Invitation to Quote
West Midlands Regional Cluster Learning and Development Needs Analysis

Issued by: Think Active on behalf of the West Midlands Regional Cluster
Issue Date: 29th June 2026
Contact for Queries and Submission: hello@thinkactive.org
Contract Value: up to £10,000
Role Title: West Midlands Regional Cluster Learning and Development Needs Analysis
Submission Deadline: 17th July 2026
Contract Length: Completed within 3 months
Reporting to: The West Midlands Regional Cluster Steering Group via Energize Shropshire Telford & Wrekin
Location: West Midlands, UK

1. About Think Active and The West Midlands Regional Cluster

Think Active is the Active Partnership for Coventry, Solihull, and Warwickshire, championing the power of sport, physical activity and movement to transform lives and help people live well. We work with partners across health, education, sport, local government and the voluntary sector to use physical activity and movement to tackle inequalities and support happier, healthier lives. Read more at www.thinkactive.org . Think Active is the Lead Accountable Body for the West Midlands Regional Cluster.

The West Midlands Regional Cluster is one of Sport England's eight national Place Clusters and brings together the following West Midlands Active Partnerships:

- Active Black Country
- Active Herefordshire & Worcestershire
- Think Active (Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire)
- Energize Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin
- Sport Birmingham
- Together Active (Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent)

Energize Shropshire Telford & Wrekin will manage the contract with the successful provider.

2. Overview of the Opportunity

Think Active, on behalf of The West Midlands Regional Cluster is seeking quotations from suitably experienced consultants, organisations, or partnerships to undertake a comprehensive Learning and Development Needs Analysis (LDNA) and Regional Priorities Mapping exercise across the six Active Partnerships that make up the West Midlands Cluster. The successful provider will work with partners across the region to identify workforce strengths, development needs and shared priorities, resulting in a practical three-year Workforce Development Framework and Toolkit that supports place-based systems leadership and long-term collaboration.

This commission forms part of a Sport England Place Cluster investment designed to strengthen collaboration, learning, people development, and system leadership across the West Midlands. The West Midlands Cluster has identified a single collective priority: developing the people, skills, capabilities, and relationships needed to lead and sustain effective place-based system change. We recognise that our people are our greatest asset and that building workforce confidence, capability, and leadership is essential if we are to maximise the impact of current and future investment across the region.

The 6 Active Partnerships in the West Midlands collectively support over 6 million residents across a diverse geography that includes large metropolitan areas, market towns, rural communities, areas of significant deprivation, and some of the country's fastest-growing populations.

Across the region, partners are working within complex systems to tackle inactivity, reduce inequalities, improve health outcomes, strengthen communities, and contribute to wider economic and social priorities.

All six Active Partnerships are Sport England System Partners and are supporting a range of place-based investments, including Place Expansion, Deepening Place work, Place Universal Offer activity, Movement Fund investment and wider local and regional system change initiatives. Whilst each partnership operates within a unique local context, there is a shared commitment to place-led, system-wide approaches that address the root causes of inactivity and inequality.

The commission should be informed by the wider regional landscape, including the evolving relationship between Sport England, the West Midlands Combined Authority, Integrated Care Systems, local government, voluntary and community organisations, and other strategic partners. We are particularly interested in approaches that draw on learning from outside the sport and physical activity sector, recognising that many of the skills required for effective system leadership, partnership development, influence, community engagement, and place-based working exist across public service reform, health, economic development, and community development sectors.

We welcome innovative approaches that maximise value for money whilst ensuring sufficient depth and quality of engagement across the six Active Partnerships and wider regional stakeholders.

3. Purpose of the Work

The purpose of this commission is to provide an independent, evidence-based assessment of workforce capability, development needs, and strategic priorities across the West Midlands Cluster to develop a coordinated approach to workforce development

The commissioned provider will help the cluster better understand the skills, knowledge, behaviours, relationships, and leadership capabilities required to deliver effective place-based and system-wide approaches to increasing physical activity and reducing inequalities. It should help the cluster move beyond isolated development opportunities towards a coordinated regional approach that develops people, strengthens relationships, accelerates learning, and improves the effectiveness of place-based working across the West Midlands.

