**Invitation to Tender (ITT)**

**ITT posted:** 30 August 2016  
**Apply by:** 23 September 2016  
**Start date:** 3 October 2016 **End date:** 16 December 2016  
**Location:** United Kingdom  
  
**For:** A Skills research project titled;

**‘Is internationalisation an effective mechanism to help tackle current Skills Development challenges in the UK?’**

# Overview of the British Council

The British Council is the United Kingdom's international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. The purpose of the British Council is to create international opportunities for the people of the UK and other countries and build trust between them worldwide

The British Council has principal offices located in 10 Spring Gardens, London SW1 2BN and Bridgewater House, 58 Whitworth Street, Manchester M1 6BB.

The British Council has offices based in the UK and in 109 countries.

More information about our work can be found at: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/>

1. **Research introduction and background**

[Skills and Employability](http://www.britishcouncil.org/education/skills-employability) is a core business area of the British Council’s that encourages closer links between education, employers and policy makers in the UK and worldwide to enhance the employability of individuals, particularly young people and disadvantaged groups. Our cultural relations objectives in terms of skills are:

* to build UK’s reputation as a trusted partner by developing effective approaches to skills development, vocational education and enterprise; and
* to provide young people with opportunities that increase their skills and employability, thus contributing to strong economic growth and stable societies.

In addition to our grant-funded work, we bid for and deliver large donor-funded international technical assistance contracts in skills development around the world. We also look for opportunities to co-create and co-fund projects and initiatives with partners.

The British Council is commissioning this research to further understand the impact and potential impact of internationalisation on Skills Development with particular emphasis on Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET). We are particularly concerned with the potential effectiveness of internationalisation as a mechanism to address current challenges faced by the Skills sector in the UK. We are seeking to understand the measureable evidence of the impact of internationalisation on different challenges facing learners, staff, organisations and national policy and whether the effect is positive or negative. Additionally we wish to learn from current practice and strategy to understand; if internationalisation can be a positive solution to tackling one or more challenges, how a cohesive internationalisation strategy can be best implemented and to what purposes.

# Scope of work, specification and outputs

The British Council is commissioning this independent study to examine the case for internationalisation in addressing challenges for Skills Development and Technical and Vocational Education in the UK.

By internationalisation we do not just mean attracting international students and running programmes overseas, but any activity which reflects an international perspective or consideration in Skills Development in Vocational Education such as;

* Having an international mind-set at organisational or policy level to understand global thought leadership, best practice and pedagogy.
* An understanding of global labour market needs and current trends to help build skills that are needed in the global community
* Encouraging an international cultural perspective in skills development initiatives to improve citizenship and soft skills.
* The development of curriculum and qualifications with international ‘currency’.

This report should focus on a series of thematic areas identified through an initial scoping study of the UK system and current opportunities and challenges. This initial scoping will form the basis for the rest of the report and identify the key challenges and opportunities for Vocational Education organisations and Skills Development policy makers in the UK at this moment in time and in the future. We will then seek to assess the impact or potential impact of internationalisation on these aspects.

Some examples of what these aspects might be are:

* Aspiration
* Responding to Labour Market Need
* Positive community integration
* Currency of Qualifications and Mobility
* Staff retention and innovation
* Inclusion

The above list is indicative only and the thematic areas will be agreed once the scoping has taken place and the appointed person(s) has met with the British Council Skills Team. To ensure focus and the level of detail required it is our recommendation that the number of thematic areas is restricted to a maximum of six. We are particularly keen to break down each thematic area and understand the impact or potential impact of internationalisation on four key parts of the Skills System, namely;

* Learners
* Staff
* Organisations
* National Policy

An analysis should then be carried out on i) whether internationalisation is an effective solution or enhancement with regards to each thematic area ii) what are the expected and proven impacts of internationalisation for this aspect iii) suggested characteristics of interventions in internationalisation based on case studies and interviews.

This will then inform an overall conclusion that draws the findings together to present a clear set of recommendations.

