



Invitation to tender
For Nations Expansion

**Invitation to tender from ScreenSkills,
on behalf of Discover! Creative Careers**

Date tender issued:

15th May 2025

Following the success of the [Discover! Creative Careers](#) programme in England, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is providing further funding for an expansion to two additional nations across 2025-26. Following a directive from DCMS, ScreenSkills, as the lead delivery partner, is inviting tenders for two contracts to deliver separate programmes of creative careers activity in two of the following nations: Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland. This programme will be modelled on the current Discover! Creative Careers programme of activity which provides careers information and employer encounters to young people aged 11-18, and those supporting their careers decisions, with the aim of building a more diverse and inclusive future workforce. The expanded programme will run from late June 2025 to March 2026. Full details of the evaluation and decision-making process can be found below.

About ScreenSkills

ScreenSkills is the industry-led skills body for the UK's screen-based creative industries, including film, High End TV, Unscripted TV, VFX, animation and games. We work across the UK with employers, individuals, learning/training providers, trade associations, unions and government to ensure the screen industries have the skilled workforce they need. We identify training needs and help tackle them. ScreenSkills is the lead delivery partner of Discover! Creative Careers, administering the programme with, and on behalf of, the wider creative industries.

About Discover! Creative Careers

Discover! Creative Careers is a free to access, industry-led programme working across England to inspire and inform young people aged 11-18 and those supporting their careers decisions. Designed in collaboration with sector bodies and employers, it provides a single front door to creative industry careers information, advice and guidance including employer encounters, supporting schools and colleges to meet several [Gatsby benchmarks](#). It aims to address key workforce challenges and opportunities through hybrid activity and resources that respond to the needs of the sector.

Vision - A strong, inclusive and diverse creative industries workforce that is representative of the national population.

Mission – To ensure every young person has access to the information, advice and guidance they need to consider a career in the creative industries, focusing on those facing the greatest disadvantage.

Whilst the programme is open to all, we focus our support on schools and young people in 100 priority areas¹ across England where young people are facing the greatest disadvantage and where there is also a proximity to creative industry hubs and opportunities.

Since Discover! Creative Careers was relaunched in 2023, the programme has reached more than 62,000 young people via in-person and online activity and industry encounters. Several hundred employers have supported the programme, particularly across Discover! Creative Careers Week where industry open their doors to give young people an experience of the workplace. We have also had interest in Discover! Creative Careers Week and registrations from industry and schools outside of England, demonstrating a UK-wide appetite for the programme.

The Autumn Budget 2024 confirmed the Government's continuing commitment to broadening and diversifying the talent pipeline into the creative industries by providing additional funding to support the programme's expansion in 2025-26. Our aim is to connect 100,000 young people with

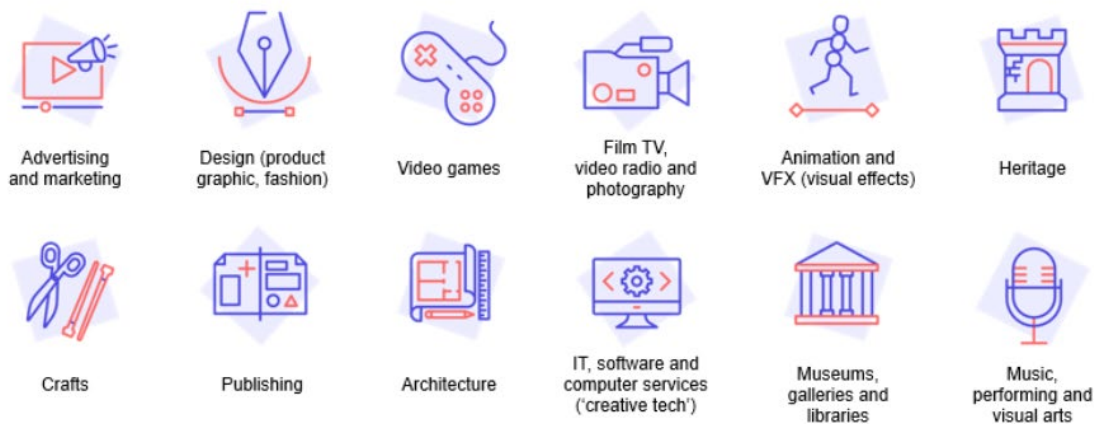
¹ See Appendix 1

employers, both in person and online, and we are now seeking delivery partners to help us achieve this goal.

