of the delivery of up to two Peer Network cohorts detailed at Table 1. The provider is expected to work closely with the D2N2 Growth Hub to initially:

- Interview potential participants prior to registering onto the peer network to ensure they meet the specified criteria and commitment and minimise participant drop out
- Ensure participants sign a Participant Charter to commit to attending the full 18 hours of group sessions and access a minimum of 3.5 hours of one-to-one support
- Deliver the contracted number of cohorts of Peer Networks using the D2N2 Growth Hub licensed *GoToTraining* Platform between 4 January to 31 March 2021
- Deliver 18 hours of support via a facilitated Peer Network meeting and 3.5 hours of one-to-one support to participants
- The provider will utilise the Peer Network 'Playbook' that will be provided
- Provide feedback reports to the Contract Manager
- Set up a robust model for undertaking the 'change in attitudes' survey of businesses supported on the programme and collect evaluation data from the cohort members
- Record activities and time spent with each cohort member using the electronic register provided by the D2N2 Growth Hub.

8. **DURATION AND BUDGET**

The contract period will be from the award date until March 2021.

The value of each cohort has a lower limit of £12,000 and upper limit of £13,000 excluding VAT.

An optional budget of £2,000 excluding VAT per cohort is available to fund additional marketing activities proposed and delivered directly by the Provider to guarantee the recruitment of at least 11 participants per cohort. These activities must complement the core D2N2 Growth Hub marketing efforts and details are required in the application form.

Should sources of subsequent funds become available in future, the Chamber reserves the right to extend the contract period (for a further 12 months), activities and value of this contract via the contract change procedure and in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

9. WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

This contract will be managed by a dedicated D2N2 Peer Network Management Team.

The first stage of the contract will be to

1) agree the schedule of delivery per cohort;

2) agree contracted Lot(s) marketing plan and Growth Hub/Provider responsibilities based on the application submission.

Consultants will receive a minimum of five days-notice should a cohort session be cancelled due to low take-up or drop out by the SME community.

Regular review meetings will take place in person or via telephone and email to check progress.

The network of facilitators across all Peer Network Themes will be required to join a Forum that will meet regularly to share best practice, discuss challenges and opportunities and guide the marketing of the programme.

10. PAYMENTS

Payment will be in arrears against monthly invoices itemising authorised work carried out during the month, and subject to provision of satisfactorily completed activities.

11. EVALUATION PROCESS

The tender will be evaluated evaluation process based on the submission of the Standard Details Questionnaire and Proposal (20 points) and Value for Money (20 points)

Tender responses will be scored by a panel consisting of three D2N2 Growth Hub representatives and based on the following scoring principles:

Scoring principles		
1	Poor	The information submitted/presented has some omissions to meet the Chamber's expectations or demonstrates only limited technical, ability and/or capacity.
2	Satisfactory	The information submitted/presented just meets the Chamber's expectations in demonstrating technical experience, ability and/or capacity to deliver the services. There are significant reservations, but not sufficient to warrant rejection.
3	Good	The information submitted/presented meets the Chamber's expectations in demonstrating technical experience, ability and/or capacity to deliver the services.
4	Excellent	The information submitted/presented exceeds the Chamber's expectations and provides evidence of high-quality technical experience, ability and/or capacity to deliver a quality service.

Standard Details Questionnaire Data will be scored as pass or fail:

Pass - the information has been assessed and judged to be acceptable
Fail –   no information has been provided and/or the standard of the information is unacceptable or does not comply with the minimum acceptable standard

In assessing the Standard Details Questionnaire and Proposal we will consider your written responses as requested and references. We reserve the right to contact any of your previous customers/clients for feedback.

12   SCORING

The Standard Details Questionnaire will be assessed, and the Proposal will be scored against the scoring principles and weighted against the following criteria:

- **Track Reference and References – maximum 40 points**

- **Skills, Experience and Knowledge – maximum 40 points**

- **Value for Money – maximum 20 points**

10.   SELECTION OF PROVIDER

The highest scoring tender will be selected against each Lot.

If none of the responses are deemed satisfactory, the Chamber reserves the right to consider alternative procurement options.

The provision of false information will disqualify organisations from further consideration. Successful and non-successful providers will be notified in accordance with the Timetable for Submission.

Potential bidders should note that if a bid is fundamentally unacceptable on a key issue, regardless of its other merits, the bid will be rejected.

11.   TIMELINE FOR SUBMISSION

Tender opened:	25 November 2021
Submission of questions from bidders by:	2 December 2020
Chamber to respond to questions by:	4 December 2020
Tender return deadline:	**Noon – 10 December 2020**
Panel scoring:	11 and 14 December 2020
Feedback to bidders:	15 December 2020
Contract signing date and inception meeting:	17 December 2020

12.   SUBMITTING YOUR PROPOSAL

Please ensure that all the required documentation is completed along with any supporting documentation.