The commission should provide a clear understanding of:

- existing workforce strengths
- future capability requirements
- shared learning priorities
- opportunities for collaboration
- regional leadership development needs

The findings will inform a three-year Workforce Development Framework and Toolkit to enable the Cluster to repeat the process independently in the future.

4. Scope of Work

The commissioned provider will:

Inception Phase: Familiarisation and Discovery

- Meet with the West Midlands Cluster Steering Group and representatives from the six Active Partnerships to understand the purpose, ambition, governance arrangements, and operating context of the cluster.
- Develop an understanding of the policy, social, economic, demographic, and political context across the West Midlands, including consideration of local, sub-regional, regional, and national influences.
- Review relevant documentation, including Active Partnership strategies, Place Partnership plans, System Partner priorities, and regional partnership priorities.
- Provide a detailed project plan which includes:
    - Methodology.
    - Timeline.
    - Key milestones.
    - Engagement approach.
    - Risk management considerations.

Research and Analysis Phase:

- **Learning and Development Needs Analysis (LDNA)**
  - Design a robust Learning and Development Needs Analysis (LDNA) methodology that can be consistently applied across all six Active Partnerships.
  - Undertake engagement with staff, leaders, trustees and, where appropriate, key partners to understand current capabilities, development needs, and future requirements.
  - Identify:
    - Existing strengths and areas of expertise.
    - Current and future skills gaps and requirements.
    - Workforce confidence levels.
    - Leadership development needs.
    - Partnership and systems-working capabilities.
    - Opportunities for peer learning and knowledge sharing.
    - Opportunities for regional collaboration

  - Consider both technical competencies and broader capabilities required for place-based systems leadership, including influencing, facilitation, relationship building, community engagement, co-production, insight, evaluation, and strategic partnership development.

- **Regional Priorities Mapping:**
  - Develop a matrix of priorities across the West Midlands region.
  - Map local and regional priorities against:
    - Sport England's five outcomes.
    - Active Partnership strategic priorities.
    - Place Expansion and Place Partnership priorities.
    - Relevant regional partner priorities, including where appropriate the West Midlands Combined Authority, Integrated Care Systems, local government, and voluntary and community sector priorities.
  - Identify common themes, opportunities for shared learning and collaboration across these priorities

Reporting and Recommendations Phase:

- Use the LDNA and the Priorities mapping to produce a Learning and Development Needs Analysis (LDNA) Report including:
  - Executive summary.
  - Methodology.
  - Findings.
  - Recommendations
  - Conclusion.

- Produce a 3-year Regional Workforce Development Framework including:
  - Recommended approaches to learning and development
  - Regional CPD Menu and Development Plan which could include:
    - Leadership development.
    - Systems leadership.
    - Place-based working.
    - Peer mentoring.
    - Communities of Practice.
    - Thematic learning programmes.
    - Knowledge exchange opportunities.
    - External learning opportunities from sectors beyond sport and physical activity
  - Recommendations for delivery partners & learning methods
  - indicative costs, and potential timescales.

- Presentation of findings and recommendations to West Midlands Active Partnership colleagues and invited partners.

Legacy Phase:

- Produce a Workforce Development Toolkit and supporting resources that can be used by the cluster to:
  - Repeat the Learning Needs Analysis in future years.
  - Monitor workforce development progress.
  - Inform future regional investment decisions.
  - Support ongoing collaboration and learning.

5. Deliverables, Outcome and Success measures

The successful provider will be expected to deliver the following outputs:

Phase	Output
Inception Phase	• Inception meeting with the West Midlands Cluster Steering Group. • Detailed project plan • Agreed Learning and Development Needs Analysis (LDNA) framework and engagement tools.
Research and Analysis Phase	• Completion of a Learning and Development Needs Analysis (LDNA) • Completion of regional priorities matrix mapping
Reporting and Recommendations Phase	• Learning and Development Needs Analysis (LDNA) Report • 3-year Regional Workforce Development Framework • Presentation of findings and recommendations to West Midlands Active Partnership colleagues and invited partners.
Legacy Outputs	• Workforce Development Toolkit and supporting resources.