Overview

We are looking to expand the current programme and to connect employers with young people across more areas of the UK, building on the programme's reach and maximising its impact. To achieve this, we are seeking to recruit delivery partners in two nations to plan and deliver parallel Discover! programmes of activity running from late June 2025 to March 2026. We are looking for applicants to collaborate with who can enrich our nationwide offer and bring a distinctive flavour to their programming that reflects their nation and brings specific benefits to their own young people. We are seeking partners to design, deliver and monitor a complementary, industry-led and informed careers programme for young people, teachers and careers advisors in their nation. Whilst we expect these programmes to deliver in parallel to the English programme, there is the flexibility for partners to create new opportunities and ways of engaging young people. The English Discover! programme delivers activity throughout the year that showcases roles and opportunities across all subsectors of the creative industries.

For the purposes of this project, the creative industries are broken down into the following categories:



The programme is designed to meet the following [Gatsby Benchmarks](#), the markers of good careers guidance in England:

- **Benchmark 5: Encounters with employers and employees**
- **Benchmark 6: Experiences of workplaces**

Our year-round programme includes live online events for students and careers professionals, and we regularly launch new, industry-informed resources including sector-specific lesson plans and films. In November, we invite industry to open their doors and showcase their sector to young people as part of Discover! Creative Careers Week. In 2024, over 200 industry partners took part, with an overall reach of more than 34,000 young people. The successful applicants will deliver their own, nation-based Discover! Creative Careers Week, either during November or at another point in the academic year and align this to the relevant benchmarks, and/or national-level statutory careers guidance where this exists. Participation should be in-person where possible, but the programme should also include opportunities for online engagement to ensure maximum engagement.

The programme should be open to every young person in each nation. However, as part of this tender, applicants should identify priority local authority areas where young people are facing the greatest disadvantage and where there is also a proximity to creative industry hubs and

opportunities. To identify priority areas in England, DCMS compiled data to capture the size and strength of the creative industries in local authority districts, with data on place characteristics to correspond with the programme's aim to maximise opportunity across the country. Metrics for strength of the creative industries included number of enterprises and employment figures, and metrics for disadvantage included the ONS index of multiple deprivation. Each metric was ranked with the ranks weighted and summed to give an overall area score that was then itself ranked to identify the top 100 areas. The ranking was formed such that a higher rank was given to areas with larger CI presence and the most disadvantaged areas.

The successful applicant should aim for around 50% of activity to take place in the areas they identify, so building partnerships with schools and industry in these local authorities should be a key focus. Evidence of the methodology used to select these areas should be provided as part of the application and will form part of the assessment criteria outlined below. It is suggested that priority areas amount to around 30% of the nation's total number of local authority areas, however there is some flexibility around this dependent on the selection criteria put forward in the methodology.

The successful applicants will work closely with the English Discover! programme team to draw on their delivery experience and to ensure consistent branding and messaging across their own website / platforms. This includes incorporating the Discover and HM Government logos. We are developing an online Opportunities Directory to promote local industry opportunities to schools. Participating nations will be able to add their own activity to this directory if required.

As part of the ongoing programming throughout the 2025-26 year, we anticipate that the delivery partner will contribute resources including lesson plans and nation specific industry content that will be housed centrally on the Discover! website: www.discovercreative.careers.com. Deliverables and evaluation criteria are outlined in full below.

Programme deliverables

The successful applicant will design, manage, market and deliver their own Discover! programme, and will be responsible for recruiting participating schools and industry partners in their nation, with a focus on key priority areas identified in their application.

- A Discover! Creative Careers Week: a week of employer encounters for pupils aged 11-18. The week should prioritise in-person engagement where possible and responsibilities include the recruitment and matching of schools and industry partners
- A suite of careers education materials specific to the nation, including but not limited to online events for students; online events for teachers and careers professionals; sector-specific lesson plans and supporting materials; video resources
- Input into the content and design of an e-learning module being developed by ScreenSkills, in the form of a nation-specific strand to support teachers and careers professionals to better understand CI opportunities in their locality

Engaging young people from diverse backgrounds is key to our delivery objectives and all partners should demonstrate their commitment to meeting the following diversity targets:

- For gender, 50% female
- For ethnicity, 20% minority ethnic
- For disability, 10% disabled and people who have a learning difference, impairment or long-term condition

Whilst these are targets and not minimum requirements, we encourage applicants to demonstrate how they propose to try and meet these targets and how they plan to capture and store the relevant D&I data.

The following target reach figures reflect the size of the secondary school population in each nation and are intended as a guide:

For Scotland: 10,000 young people

For Northern Ireland: 5,000 young people

For Wales: 5,000 young people

Who can apply?

