



Gaining Direction with SDP

Concept Northern first registered with the Supplier Development Programme in 2016 and won its first tender with the University of Highlands and Islands in early 2021.

Concept Northern

Concept Northern is a small business that provides assistive technology and training to help individuals achieve their work and study goals. The company encourages people to take control of their future by supplying equipment and support to make a profound difference to their daily lives.



Concept Northern first engaged with the Supplier Development Programme (SDP) in 2016 at a supplier event related to the then-new Glasgow City Region City Deal. Staff undertook SDP webinar training in environmental policy, health and safety policy, equality and quality management through ISO9001 policy, and participated in several Meet the Buyer events over the years. Concept Northern is an accredited Living Wage Scotland employer, and won its first public sector contract with the University of the Highlands and Islands in 2021 to provide Text Help software, 'Read Write Gold'.

Despite this hard-earned success, Concept Northern still found the general tendering process in Scotland's public sector difficult, unclear and exhaustive. Jamie Graham, Concept Northern's Business Engagement and Relationship Manager is Neurodiverse, and he decided to re-engage with the free tender training offered by SDP to improve his tendering skills.

Accessing SDP's training at beginner and intermediate levels from August 2021 has allowed Jamie to fully dissect and process what is needed for public sector tendering and to better understand the PCS portals. He said: "It really helped me understand the portals and what to look out for. By starting at the beginning and learning how to find tenders on the Public Contracts Scotland website, the Supplier Development Programme has given me a clearer strategy for answering tenders and Invitation to Tenders (ITTs)."

Jamie continued: "I am Autistic, and I wanted to understand PCS better as well as how the public sector buys through procurement. SDP has given me a clear structure in the bidding process and helped me understand how to go about things better. I'm pleased for my colleague who submitted Concept Northern's first successful bid and I'm looking to do the same now, and I feel better prepared because of the Supplier Development Programme."

With offices in Glasgow City and South Lanarkshire, Concept Northern employs 19 people. More information this Access to Work and Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA) specialist business can be found by visiting www.conceptnorthern.co.uk.