Scope

To achieve the necessary degree of focus in the study we are keen that priority is given primarily to the practical and measureable and avoids being solely a discussion of concepts or ideas. Therefore we anticipate that whilst the overall title of the piece will be ‘Is internationalisation an effective mechanism to help tackle current Skills Development challenges in the UK?’ we will limit the paper to the six identified subject areas and subsequent conclusions that can be drawn from these both individually and as representative of the system as a whole.

The research objectives are:

* 1. Conduct an analysis of the current and future UK priorities and challenges for TVET and identify key thematic areas and challenges to further research the impact of internationalisation
  2. Conduct interviews and literature review for each of the agreed thematic areas to:
     + Research what current initiatives are in place
     + Examine the effectiveness of current provision in contributing to tackling key challenges
     + Understand how the effectiveness of internationalisation projects or perspective is calculated and shared
     + Learn what the impact of internationalisation is at different levels of the Skills Sector (learners, staff, organisations and National Policy) and where the most benefit is being realised and could be realised.
     + Through dialogue understand best practice in planning and implementation both in individual projects and overall strategy to ensure maximum impact
  3. Suggest characteristics of successful internationalisation generally and where resources could be best targeted.
  4. Recommend ways to enhance the effectiveness of internationalisation in TVET at a practical and policy level
  5. Promote best practice by creating a matrix of impact or theory of change to inform strategic planning for internationalisation in TVET for the sector.

Expected outputs:

1. An initial scoping study of current challenges with identification of thematic areas to focus on which will form the introduction to the main report.
2. Attend an inception meeting with the British Council Skills team to agree the scope of the research.
3. Complete a literature review on the theme with full bibliography
4. Undertake a series of interviews with identified stakeholders to understand approaches, impact and ideology on each theme.
5. Write a 40 page (maximum) report which includes;
   1. Contents
   2. Foreword including the findings of the scoping study of current challenges in TVET and summary of the current landscape.
   3. Executive summary
   4. Main body – findings (maximum of 6 chapters linked to thematic areas identified in 1)
      1. An analysis of current practice and thinking on each theme with reference to each of the four groups (learners, staff, organisations and National Policy)
      2. Suggestions on the characteristics of best practice drawn from interviews and case studies.
      3. A conclusion as to relative merits and demerits of internationalisation for each thematic area.
   5. A conclusion on the effectiveness of internationalisation for TVET more generally and where resources may best be targeted
   6. Recommendations including a proposed matrix / theory of change for a joined up approach to implementing internationalisation at a strategic level.
   7. Acknowledgements
   8. References

Note: British Council holds all rights to the layout, design, and branding of the final report.

# Expertise required

The successful candidate will possess excellent written communication skills, with a proven ability to conduct impactful, insightful research allied to significant expertise in Skills Development and Technical and Vocational Education. The ability to analyse the current UK policy landscape to identify key challenges and how internationalisation has, and can be applied to them is important. The successful candidate will have experience of working in the UK Skills Sector and ideally will have a strong understanding of the strategic implications of internationalisation. They will also have significant expertise and experience in working with a range of Vocational Education institutions, ideally both employers and training providers. They should have strong knowledge of a range of internationalisation initiatives and methodologies and be able to work with a diverse group of suggested partners as well as suggesting their own.

The intellectual property generated during the course of this project is to be transferred to the British Council. The terms and conditions for this arrangement will be stipulated in the eventual contract with the supplier.

The appointed supplier will be obliged to abide by the British Council’s brand guidelines for the editorial style of the report and its visual identity. For information about this is available here: [www.brand.britishcouncil.org](http://www.brand.britishcouncil.org).

# Timescale

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Date** |
| Invitation to Tender (ITT) Released | 30 August 2016 |
| Clarification / Questions from suppliers (includes T&Cs queries) | 9 September 2016 |
| Clarification Responses from the British Council (includes T&Cs responses) | 12 September 2016 |
| ITT Return Date | 23 September 2016 |
| Evaluation of all received ITTs complete | 28 September 2016 |
| Selection of Preferred Supplier | 29 September 2016 |
| Contract signed and work commences | 3 October 2016 |
| Completed research report delivered | 16 December 2016 |

Note: Timescales are estimated and may be subject to change.

