

INVITATION TO TENDER

Notice

**For the provision of support for the regional
coordination of English for Speakers of Other
Languages (ESOL)**

August 2025

Invitation to Tender

East Midlands Councils (EMC) invites suitably qualified and experienced suppliers to bid for a contract for the provision of support for East Midlands Councils' (EMC's) coordination activities in the regional English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) sector.

Overview

East Midlands Councils Introduction

EMC represents the interests of local councils to Government and national organisations, fostering collaboration on key issues and providing advice and services on employment, training and development, housing, health, transport, planning and asylum and refugee resettlement.

East Midlands Councils provide the opportunity for this collaboration to take place. It is the consultative forum for local authorities in the East Midlands, providing a strong voice for the region. It gives support to councils to help them develop their workforce and leadership and improve their services.

East Midlands Councils is a member-owned and led organisation consisting of 40 local authorities in the Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland areas.

Town and Parish Councils, Fire Authorities, voluntary bodies, and other organisations engaged in the delivery of local services may apply to join us as an Associate Member.

We are also a Regional Employers' Organisation, representing the interests of employers of local government staff.

We provide regional leadership on asylum and refugee resettlement, workforce issues, supporting the leading role of councils on Midlands Connect and the Midlands Engine and work with DfT on the East Midlands Rail Franchise process, all of which provide huge benefits to local authorities.

We also work with MPs and the East Midlands Chambers of Commerce to support the East Midlands All Party Parliamentary Group.

Strategic Migration Partnership Introduction

East Midlands Councils hosts and provides governance for the Strategic Migration Partnership for the East Midlands, one of 12 such regional partnerships across the UK funded by the Home Office and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

The East Midlands Strategic Migration Partnership (EMSMP) provides a regional advisory, development, and consultation function for member organisations from the statutory, voluntary, community and private sectors, enabling co-ordination and provision of advice, support, and services for migrants.

During 2024/25, EMC introduced a regional ESOL programme to develop understanding of the English language training sector, and to increase opportunities for collaborative and constructive interaction between ESOL stakeholders of all kinds.

This activity resulted in the development of a register and map of ESOL provision in each

locality of the East Midlands ([Map of ESOL provision in the East Midlands](#)), and a qualitative assessment of the features, successes, gaps and challenges of the regional ESOL sector ([ESOL in the East Midlands: An Evaluative Report](#)). This report also contains recommendations for ongoing development of the regional ESOL sector.

Subsequently, the programme moved to engage sector stakeholders in each locality in the co-development of collaborative ESOL forums; there are now five such groups operating in the region, covering each locality in the following groupings:

- Derby & Derbyshire
- Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland
- Lincolnshire
- Nottingham & Nottinghamshire
- Northamptonshire

The programme formally came to an end on 31st March 2025 with the establishment of these forums.

Procurement Objective

EMC seeks to embed, maintain and develop the outputs of the regional ESOL programme, principally by supporting the development and operation of the local-level ESOL forums, working with EMC and its partners to implement recommendations contained in the *ESOL in the East Midlands* report, and building on research and mapping work to develop evidence-driven insights.

Requirements

The contract will run for a period of six months, from 22nd September 2025 to 31st March 2026, and will require the following:

- Attend and support development of the emerging sub-regional collaborative ESOL forums, paying attention to recommendations contained in *ESOL in the East Midlands* (see Scope and Specification Appendix One).
- Develop and convene an annual region-wide ESOL conference to bring sub-regional strands together.
- Support EMC to deliver Home Office objectives relating to ESOL (see Scope & Specification Appendix Two).
- Build on previous research and mapping work to support sub-regional forums and wider region-wide activities with evidence-driven insights, and maintaining oversight of developments in the regional sector with relevance to this research.
- Work with EMC to develop engagement and collaboration with emerging Combined Authorities.
- Support EMC in management of day-to-day ESOL enquiries, and support quarterly monitoring returns to Home Office in respect of ESOL.
- To map relevant ESOL qualifications, highlighting their equivalency and progression routes between them.
- Provide a report evaluating the delivery of services specified in this tender.

Please see the scope and specification document for further guidance on the requirements.

Contract Value & Payment Schedule

This contract is valued at a maximum of £50,000, and payment will be provided according to the indicative schedule below. The quality of deliverables will be assessed according to the acceptance criteria outlined in the Scope and Specification. EMC will not release the final payment until the acceptance criteria are met.

Payment Number	Payment Condition	Payment Amount (%)
1	Payment upon signing agreement after appointment.	50
2	Payment upon completion of contract and acceptance of deliverables	50

GDPR & Data Protection

The Data Protection Act 2018 controls how personal information is used by organisations, businesses or the government and The Data Protection Act 2018 is the UK's implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

EMC is committed to transparency about how it collects and uses personal data, and to meeting its data protection obligations. EMC's GDPR Policy includes how we share information with third parties. EMC will therefore refer learners to the successful provider and will not gather, retain, or share personal information.

On awarding any contract, EMC expects the successful bidder to comply with UK regulations relating to GDPR and Data Protection, specifically in relation to protecting personal data of learners. EMC will not share personal information without the express and documented permission of the data subject.

Bidders who cannot demonstrate their ability to comply with UK regulations relating to GDPR and Data Protection to the satisfaction of EMC will be excluded from the procurement process.

Bidder Qualifications

The successful bidder will demonstrate expertise and experience in the strategic coordination of ESOL at regional and local levels, and will demonstrate a track record of successful interventions to develop the profile and impact of ESOL training.

The qualifications and experience listed above must be demonstrated within the application form, bids which do not include this information in sufficient detail to the satisfaction of EMC and/or include this information in a different format will be excluded from the procurement process.

Evaluation

Bidders are expected to demonstrate their ability to fulfil the tender requirements by completing the application form and screening questions.

The application form will outline the scoring mechanism including weighting and will state the

maximum score available for each of the evaluated questions.

However, there is no set threshold beyond which bidders are automatically invited to interview, EMC reserves the right to interview the number of bidders it deems necessary to ensure successful delivery of the requirements, or to appoint directly from a bid where EMC judges a bid to be of appropriate quality.

Bidders are expected to demonstrate the suitability of their proposal within the application form provided additional information provided in other formats or as links embedded within the application form will not be considered as part of the bid for evaluation purposes.

Application Conditions

Please read our full scope and specification before applying.

Please ensure that all the information relevant to your bid is contained within the tender application form, any additional information submitted in another format and information contained within links placed within the application form will not be considered as part of the bid and as such will not be evaluated.

Applications which do not complete all the screening questions contained within the application form will not be progressed to the next stage of the tender process.

Applications which cannot demonstrate compliance with all the screening questions will not be progressed to the next stage of the tender process.

The deadline for submitting questions regarding the tender is 1700 on Friday 29th August 2025; all questions and answers will be appended to the EMC Tenders webpage no later than 1700 on Wednesday 3rd September 2025, and will be available for all potential applicants to view.

The deadline for submitting completed application forms is 1700 on Monday 15th September. Application forms submitted after the deadline will not be progressed to the next stage of the tender process.

Please return your tender submissions via email to: smp@emcouncils.gov.uk
Submissions by post will not be accepted.

Procurement Timetable

Invitation to tender issued	Friday 22 nd August 2025
Deadline for tender questions	Friday 29 th August 2025 (1700)
Deadline for submission of proposals	Monday 15 th September 2025 (1700)
Notification of award and contract signing	Monday 22 nd September 2025
Expected Contract Start Date	Monday 22 nd September 2025
Expected Contract End Date	31 st March 2026
Delivery of End of Contract Report	30 th April 2026

East Midlands Councils

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