

## Job Description

### Skills Adviser

#### About SWLEP Ltd

The Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) is a private sector led partnership between Swindon Borough Council, Wiltshire Council and local businesses. Our role is to set the overarching economic priorities for the area and to undertake activities that will drive economic growth and job creation.

Our Local Industrial Strategy sets out ambitious plans for the future, building on the unique features of the area to support the inclusive development of our economy and boost our productivity over the next ten to fifteen years. The strategy is based on a broad and detailed evidence base which has been tested through engagement with over a thousand local businesses and business representation organisations. It addresses both local challenges and those outlined as part of the UK's Industrial Strategy, in order to improve the productivity of Swindon and Wiltshire and ensure that all communities contribute to, and benefit from, higher productivity.

The Swindon and Wiltshire area has an excellent track record for stimulating start-ups and high survival rates. The Swindon and Wiltshire Growth Hub has been instrumental in supporting this. Its services remain very popular, with intensive support to businesses tripling between 2016/17 and 2018/19 and a six-fold increase in start-up businesses created during the same period. Despite the vibrant start-up scene, progress to scale-up has been sluggish. These businesses have been harder to identify and engage with, however this is something that we intend to remedy in the future.

#### Business Support via the Growth Hub

In terms of productivity, the Swindon and Wiltshire area is slightly below the national average, partly due to our sector mix. A number of our large employment sectors are in low-value industries. At the same time, we have numerous high-output businesses that remain small despite having high potential for growth. This is partly due to the proportion of smaller life-style businesses located predominantly in our market towns and rural areas. Therefore, we need to do more to support both of these groups. We need to improve the contribution made by our most productive industries, including having the right environment to encourage spin-offs. We also need to tackle the underperformance, which will require novel solutions and extended business support services. For both of these, the Growth Hub and its business support programmes will play a part in achieving our aspiration.

This role is funded by the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.

## Job Description: Skills Adviser

### Purpose:

To promote and raise the profile of UK Higher Education and other work-based learning to drive skills improvement in businesses within Swindon and Wiltshire, and to provide support to local businesses and team members on learning and skills related issues.

### Main duties:

- Gain an understanding of SWLEP's Local Industrial Strategy and Skills Plan to inform general direction of work and alignment with priorities.
- Raise the profile of UK Higher Education and other work-based learning to drive skills improvement in businesses including lower level apprenticeships, vocational courses, and short courses within Swindon and Wiltshire and make strong, impartial suggestions to businesses looking to engage in skills/workforce development activities.
- Support the visibility of the Growth Hub Skills brand through social media, creating learning skills related content for the SWLEP website, and creating and delivering webinars.
- Engage with businesses, offering direct support regarding business skills needs and propose solutions by signposting and making appropriate introductions.
- Actively champion apprenticeships as a productive way to develop skills within the workforce together with promoting the wider benefits relating to funding, levy etc.
- Be in receipt of skills-based referral enquiries from the Growth Hub team, and SWLEP staff.
- Where viable, make contact with any referrals within a 48-hour timeframe, or as agreed within any customer charter.
- Connect and build relationships with Local Authority Employment & Skills teams to ensure strong collaboration and joined up working towards common goals.
- With the support of the Growth Hub Manager, complete any reporting requests from SWLEP, Central Government or other institution.
- Regularly feedback skills-related concerns to Growth Hub Manager, particularly gaps in the regions provision offer.
- Record all business engagement activity in detail using the SWLEP's CRM system – HubSpot.
- To be responsible for the upkeep of learning hub work.

## Person Specification: Skills Adviser

### Essential Knowledge, Training & Experience

- Experience of working in a skills-based environment with an up-to-date working knowledge of employment/education/skills issues both nationally and locally.
- English Language and Mathematics GCSE Grade C (Level 4) or above, or equivalent.
- Experience in business to business relationship management with the ability to sell concepts and ideas to employers and produce business focused and innovative solutions.
- Experience and a proven track record of developing and managing the delivery of effective support and provision for employers to assist them to benefitting from access to higher level learning and other work-based learning such as lower-level apprenticeships, vocational courses, and short courses for their workforce.
- Strong IT skills, including intermediate level MS Office (especially Excel, PowerPoint, Word and Outlook) and CRM systems.

### Essential skills

- Excellent negotiation, influencing and persuasion skills with effective decision making skills..
- Highly defined relationship management and interpersonal skills and the ability to collaborate with and relate to a range of professionals, across a range of organisations and disciplines.
- Approachable with excellent interpersonal, oral and written communications skills - good skills in presenting information in an appropriate method depending on the audience to ensure messages are given in a clear and concise manner.
- Proactive relationship builder with an engaging manner, able to converse with, understand, influence, establish and maintain credibility with business leaders.
- Self-motivation and ability to work on own initiative and independently as well as having excellent team-working skills.
- Able to work effectively under pressure in a constantly changing environment.
- A high standard of organisational and prioritising skills. A proactive approach in anticipating workload and prioritising accordingly to ensure deadlines and competing demands are met.
- High levels of integrity and confidentiality and an ability to work with discretion.
- Commitment to the principles and practice of equality and diversity.

### Desirable Knowledge, Training and Experience

- A skills, careers or teaching/lecturing qualification
- Knowledge and demonstrable experience of the UK Higher Education system and other work-based learning, including UK funding models for HEIs & FE Colleges, apprenticeships, vocational courses and short courses.
- Locally aware and experienced in the region with a significant understanding of HE/FE delivery and other work-based learning such as lower level apprenticeships, vocational courses, and short courses, within the region. Experience of working with the Swindon and Wiltshire business base and understanding of the skills gaps employers face.
- Passion for delivering excellent business focused services that add value.
- Knowledge and experience of IT development process and functionality, especially website and CRM development.
- Good understanding of Local Economic Partnerships, local government, central government or similar quasi-government bodies.
- Experience of updating websites and using social media for business purposes.

### Other Requirements

- Valid driving licence and own transport, or can provide alternative, suitable method of travel
- Work outside of standard hours including evenings and weekends may be required from time to time including attendance at meetings and events.

- Willingness to undertake occasional travel throughout Swindon and Wiltshire.

**Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership**

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