This is an open tender competition with two contracts available; one for each of the two nations selected. ScreenSkills welcomes applications from organisations or partnerships that have a proven track record of successful engagement projects with young people. We are open to delivery partners tendering for both nations, but the requirement is that one tender be submitted per nation. We are looking for partners who can demonstrate a depth of knowledge about the careers landscape and creative and cultural industries presence in the nation they are tendering for and that have the necessary networks, resources and infrastructure to deliver this programme at pace across 2025-26. Partners will be selected for their ability to deliver the programme within the tight timeframes specified and for the added value they and their industry contacts can bring to the core programme. Applicants who are already delivering similar programmes and can expand their offer to include the scope outlined in this document are welcome to apply. We also welcome applications from organisations that are UK-wide but can demonstrate national specificity in their application.

Applicants best suited to this project will have a working knowledge of;

- Employer/industry-led career engagement initiatives across the creative industries
- The needs and expectations of secondary schools and colleges when it comes to careers provision and employer engagement
- Requirements relating to statutory careers guidance and relevant frameworks (such as Gatsby Benchmarks) in your nation
- The creative industries including but not limited to film, museums and heritage, animation, music, theatre, advertising and architecture
- Government policy relating to education and industry engagement

Further details can be found in the assessment and evaluation criteria sections at the end of this document.

Timescale

ScreenSkills require activity to be delivered between late June 2025 and March 2026. A final report on the pilot's success should be submitted by 31st March 2026. Please ensure this is worked into your timeline.

Procurement timeline:

Invitation to tender issued	15 th May 2025
Deadline for ScreenSkills response to clarification questions	4 th June 2025
Deadline for submission of tenders	11 th June at 12.00 noon
Completion of evaluation, including clarification of any queries from ScreenSkills	16 th June 2025
Preferred bidder identified and appointed	20 th June 2025
Contract start date	25 th June 2025
Contract end date	31 st March 2026

Project timeline:

Inception meeting	27 th June 2025
Programme and financials update	1 st July 2025
Deadline for confirming dates of Discover! Creative Careers week	29 th August 2025
Programme and financial interim update	1 st September 2025
Input into the design of e-learning modules	By 26 th September 2025
Programme and financial interim update	1 st December 2025
Programme and financial interim update	2 nd March 2026
Final written report and financials submitted including independently audited project costs.	31 st March 2026

Budget

The total budget for the tender is £200,000 - £225,000 per nation. However, costs will be a primary factor in our assessments of proposals, so ScreenSkills asks that any potential savings are factored into proposals.

A full resource schedule including a breakdown of activities, time allocated and daily rate of each member of the project team, including their respective job titles, should be included as part of your fee proposal. An external independent audit will be required upon the completion of the project. The associated costs should be incorporated into the overall project budget.

- Applicants are asked to provide the following:
- A breakdown of costs associated with each element of the project;

- Total figures inclusive of all costs (e.g. VAT and travel / accommodation);
- Number of days spent working on the project;
- The daily rate for each member of the project team;
- A breakdown of translation and/or transcription costs, if required;
- The cost of an external, independent financial audit

Indicative payment milestones

Payment will be set against agreed milestones and deliverables and on submission of periodic programme and financial updates and evidence of expenditure.

- 1st July (upon signing of contract) - 10%
- 1st September (for period July-Sep 25) - 25%
- 1st December (for period Oct – Dec 25) - 25%
- 2nd March (for period Jan – March 26) 25%
- 31st March (final payment to be awarded following programme completion and final reporting) - 15%

Assessment criteria:

Applicants must be able to demonstrate:

- Significant experience of operating similar programmes at scale and the infrastructure needed to establish and deliver the project at pace, including existing networks and resources and a recognised platform to direct schools and industry to,
- A proven track record of engaging with schools and young people and a clear plan for engagement in priority areas,
- Experience of recruiting and working with creative industry partners, and a thorough understanding of the sector in their nation,
- A depth of knowledge about their nation's careers landscape, including curriculum links, skills needs and education/career pathways – informed by their respective devolved administration's skills and careers policy,
- A robust methodology for selecting priority areas,
- A system for monitoring engagement and capturing data that can be aligned with the English programme for reporting back to DCMS,
- An identification of key risks arising through this project, and appropriate mitigation measures, including health and safety and safeguarding policies,
- An understanding of the challenges around diversity facing the local creative industries workforce and how the project can help address these,
- How their proposal offers value for money,
- How many young people they plan to engage through different programme strands, presented as target figures and as a proportion of the population,
- A commitment to diversity, including:
- making reasonable adjustments to the offer (whether face-to-face or online) to make it accessible to a diverse audience – we will ask for evidence of your approach and implementation
- having an equality policy in place as an employer

- demonstrating how you plan to monitor and track the diversity of participants, and how this information will be stored

The successful applicant/s will be expected to work with the overall programme evaluator to monitor and collect data for the whole programme evaluation. They will be contracted by DCMS, and in place by the signature of this contract.

Application requirements

Please ensure you have provided all the relevant documents in the table below when submitting your response.