# Instructions for Responding

1. Provide up to date contact details using the template provided in ANNEX 2
2. Complete ‘Supplier Response’ using the template given in ANNEX 3, ensuring all answers are inserted below each section of the British Council requirements.
3. Submit all mandatory documentation by email to: [andrew.hall@britishcouncil.org](mailto:andrew.hall@britishcouncil.org) by **23 September 2016**, with the subject title “Internationalisation in Skills Proposal”.

In addition, the following key points must be considered when responding to this ITT:

* Please keep in mind the evaluation methodology and weighting given in ANNEX 4
* Supporting evidence can be provided to substantiate your response – please ensure that all attachments/supporting evidence is clearly labelled and in PDF, JPG, PPT, Word or Excel formats only.
* Any supporting marketing materials should be provided separately to the main ITT response. All the references to such marketing content should be explicitly annotated in the ITT response.
* Completion and submission of your response does not guarantee award of any contract from the British Council.
* Please ensure that your responses are concise, unambiguous, and directly address the requirement stated or question posed.

# Clarification Questions

Any questions on the ITT, project outline or contracting details, should be submitted via email to [andrew.hall@britishcouncil.org](mailto:andrew.hall@britishcouncil.org) by **9 September 2016**.

# ANNEX 1 –

# Conditions and contractual requirements

The Contracting Authority is the British Council which includes any subsidiary companies and other organisations that control or are controlled by the British Council. The contract awarded will be for the duration of the project, subject to the submission of the final report. The British Council reserves the right to demand that the chosen supplier works in partnership with one or more other parties for the delivery of this project. Any such decision will be undertaken in consultation with the chosen bidder.

The appointed supplier will only process personal data accessed in performance of the services in accordance with the British Council ’s instructions and will not use such data for any other purpose. The contracted supplier will undertake to process any personal data on the British Council’s behalf in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and ensure appropriate and legislative consent is acquired where necessary.

The British Council is committed to equality and to positive action to promote this. It believes that an Equal Opportunities Policy helps to ensure that there is no unjustified discrimination in the recruitment, retention, training and development of staff on the basis of gender including transgender, marital status, sexual identify, region and belief, political opinion, race, work pattern, age, disability, HIV/AIDS status, socio-economic background, spent convictions, trade union activity or membership, on the basis of having or not having dependents, or any other relevant grounds. The appointed supplier must agree to operate in accordance with these principles while undertaking work at or on behalf of the British Council.

The British Council is committed to open government and to meeting its legal responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the “Act”). Accordingly, all information submitted to a public authority may need to be disclosed in response to a request under the Act. The British Council may also decide to include certain information in the publication scheme, which the British Council maintains under the Act.

If suppliers considers that any of the information included in their completed documentation is commercially sensitive, it should identify it and explain (in broad terms) what harm may result from disclosure if a request is received, and the time period applicable to that sensitivity. The suppliers should be aware that, even where they have indicated that information is commercially sensitive, the British Council might be required to disclose it under the Act if a request is received.

The suppliers should also note that the receipt of any material marked ‘confidential’ or equivalent by the British Council should not be taken to mean that the British Council accepts any duty of confidence by virtue of that marking.

The supplier will comply with all applicable legislation and codes of practice, including, where applicable, all legislation and statutory guidance relevant to the safeguarding and protection of children and vulnerable adults and with the British Council’s Child Protection Policy; in addition the supplier will ensure that where it engages any other party to supply any of the services under this agreement that that party will also comply with the same requirements as if they were a party to this agreement.

All relevant policies that suppliers are expected to adhere to can be found on the British Council website – [www.britishcouncil.org/about/policies](http://www.britishcouncil.org/about/policies). The list of policies includes (but it is not limited to):

* Anti-Fraud and Corruption
* Child Protection Policy
* Equal Opportunities Policy
* Records Management
* Privacy

By submitting a tender, you are agreeing to be bound by the terms of this ITT and the Contract without further negotiation or amendment.

