

## GUIDANCE PACK

1. Invest Northern Ireland (Invest NI) is seeking to provide partial support to eligible businesses to engage with a third party consultant who will help the business to assess the impacts of COVID-19 and to develop a strategic recovery plan.
2. Invest NI is seeking to establish and publish a register of approved consultants that businesses can then select from to undertake the work. Consultants will need to have experience in business planning, financial modelling and assisting businesses to raise capital.
3. The register of approved consultants will be published on Invest NI's business information website, [nibusinfo.co.uk](http://nibusinfo.co.uk), during the call for applications for the partial support. A copy of the register will also be supplied to those businesses that apply and are approved for partial support.
4. It is the responsibility of the business to directly engage with a consultant, agree the fee and to make payment. Eligible businesses will be able to make an application for support, however, a letter of offer will only be issued to the business once an approved consultant has been confirmed to undertake the work.
5. The work must be completed within 8 weeks of a letter of offer being issued. Businesses will be required to have made payment for the work and submitted a claim to Invest NI by no later than Friday 26 February 2021.
6. A detailed Terms of Reference and scope of work involved is available on request by emailing: [bfpg-consultants@investni.com](mailto:bfpg-consultants@investni.com)
7. When submitting a request to be included on the published list, consultants will be required to declare that they have sufficient full-time resource and the capacity to deliver promptly and professionally on the work within the timeframes noted above and in accordance with the Terms of Reference.
8. Businesses can use the support offered to contribute towards the fees of an external consultant, with a daily rate of up to a maximum of £750 per day. This rate is inclusive of travel and subsistence and all out of pocket expenses. If an hourly rate is used this will be subject to a maximum of £100 per hour on the basis of a 7.5 hour working day.
9. A request to be included on the register of approved consultants must be made for each individual consultant. Firm or practice wide requests will not be considered.
10. It is permissible for junior staff to assist with the project, however, the approved consultant will take ultimate responsibility for the work undertaken and should be the main point of contact for the business receiving the support. Where a consultancy has more than one consultant engaged on the project this should be noted on the invoice. The aggregate number of days worked by all consultants on the project is counted.
11. Consultants should provide a schedule to their invoice that lists each consultant, their daily rate and the number of days worked.
12. The criteria for inclusion on the approved list is set out below. This is subject to a Pass/Fail assessment as detailed in Appendix 1 below:
  - i. A consultant with a recognised professional accountancy, consultancy or banking qualification.
  - ii. A current member of a professional accountancy body, consulting institute or banking institute.
  - iii. At least 8 years post-qualified experience.
  - iv. Detail of three similar assignments undertaken in the last five years.
  - v. Signed and returned declarations as detailed at Appendix 2.
13. Further details on the scoring methodology and the process to be included on the approved consultant's list is located at Appendix 1. Applications should be kept to a maximum two pages.

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- 14.** Appendix 2 details declarations that must be signed and returned with the request for inclusion on the approved consultant's list. The declarations do not form part of the two-page application limit.
  - 15.** Consultants can submit requests to be included on a published list at any point up until 5pm on Friday 7 November. Invest NI will review and assess later applications by the Friday of the week following the submission of a consultant's request.
  - 16.** The Corporate Finance Team at Invest NI will be responsible for assessing requests to be included on the approved list. Enquires and completed applications should be emailed to: **[bfpg-consultants@investni.com](mailto:bfpg-consultants@investni.com)**

## APPENDIX 1

### REQUESTS FOR INCLUSION: CONSULTANT BIO, WORK EXPERIENCE AND DECLARATIONS

#### Consultant bio

The consultant bio and corresponding three work experience examples should be a maximum of two pages. Each work experience example should be a maximum of 300 words.

Individual candidates should structure their bio as follows:

- Consultant's name.
- Current firm/practice.
- Professional accountancy, consultancy or banking qualification.
- Current accountancy body, consulting institute or banking institute membership.
- Number of years post qualified.

#### Work experience

Each consultant must provide three work experience examples to demonstrate their experience of meeting the service requirements of this register. Each example should be anonymised, so please do not provide the business name to which the assignment relates.

Each example should reflect the specific experience of the nominated consultant and not the overall track record of the firm or practice. Each example must also be structured to cover the details of the assignment including:

- Company background including turnover and number of employees, sector and location.
- A summary of the services provided by the nominated consultant.
- Date the assignment commenced and the date the assignment was completed.
- Measurable outcomes to the company as a direct result of the assignment.
- The specific role of the nominated consultant.

The criteria for inclusion on the approved list is set out below. This is subject to a Pass/Fail criteria and each criterion will be scored as follows:

- i. A consultant with a recognised professional accountancy, consultancy or banking qualification.

**Pass:** Where a consultant details a professional accountancy, consultancy or banking qualification.

**Fail:** Where a consultant does not detail a professional accountancy, consultancy or banking qualification.

- ii. A current member of a professional accountancy body, consulting institute or banking institute.

**Pass:** Where a consultant advises the professional accountancy body, consulting institute or banking institute of which they are a current member and this can be verified to either a publicly available register or evidence of membership is provided.

**Fail:** Where a consultant does not advise the professional accountancy body, consulting institute or banking institute of which they are a current member or this cannot be verified to either a publicly available register or evidence of membership is not provided.

iii. At least 8 years post-qualified experience.

**Pass:** Where a consultant advises their admission date to the accountancy body, consulting institute or banking institute listed under (ii) is September 2012 or earlier.

**Fail:** Where a consultant does not advise their admission date to the accountancy body, consulting institute or banking institute listed under (ii) or the date listed is October 2012 or later.

iv. Can provide evidence of at least three similar assignments undertaken in the last five years.

**Pass:** Where a consultant provides three examples of similar assignments undertaken in September 2015 or later in accordance with the guidance detailed under “work experience” above.

**Fail:** Where a consultant does not provide three examples of similar assignments undertaken in September 2015 or later in accordance with the guidance detailed under “work experience” above.

v. Signed and returned declarations.

**Pass:** Application submission include a completed and signed return of the Information Declarations as at Appendix 2.

**Fail:** Application submission does not include a completed and signed return of the Information Declarations as at Appendix 2.

## APPENDIX 2 DECLARATIONS

### INFORMATION DECLARATION

1. I the undersigned confirm that all information included within this request is accurate. I understand and agree that the inclusion of information that is found to be false or misleading, may result in exclusion from any published list.
2. I the undersigned undertake to notify Invest NI if there are any changes to the information provided during the course of appointment to the published list.
3. I the undersigned confirm that, either as an individual or practice, I have and will maintain professional indemnity insurance of one million pounds (£1,000,000) during the period of appointment to the published list.
4. I the undersigned confirm that I will only undertake an assignment where I have sufficient full-time resource and the capacity to deliver promptly and professionally on the work within the timeframes and in accordance with the Terms of Reference.
5. I the undersigned confirm that I understand the register of approved consultants, including their names and contact details, will be published on Invest NI's business information website [nibusinessinfo.co.uk](http://nibusinessinfo.co.uk) for the duration of the programme.

Signed\*: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name: \_\_\_\_\_

Registered Address:  
\_\_\_\_\_

\* An electronic signature is permissible provided the application is received from the email address of the named consultant or the named consultant is copied into the email.