Tenders submitted after the stipulated time and date will be rejected.

Tenders must be written in English.

Where the tenderer is a company the Standard Details Questionnaire and Proposal must be signed by a duly authorised representative of the company. In the case of a sole trader you should sign and give your name in full together with the name under which you are trading.

The tender must be clear, concise and not qualified in any way. The Chamber reserves the right to mark a tenderer down or exclude them from the procurement if the tender

contains any ambiguities or lacks clarity. Tenderers should submit only such information as is necessary to respond effectively to this brief.

Each tender must operate as a standalone bid and not be dependent on any other bid or factors external to the tender itself (that is the tender must be capable of being accepted in its own right).

Email your tender submission no later than **noon on Thursday 10 December 2020 to: tenders@emc-dnl.co.uk** with the subject line: **D2N2 Peer Networks (Lot Number)**

Your submission will be acknowledged.

If you wish to receive copies of any clarification questions submitted and the answers to them please register your interest by emailing tenders@emc-dnl.co.uk quoting the tender reference in the subject line.

13.   TENDER QUESTIONS

Any questions in relation to this invitation to tender should be submitted to rubina.blackwell@emc-dnl.co.uk.

The Chamber will respond to all reasonable clarifications as soon as possible and replies will be available for all to view on the Chamber's website www.emc-dnl.co.uk. It is your responsibility as a bidder to check the website for questions and responses however, if you register your interest in this tender (by emailing Rubina.blackwell@emc-dnl.co.uk) a copy of the questions and the answers will be sent to you.

Your questions and the answers to them will be publicly available. It is your responsibility to make sure that you do not include any information in your questions which you consider to be confidential or sensitive.

The deadline for receipt of clarifications is 2 December 2020 and no clarifications will be considered after this deadline.

The Chamber reserves the right (but will not be obliged) to seek clarification of any aspect of a tender during the evaluation phase where necessary for the purposes of carrying out a fair evaluation. Tenderers are asked to respond to such requests promptly.

14.   TERMS

The tenderer is responsible for all costs, expenses and liabilities incurred in the preparation of the tender submission.

It must be recognised that the Chamber reserves the right to withdraw this tender document and all funding contained within it without notice.

- No tender will be considered for acceptance if the potential provider has indulged or attempted to indulge in any corrupt practice or canvassed the tender with a member of staff employed by the Chamber

- If the successful provider has indulged or attempted to indulge in such practices and the tender is accepted, then grounds shall exist for the termination of the contract and the claiming of damages from the successful provider

- It is unlikely that any tender will be accepted which (a) is incomplete or inaccurately or inadequately completed or which purports to impose conditions other than those provided in the contract documents and (b) is delivered out of time or in a manner other than specified in the specification.

In submitting a tender against this contract, the potential provider confirms that he/she has not fixed or adjusted the amount of the tender by or under or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other person.

The potential provider also certifies that at no time before or following the submission of the tender has the tenderer carried out any of the following acts:

- Entering into any agreement or arrangement with any person that she/he shall refrain from tendering or as to the amount of any tender to be submitted;

- Offering or paying or giving or agreeing to give any sum of money or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to any person for doing or having done or causing or having caused to be done in relation to any other tender or proposed tender for the said work any act or thing of the sort described above. In the context of this clause the word 'person' includes any persons and anybody or association, corporate or unincorporated, and 'any agreement' includes any such transaction, formal or informal, and whether legally binding or not.

15. <u>FREEDOM OF INFORMATION</u>

Information in relation to this tender may be made available on demand in accordance with requirements of the [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#).

Potential providers should state if any of the information supplied by them is confidential or commercially sensitive or should not be disclosed in response to a request for information under the Act. Potential providers should state why they consider the information to be confidential or commercially sensitive. This will not guarantee that the information will not be disclosed but will be examined in the light of the exemptions provided in the Act.

It is important to note that information may be commercially sensitive for a time (eg during a tender process) but afterwards, it may not be. The timing of any request for information may be extremely important in determining whether the information is exempt. However, providers should note that no information is likely to be regarded as exempt forever.

16. <u>ATTACHMENTS</u>

Appendix A : Standard Details Questionnaire and Proposal

Annex 1: Peer Network Facilitator Profile & One-to-One Support Provider

Peer Network Facilitator

The D2N2 Peer Networks programme will see the creation of 23 peer networks across the D2N2 LEP area, which will be delivered by D2N2 Growth Hubs working in partnership with BEIS. Each will harness action learning to gain powerful results for the participants helping them to explore new thinking or opportunities, or find ways to overcome difficulties, or address other challenges.

