

## Project Officer – SME Growth Manager

Salary Details: £37,890 - £39,880

Kirklees Council

Economy and Skills

Place of Work: Civic Centre 3, High Street, Huddersfield, HD1 2TG

Contract type: Temporary

Working Pattern: Full time

Hours per Week: 37

**Closing Date: 27<sup>th</sup> June 2021**



**European Union**

European Regional  
Development Fund

### Summary Sheet – Project Officer (SME Growth Manager) – Grade 12

**This job is temporary up to the end of March 2023 due to specific funding.**

The Project Officer (SME Growth Manager) will work as part of the local spoke of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Growth Service (GS). The LEP GS is the Government-backed Business Growth Hub covering all the Leeds City Region (LCR). It provides free and impartial access to all of the publicly funded business support available in LCR, including products delivered directly by the Leeds City Region Local Enterprise Partnership and by its local, regional and national partners, including Local Authorities (LAs), Department for International Trade, Innovate UK, Northern Powerhouse Investment Fund etc.

The GS operates as a 'hub and spoke' model with a central business gateway that handles enquiries from businesses of all sizes, and a team of GMs, who work more intensively with SMEs that require support to achieve growth and/or sustainability. The activities of this role is to operate at a Kirklees level, account -managing relationships with only ERDF eligible SMEs contributing to the proposed project outputs The GM will focus on the delivery of 3 hour non-financial support to SMEs and link these businesses to the right support at the right time to meet their growth plans. You will be based in Kirklees, with travel required across that district and less frequently across the Leeds City Region.

#### **As a Project Officer (SME Growth Manager) you will:**

- Deliver an Information, Diagnosis and Brokerage (IDB) function to SMEs in Leeds City Region, in the process providing them with 3 hours of bespoke support to enable them to realise their business growth, improvement and sustainability.
- Account-manage relationships with SMEs and link them to the full range of business support products and services available to them, including local, city- regional, regional and national support.
- Diagnose in detail the needs of SMEs and put together packages of support tailored to the specific challenges and opportunities facing them.
- Undertake specific activity on behalf of individual SMEs (determined by a detailed diagnostic) to improve their business resilience, with a specific focus on property requirements, financial planning and regulatory/ legislative impacts.
- Develop and maintain a forensic working knowledge of the products and services available to SMEs in Leeds City Region.

- Build strong, lasting and multi-layered working relationship with cohorts of SMEs (up to 60 per year, although this may vary in accordance with local priorities, opportunities and the specific needs of each SMEJ).
- Build strong and lasting working relationships with key individuals involved in the delivery and development of products and services to support the growth and sustainability of SMEs (including key private sector intermediaries, such as banks, accountants, legal practices, property agents/chartered surveyors and architects).
- Utilise contacts in the business support environment to ensure SMEs are referred to relevant products and services in a seamless, effective and integrated manner.
- Proactively identify strategically important SMEs through a variety of engagement-routes, including existing business networks and support-providers, attendance at events and use of business data/intelligence.
- Proactively link SMEs to new products and services that enter the business support marketplace.
- Contribute to the ongoing development of the SME Growth Manager function, including best practice-exchange with other managers at regular workshop sessions.
- Operate within a shared quality assurance framework and working protocol, including SME diagnosis, Growth Service and ERDF/ESIF branding, performance reporting and data sharing.
- Record all interaction with SME clients on the shared CRM system in line with agreed LEP Growth Hub working protocol.
- Contribute to the ongoing development and delivery of products and services to improve support for SMEs.

**To undertake this role, you will need the following knowledge, skills and experience:**

- Knowledge and experience of SME business drivers, priorities and issues.
- Knowledge and practical experience of delivering business support projects/programmes.
- Knowledge of external funding streams for SME growth.
- Experience of matrix-management across teams, and in other partner organisations (e.g. Local Authorities and SMEs).
- Detailed understanding of EU funding including the implications on procurement regulations, outputs, eligibility and financial monitoring.
- Knowledge and understanding of the Leeds City Region SME population and the products and services available in Leeds City Region to support SME growth. Excellent understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing strategically important SME.
- Excellent understanding of the business and financial planning cycle within larger SMEs, and of current relevant approaches to financial resilience and risk management/mitigation.
- Detailed working knowledge of the core activities involved in scoping and satisfying business property location requirements.
- Detailed working knowledge of the products and services available to support the growth and sustainability of SMEs.
- Proven ability to diagnose the business challenges and growth opportunities of SMEs in a straightforward and business-friendly manner.
- Proven ability to develop and implement joint action plans with SMEs capable of addressing barriers to growth and realising growth opportunities.
- Ability to refer SMEs to appropriate support (both public and private) in a seamless, effective and integrated manner.
- Experience of building strong, trusted and multi-layered working relationships with people running/managing strategically important SMEs
- Experience of building strong and trusted working relationships with people from the private and public sectors developing and delivering support to strategically important SMEs.
- Experience of managing relationships with multiple businesses at any one time in an effective and client-focused manner.
- Willingness to identify and share best practice and to contribute fully to the ongoing improvement of the LEP Growth Service, and particularly the SME Growth Manager function.
- Willingness to participate fully in any evaluation of the LEP Growth Service, and/or, of the products and services accessed via it
- Willingness to operate under a shared LEP Growth Hub brand and within an agreed quality assurance framework. including SME engagement business diagnosis performance e-reporting, data sharing and ERDF publicity guidelines.
- Excellent communication skills, written and verbal
- Strong team player with a confident and assured approach to working with a range of different people and organisations. Flexible, responsive and open to adopting new ways of working in a fast-moving environment.