If the terms of the Contract render the proposals in your tender unworkable, you should submit a clarification in accordance with this ITT and the British Council will consider whether any amendment to the Contract is required. Any amendments shall be published via email and shall apply to all tenderers. Any amendments which are proposed but not approved by the British Council through this process will not be acceptable and may be construed as a rejection of the terms leading to the disqualification of the tender.

This document does not constitute an offer to provide goods and/or services to the British Council. All costs incurred in the preparation of the proposal are the supplier’s responsibility. The British Council is not obliged to award a contract for these services and reserves the right to withdraw from the procurement process at any stage. The British Council reserves the right to request reference information.

# Confidentiality

All information contained within this document is confidential and is provided only to give suppliers an adequate understanding of the British Council’s requirements and under no circumstances should be disclosed to a third party without the British Council’s consent.

The contents of this ITT are being made available by the British Council on condition that:

* Tenderers shall at all times treat the contents of the ITT and any related documents (together called the ‘Information’) as confidential, save in so far as they are already in the public domain;
* Tenderers shall not disclose, copy, reproduce, distribute or pass any of the Information to any other person at any time;
* Tenderers shall not use any of the Information for any purpose other than for the purposes of submitting (or deciding whether to submit) a Tender; and
* Tenderers shall not undertake any publicity activity within any section of the media.

Tenderers may disclose, distribute or pass any of the Information to the Tenderer’s advisers, sub-contractors or to another person provided that either:

* This is done for the sole purpose of enabling a Tender to be submitted and the person receiving the Information undertakes in writing to keep the Information confidential on the same terms as if that person were the Tenderer; or
* The Tenderer obtains the prior written consent of the British Council in relation to such disclosure, distribution or passing of Information; or
* The disclosure is made for the sole purpose of obtaining legal advice from external lawyers in relation to the procurement or to any Framework Agreement arising from it; or
* The Tenderer is legally required to make such a disclosure.

In relation to the above the definition of ‘person’ includes but is not limited to any person, firm, body or association, corporate or incorporate.

The British Council may disclose detailed information relating to Tenders to its officers, employees, agents or advisers and the British Council may make any of the contractual documents available for private inspection by its officers, employees, agents or advisers. The British Council also reserves the right to disseminate information that is materially relevant to the procurement to all Tenderers, even if the information has only been requested by one Tenderer, subject to the duty to protect each Tenderer's commercial confidentiality in relation to its Tender (unless there is a requirement for disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act).

# Payment and Invoicing

The Council will pay correctly addressed and undisputed invoices within 30 days. The essential information on an invoice for the Council is:

* A description of the services supplied
* The Council reference number/Purchase Order number
* Addressed to Accounts Payable
* The costs including VAT (if applicable) and any other charges.

**ANNEX 2 –**

**Response to Invitation to Tender**

**For the supply of ‘Internationalisation in TVET Research Project’ to the British Council**

**Company name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Contact name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Contact email address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Contact Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

## ANNEX 3 -

## Supplier Response

**Scoring -** the scoring methodology for evaluating responses is included in ANNEX 4. This will be applied and weighted for all selection criteria below:

|  |
| --- |
| **Section 1: Methodology and Approach**  Selection Criteria Weighting: 20%  Please describe your proposed research methodology and project plan for this work, including an estimated timeline (keeping in mind the December delivery date). Please note that you are welcome to propose more than one methodology for this project. Each methodology must include a full costing, as per Criterion 5 below. |
| **Section 2: Track record of similar projects**  Selection Criteria Weighting: 20%  Please provide a summary of relevant projects undertaken over the last five years. Please highlight any research projects conducted in internationalisation and/or Technical and Vocational Education and Training in addition to your previous work with the British Council if any. |
| **Section 3: Capability and experience of the individual/s proposed to undertake this project**  Selection Criteria Weighting: 30%  You should identify your experience of work in TVET / Skills Development and an understanding of the principles of internationalisation. You should also demonstrate significant expertise and experience in working with a range of Skills Development Stakeholders and an understanding of the challenges with regards to Skills Development in the UK. You should highlight strong knowledge of a range of initiatives and methodologies and be able to work with a range of suggested contacts as well as suggesting your own. |
| **Section 5: Cost**  Selection Criteria Weighting: 30%  Please provide a detailed cost breakdown of your proposal/s. We expect this work to take no fewer than 20 days and no more than 25 in line with the following breakdown.  4 days initial scoping of current UK challenges and opportunities including inception meeting with BC staff  15 days research, literature review, interviews, writing and editing  2 days for revisions after first submission  4 days promotion and speaking engagements.  Subject to prior agreement and where required reasonable costs for travel and subsistence will be reimbursed. |