The role of the facilitator is critical to the successful management and optimisation of an individual peer network – supporting the rapid building of trust and collaborative relationships between participants within the peer group (the cohort), providing strong leadership and direction, and driving the in-session action learning process to deliver tangible actions and solutions for each member of the group.

The facilitator has three main strands of responsibility:

- Management and direction of their individual peer network(s) and its successful facilitation using the principles of action learning
- Individual one-to-one communication with each participant to support reflection and provide signposting to the most appropriate local support
- The capture of Information, data, and insight to help inform the contract manager and programme about frequent hot topics for delegates

The role

The main duties of the facilitator are to enable participants to get the most benefit from their cohort experience this should include encouraging participants to:

- Express and discuss their ideas, concerns and understanding of the business situation facing them
- Reflect on and learn from things that did not turn out as expected
- Take responsibility for their own decisions, plans and actions
- Work together to agree both group and personal objectives
- Undertake constructive exploratory discussions within the cohort and avoid conflict.
- Maximise opportunities within their existing business
- Review their progress and identify realistic and practical options to realise their goals
- Connect with other sources of information, advice or further support when appropriate

Working to action learning principles the group facilitator will have the ability to:

- Respect the needs of participants
- Listen and respond effectively and check understanding
- Keep their promises
- Empathise with a range of different feelings and experiences
- Build and maintain an effective relationship with their participants
- Manage group dynamics and deal with conflict
- Generate creative energy within the cohort
- Develop a resourceful state in others
- Handle and respond effectively to change

- Encourage the group to focus on the output
- Shift group and individual perspective
- Evaluate people and processes
- Ensure the people involved retain ownership of the solutions arrived at
- Challenge people to think

The requirements

Facilitation of the peer network
- Facilitate and host a series of sessions (using GoToTraining video conference) that are inspirational and engaging
- Use the principles of action learning to successful facilitate each session
- Work with participants to develop a collaborative and open culture and supporting behaviours within the peer network cohort
- React and respond to the specific issues presented by participants within the sessions
- Focus the session topics on specific issues as directed by the cohort participants
- Champion the programme, its benefits and its impact on productivity
- Gather and capture learnings and good/best practice and feedback back insight, share best practice, and identify opportunities for improvements and new initiatives
- Work collaboratively with programme colleagues and other facilitators to ensure high quality service provision

During the course of the programme identify opportunities where participants could benefit from deeper support by referral into the Growth Hub and at the end of the action learning series the facilitator will hold a one-to-one review with each individual participant to help consolidate their experience into potential next steps.

- Undertake a structured one-to-one 'review and next steps' discussion to understand the challenges and opportunities they need to address, and develop a short action plan for follow-on support
- Identify opportunities for further business support and ensure effective signposting, referrals, and connections
- Link clients into further one-to-one support if not already connected and/or onto appropriate D2N2 Growth Hub support, and liaise effectively to support relevant account management activities
- Undertake any necessary handover requirements

Supporting the programme more broadly
- Support relevant stakeholders to promote, engage, and sell the programme and its activities
- Be flexible and responsive to the needs of participants and the programme managers
- Participate in programme-specific training and orientation
- Maintain participant activity records and documents
- Conform with any other relevant contractual requirements, targets, outputs and reporting
- Comply with all aspects of the programme's Quality Assurance Framework
- Support in-programme and post-programme review and evaluation activities

Key skills and qualifications

Facilitators should have a range of competencies, enabling them to demonstrate their individual credibility to businesses in the network. All will have the following attributes:

- Strong facilitation capabilities and toolset – including the use of action learning principles
- Proven facilitation track record built through work performed with small-businesses, entrepreneurs, ambitious business owners and leaders
- Technical skills to run and manage groups virtually using video conference / collaboration tools
- Excellent understanding of the range of business issues associated with growth, productivity, innovation, strategy, people and skills, driving change, resilience, technology adoption
- Good understanding of the specific needs, characteristics and issues faced by SMEs with the local region
- Appreciation of the business/organisational/economic challenges posed by COVID-19

Key characteristics:

