

## **Request for Proposal: AI Upskilling & Training for Visitor Economy Businesses in North East England**

### **Introduction**

Destination North East England (DNEE) invites proposals from consultants, training providers, or consortia to design and deliver an AI upskilling and training programme for visitor economy businesses in the North East. The aim is to build business confidence in adopting AI tools, provide practical skills, and capture case studies to evidence impact.

### **Background**

AI technologies are transforming how businesses operate, from marketing and content creation to customer engagement, productivity, and data analysis. For visitor economy SMEs, these tools offer opportunities to:

- Improve efficiency and reduce costs.
- Enhance customer service and visitor experience.
- Strengthen marketing reach and conversion.
- Support innovation in product and experience design.

However, adoption remains limited due to low awareness, confidence, and skills. This programme will address that gap by providing hands on training, one-to-one support, and practical implementation guidance.

### **Objectives**

The appointed consultant will:

- Deliver practical AI training to a cohort of visitor economy businesses.
- Provide tailored one-to-one support to participating businesses.
- Equip businesses with accessible tools, skills, and resources to apply AI confidently.
- Capture and track implementation, producing case studies that demonstrate business impact.

### **Scope of Work**

The consultant will be expected to:

- Design and deliver training sessions (in-person preferred, but online/hybrid considered) for businesses.
- Work with DNEE and regional partners to encourage business participation, outlining how they would approach recruitment, and identifying any potential barriers to engagement and strategies to overcome them.

- Provide 1:1 support to each participating business (approx. 30–60 minutes per business, or as appropriate).
- Support implementation tracking, capturing how businesses apply AI in practice.
- Develop business case studies (final design/branding to be completed by DNEE for consistency).
- Evaluate and report on lessons learned, identifying what worked well, what didn't, and recommendations for scaling.

### **Suggested Topics (flexible to consultant's expertise)**

- Introduction to AI: demystifying AI and addressing myths.
- Prompt writing: creating effective prompts for generative AI tools.
- AI for content creation: written content, imagery, video, social media.
- AI for marketing: customer targeting, campaign optimisation, analytics.
- AI for productivity: automation, summarisation, scheduling.
- AI for customer service: chatbots, personalised itineraries, FAQs.
- Ethical and responsible AI use: accessibility, bias, data protection.

### **Deliverables**

- Training session(s) design and delivery.
- 1:1 support sessions with participating businesses.
- Tracking and evaluation of implementation.
- Draft case studies of participating businesses.
- Evaluation summary capturing what worked, what didn't, and future recommendations.
- Final report summarising outcomes, learnings, and recommendations.

### **Consultant Requirements**

Proposals should demonstrate:

- Proven experience delivering AI or digital skills training to SMEs.
- Understanding of the visitor economy and challenges faced by SMEs.
- Ability to make AI accessible, practical, and relevant to non-technical audiences.
- Experience in capturing and presenting case studies of business impact.

### **Timeline**

- Proposal submissions close: 13/10/2025
- Consultant appointed: 17/10/2025
- Project completion: 01/03/2025

### **Proposal Submission**

Interested consultants should submit a proposal including:

- Approach and methodology, including suggested number of businesses that could be supported within budget.
- Plans for business recruitment and engagement, including any anticipated challenges and how these would be addressed in partnership with DNEE.
- Relevant experience and case studies.
- Team members (if applicable).
- Timeline and milestones.
- Budget breakdown.

### **Budget**

- £10,000+VAT.
- If your proposal exceeds the budget, please provide an explanation of why and how the budget will spent.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

Proposals will be assessed against:

- Relevant experience and expertise (30%).
- Quality and feasibility of proposed approach (30%).
- Value for money (20%).
- Understanding of the visitor economy context (20%).

### **Submission**

Please submit proposals by 15/10/2025 to:

David Bowe

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NewcastleGateshead Initiative

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