**ANNEX 4 -**

# Evaluation Criteria

Each bidder will have their tender response evaluated as set out below:

|  |
| --- |
| **Stage 1:** Tenders will be checked to ensure that they have been completed correctly and all necessary information has been provided. Tenders correctly completed with all relevant information being provided will proceed to Stage 2. Any tender not correctly completed and/or containing omissions may be rejected at this point. Where a tender is rejected at this point it will automatically be disqualified and will not be further evaluated.  **↓**  **Stage 2:** Eligibility statements will then be reviewed to confirm that the bidder is deemed eligible to tender for the contract described in this ITT. The tenders of bidders deemed eligible will proceed to Stage 3. Bidders may be excluded from the process at this point on the basis of the mandatory and/or discretionary grounds for rejection in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 (as amended). Where a bidder is excluded at this point its tender will automatically be disqualified and will not be further evaluated.  **↓**  **Stage 3:** If a bidder succeeds in passing both Stages 1 and 2 of the evaluation, then it will have its detailed Supplier Response evaluated in accordance with the evaluation methodology set out below. Please provide details for all five criteria. |

Supplier responses will be assessed using the following criteria and weightings. A score will be given for each part of the information submitted that is to be assessed. The qualitative aspects of your response will be evaluated entirely on your response submitted.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Weighting** |
| 1. Methodology and Approach | 20% |
| 1. Track record of similar projects (for example conducting research projects or report writing, working with the British Council, research into internationalisation and/or Technical and Vocational Education). | 20% |
| 1. Capability and experience of the individual/s proposed to undertake this project with particular emphasis on knowledge of the UK Skills Sector and experience and understanding of internationalisation within that setting. | 30% |
| 1. Cost | 30% |

The responses under each sub category will be scored based on the following matrix:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Points** | **Interpretation** |
| 10 | **Excellent** -A comprehensive and strong answer indicating the provider is fully capable and experienced to deliver the required outcomes. A detailed response that directly responds to all requirements with no ambiguity and relevant examples provided. |
| 7 | **Good** -There are slight concerns that the organisation will not be able to achieve all the outcomes required and response lacked details of relevant experience. A less detailed response that broadly responds to the requirement with some ambiguity and few relevant examples provided. |
| 5 | **Adequate** - There are concerns that the organisation will not be able to achieve the outcomes required and response significantly lacks details of relevant experience. A less detailed response that broadly responds to the requirement with some ambiguity and no/irrelevant examples provided. |
| 3 | **Poor Response/Limited Evidence** - There are serious indications that the organisation will not be able to achieve the outcomes required and has not provided appropriate evidence of experience to successfully deliver the outcomes required. A response that is not entirely relevant to the requirement, with ambiguity and lacking specific detail. |
| 0 | **Unacceptable** - The answer is non-compliant and/or no relevant information has been received to demonstrate the organisation can achieve the required outcomes. No response or a response that is entirely irrelevant. |

The panel appointed to evaluate the bids will individually score all responses received. Each score will then have the relevant weighting applied. The mean average of the weighted scores awarded by each member of the evaluation panel will then be calculated.

The mean average scores after the weighting has been applied, will be added together to produce an overall total score.

The pricing evaluation will be based on the response with the lowest overall cost being assigned a score of 10 and all other responses will be calculated pro-rata.

Please note that all your responses to the tender requirements and the pricing schedule will be incorporated into a contractual document.

**The successful tender will be the tender with the highest score awarded at the end of the evaluation process outlined in this ITT.**