Essential
- Optimistic, enthusiastic and self-motivated, with an empathetic approach
- Engaging personal style, energetic personality
- Understanding and appreciation of smaller business – from micros to large SMEs
- Passionate about getting the best out of people, with a genuine interest in supporting others to excel
- Integrity, independence and patience
- Knowledge and application of facilitation methodologies and toolsets – including action learning styles
- Proven track record in high-impact facilitation in the SME space
- Strong interpersonal skills, with a robust but respectful and constructive approach to facilitation
- Able to offer constructive challenge
- Credibility, a strong business acumen, commercial mindset and excellent project management skills
- Able to interact comfortably at owner/MD/CEO/Board level, with great communication, collaboration and storytelling skills
- Flexible approach to solving business problems and the ability to articulate solutions
- High degree of personal ethics, able to understand and reflect LEP/GH/BESI strategy and values
- Ability to rapidly evaluate the needs of participants and suggest appropriate support based on their capacity, ability and motivation
- Practical understanding of the current landscape of publicly funded business support (local and national)
- Strong IT/technical skills, including an understanding of video conference platforms (e.g. Teams/ Zoom/Hangouts), computerised management information systems, diary management, and CRM databases
- Excellent stakeholder management and relationship management abilities

Desirable
- Experience of developing and leading peer-to-peer groups, peer boards, or peer networks
- Experience of operating in senior leadership positions within an SME
- Experience setting up, running, and growing an SME business

- Professional experience of managing and delivering business assessment, advice and development
- Ability to structure, analyse and present complex ideas and data, as well as resolve complex problems
- Relevant qualifications and accreditations

Peer Network One-to-One Support Provider – for the provision of one-to-one support

The Peer Network Programme provides additional one-to-one support for each participant. This begins once the formal peer network set is complete and requires the provision of one-to-one follow-on business-focused coaching/mentoring/support to individual participants through a mixture of consultations and signposting.

The role

The main duties of the One-to-One Support Provider include:

- Analysing the specific difficulties posed to the business by the impact of COVID-19 and what actions should be taken by the SME participant to tackle those issues, in conjunction with their learning from the peer networks
- Agreeing with the SME participant ways to maximise opportunities within their existing business
- Encouraging the SME participant to express and discuss their ideas, concerns and understanding of the business situation facing them
- Supporting the SME participant in creating both business and personal objectives and goals
- Helping the SME participant to review their progress and set realistic and practical options to realise their goals
- Helping the SME participant to reflect on and learn from things that did not turn out as expected
- Signposting the SME participant to other sources of information, advice or further support when appropriate
- Encouraging the SME participant to take responsibility for their own decisions, plans and actions.

The requirements
One-to-one follow-on coaching/mentoring/support
- Work with the participant to understand their strategy, the challenges and opportunities they face, and agree a plan for follow-on advice which will address specific barriers to productivity and growth
- Deliver a series of structured one-to-one sessions to help address the identified challenges and opportunities
- Provide wide-ranging coaching, mentoring, support and direction tailored to individual participants
- Understand the local business support landscape to ensure effective signposting, referrals, and connections
- Refer clients back into (or onto) the D2N2 Growth Hub support and liaise effectively to support their account management activities

Supporting the programme more broadly
- Support relevant stakeholders to promote, engage, and sell the programme and its activities

- Be flexible and responsive to the needs of participants and the programme managers
- Participate in programme-specific training and orientation
- Maintain participant activity records and documents
- Conform with any other relevant contractual requirements, targets, outputs and reporting
- Comply with all aspects of the programme's Quality Assurance Framework
- Support in-programme and post-programme review and evaluation activities

Key characteristics:
Essential
- Optimistic, enthusiastic and self-motivated, with an empathetic approach
- Engaging personal style, energetic personality
- Understanding and appreciation of smaller business – from micros to large SMEs
- Passionate about getting the best out of people, with a genuine interest in supporting others to excel
- Integrity, independence and patience
- Knowledge and application of coaching/mentoring/consulting methodologies and toolsets
- Proven track record in high-impact coaching/mentoring/consulting, and SME business advice
- Strong interpersonal skills, able to offer constructive challenge
- Strong influencer, significant experience of coaching/mentoring/advising/supporting others through change
- Credibility, a strong business acumen, commercial mindset and excellent project management skills
- Able to interact comfortably at owner/MD/CEO/Board level, with great communication, collaboration and storytelling skills
- Flexible approach to solving business problems and the ability to articulate solutions
- High degree of personal ethics, able to understand and reflect LEP/GH/BESI strategy and values
- Ability to rapidly evaluate the needs of participants and suggest appropriate support based on their capacity, ability and motivation
- Practical understanding of the current landscape of publicly funded business support (local and national)
- Strong IT/technical skills, including an understanding of video conference platforms (e.g. Teams/ Zoom/Hangouts), computerised management information systems, diary management, and CRM databases
- Excellent stakeholder management and relationship management abilities

Desirable
- Experience of operating in senior leadership positions within an SME
- Experience setting up, running, and growing an SME business
- Professional experience of managing and delivering business assessment, advice and development
- Ability to structure, analyse and present complex ideas and data, as well as resolve complex problems
- Relevant qualifications and accreditations