All outputs should be provided in accessible Microsoft Office formats and become the property of the West Midlands Regional Cluster.

6. Budget, Timescale and Procurement Process

- **Budget:** £10,000 inclusive of VAT and all expenses.
- **Contract start date:** July 2026
- **Contract competition date:** 31st October 2026

Detailed indicative timelines are as follows:

Stage	Date
Invitation to Quote issued	26June 2026
Deadline for clarification questions	10 July 2026
Responses to clarification questions issued	13 July 2026

Submission deadline	17 July 2026
Evaluation of submissions	20-23 July 2026
Interviews / presentations	Week commencing 24 July 2026
Appointment confirmed	By 31 July 2026
Contract mobilisation and inception meeting	Week commencing 3 August 2026
Discovery and document review	August 2026
Learning and Development Needs Analysis engagement	August–September 2026
Interim findings workshop with Cluster Steering Group	Mid-September 2026
Draft report and recommendations submitted	9 October 2026
Feedback from Cluster Steering Group	16 October 2026
Final report, framework and CPD recommendations submitted	30 October 2026
Final presentation to West Midlands Cluster	By 31 October 2026

The West Midlands Cluster reserves the right to amend these dates if required.

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7. Quotation Requirements

1. Complete the following Due Diligence form here

2. Submit a short proposal that includes the following information:

   - Your proposed approach to the work, including:
     - Understanding of the brief.
     - Proposed methodology and approach.
     - Project plan and timeline.
     - Stakeholder engagement approach.
     - Risks and mitigation
   - Relevant experience and examples of similar work (See Appendix A for provider Experience and Skills)
   - Timeline & milestones
   - Names and roles of key individuals involved
   - Full cost breakdown (inclusive of VAT and expenses, if applicable) including how you will ensure value for money
   - Your commitment to sustainability, environmental impact, ethical practices, and social responsibility.
   - Two relevant references

8. Evaluation Criteria

The quotation will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Evidence of knowledge, expertise and experiences (30%)
- Suitability of the proposed approach (30%)
- Evidence of capacity to understand and deliver the work within the defined budget and timescales (20%)
- Value for Money (10%)
- Sustainability and Ethical Considerations including commitment to sustainability, environmental impact, ethical practices, and social responsibility. (10%)

The percentage weighting indicates the importance of each area in the overall assessment.

9. Submission Process

- **Clarification Questions**: Submit to hello@thinkactive.org by 10th July. Clarification questions and responses will be posted on the procurement opporunities page here on the Think Active website
- **Deadline:** Friday 17th July
- **Submit to:** hello@thinkactive.org referencing West Midlands Regional Cluster Tender

10. Our Terms and Conditions

All procurement opportunities will be subject to our Supply of Services Terms and Conditions which are available here

Appendix A: Provider Experience and Skills Expectations

We are seeking a consultant, organisation or partnership with demonstrable expertise in workforce development, organisational development and place-based systems change.

The successful provider should be able to demonstrate experience in:

- Designing and delivering Learning Needs Analyses or workforce development reviews.
- Facilitating engagement across multiple organisations and stakeholders.
- Developing practical recommendations and implementation plans.
- Understanding place-based approaches and systems leadership.
- Working within complex partnerships involving public, voluntary, health and community sectors.
- Producing high-quality written reports and presentations.

The following would also be desirable:

- Experience of working with Active Partnerships, Sport England, local government, Integrated Care Systems or Combined Authorities.
- Understanding of the West Midlands political, economic and social landscape.
- Knowledge of physical activity, public health, prevention and tackling inequalities.
- Experience of leadership development, organisational culture and workforce transformation.
- Experience of developing Communities of Practice and peer learning approaches.
- Understanding of Uniting the Movement and Sport England's place-based approach.

We are particularly interested in approaches that bring learning from outside the sport and physical activity sector and draw on best practice from public service reform, community development, organisational development and systems leadership.

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