Project proposal, including engagement plan, schedule of dates, reach and D+I plans	
Pricing Schedule (Appendix B)	
Priority Areas List and accompanying methodology	
Project team information	
Indicative Work schedule	
Company information (address, company number, constitution etc.)	
Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy	
Risk assessment, including RAG ratings	

Evaluation Criteria

Please send your proposal to Discover! Programme Lead Mary Rose: mary.rose@ScreenSkills.com by **11th June at 12.00 noon** with the email subject: *Tender for Discover! Creative Careers Nations Expansion*. Tenders will be evaluated independently of one another, and a final decision of which nations to expand to will be made based on the quality of applications according to the scoring system set out below. The proposal should demonstrate the following:

<p>Project Proposal: Understanding of the project, the scope of requirements and services to be provided and quality of the proposed engagement plan (approx 6 pages, weight 25%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a clear overview outlining how you will plan, deliver and monitor the project, in collaboration with the English delivery team. Include all relevant experience of delivering similar programmes.
<p>Pricing Schedule: Level of fee for carrying out the services (weight 25%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include pricing schedule as a budget template, providing a fixed cost for delivery of the project to include all expenses and including daily rate for each member of the team

<p>Priority Areas List & Accompanying Methodology: Approach to identifying and meeting regional and demographic targets (approx 3 pages, weight 20%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a list of priority areas and engagement plan tailored to them. Include a methodology for identifying priority areas, target engagement numbers across the programme and a plan for monitoring, tracking and storing D&I data. Include evidence of your organisation's current and planned reach/engagement in these areas.
<p>Project team (approx 1 page, weight 10%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide details of key personnel to be assigned to deliver this project, including past, relevant experience, and their role in delivering this project, including stated percentage time
<p>Indicative Workplan: Schedule of work (approx 1 page, weight 10%)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide an indicative work plan, including a schedule of work with timeframes and milestones
<p>Risk Assessment: Risks and mitigation (approx 1 page, weight 10%)</p> <p>Provide an indication of the main risks and how you would approach them, with particular reference to health and safety and safeguarding. Include a risk assessment with RAG ratings</p>

Queries

Any questions or points of clarification from tenderers must be submitted electronically via email. Be advised that even after the closing date (e.g. after submission of tender materials), tenderers must still utilise email for communication.

Please send your queries to

Mary Rose: Programme Lead

mary.rose@ScreenSkills.com

Appendix A: Priority Regions in England

East Midlands

- Chesterfield
- Derby
- Leicester
- Nottingham

East of England

- ✧ Basildon
- ✧ Bedford
- ✧ Colchester
- ✧ Dacorum
- ✧ Hertsmere
- ✧ Ipswich
- ✧ Luton
- ✧ Norwich
- ✧ Peterborough
- ✧ Southend-on-Sea
- ✧ Stevenage
- ✧ Tendring
- ✧ Watford

London

- ✧ Central London (*Camden, City of London, Kensington and Chelsea, Southwark, Westminster*)
- ✧ East London (*Barking and Dagenham, Greenwich, Havering, Lewisham, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest*)
- ✧ North London (*Barnet, Enfield, Haringey*)
- ✧ South London (*Bromley, Croydon, Merton, Sutton, Wandsworth*)
- ✧ West London (*Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Richmond upon Thames, Hillingdon, Hounslow*)

North East

- County Durham
- Gateshead
- Middlesbrough
- Newcastle upon Tyne
- North Tyneside
- South Tyneside
- Sunderland

North West

- Bolton
- Bury
- Calderdale
- Cheshire East
- Cheshire West and Chester
- Halton
- Liverpool
- Manchester
- Oldham
- Preston
- Rochdale
- Salford
- Stockport
- Tameside
- Trafford
- Warrington
- Wirral

South East

- Ashford
- Basingstoke and Deane
- Brighton and Hove
- Buckinghamshire
- Canterbury
- Hastings
- Havant
- Maidstone
- Medway
- Milton Keynes
- Oxford
- Portsmouth
- Reading
- Runnymede
- Rushmoor
- Slough
- Southampton

- Spelthorne
- Swale
- Thanet
- Woking
- Wokingham

South West

- Bath and North East Somerset
- Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole
- Bristol, City of
- Cheltenham
- Cornwall
- Dorset
- Plymouth
- Swindon
- Wiltshire

West Midlands

- Birmingham
- Coventry
- Dudley
- Sandwell
- Solihull
- Stoke-on-Trent
- Telford and Wrekin
- Walsall
- Warwick
- Wolverhampton

Yorkshire and the Humber

- Barnsley
- Bradford
- Kingston upon Hull, City of
- Kirklees
- Leeds
- Rotherham
- Sheffield
- Wakefield