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We are delighted to publish an independent evaluation of the Company's first Careers and Enterprise Fund, launched in December 2015. The report shows that the fund has helped to expand the scope, scale and reach of existing careers activity nationally, has provided benefits to providers, employers, schools, LEAs and most importantly suggests longer-term impacts for young people through improved careers and enterprise provision.

2.

The application process for the CEF18 will require applicants to outline which of the Gatsby Benchmarks their programme and activities align to and this will be considered during the assessment process, ensuring a diverse spread of activities and benchmarks being delivered in schools.

Activities are also filtered by Gatsby Benchmark on The Career & Enterprise Company's new resource, 'Find an Activity Provider' available on our website for all schools to use, enabling them to contact and work with organisations which fill gaps in their provision.

3.

Since this funding round, we have added several processes which give grant recipients more support on ensuring their targets are realistic and maximise delivery.

We have added clear expectations around delivery requirements in prospectuses published before each funding round and these are explored in more depth at interview stage.

The Investment Team have implemented an account management process to provide further support to grant recipients, to help them understand the contracts and programme characteristics at the beginning of the funding period and to act as a single point of contact for mid-funding contractual changes or requests.

However, grant recipients will still be expected to take responsibility for their own delivery targets. We expect honesty and transparency throughout the application process from applicants about what is

4. The Careers & Enterprise Company should consider options for supporting better coordination of employer engagement at regional level, which could include a role for regional partners such as Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). The Careers & Enterprise Company should consider options for giving LEPs a more formal role in coordinating funded activity within their areas.

When CEF 2015 was launched, the Enterprise Adviser Network was still in its infancy. In the three years since, we have worked with the LEPs to grow the Network to 125 ECs and over 2,200 Enterprise Advisers (EA). To support better regional collaboration, during the commissioning process of subsequent funds the Investment Team have involved the LEPs to make sure that the grant recipients who receive funding meet the needs of the local area. Contracts between CEC and the LEPs have also been amended to encourage ECs to provide further regional support

linking them to known employers and helping to build relationships.

Beyond coordinating more closely with the LEPs, the Investment Team is working with the Employer Engagement Team to join up requests for business support from grant recipients with interest shown from businesses in providing support.

Investment Team Account Managers also keep an up to date record of which grant recipients require support (e.g. employee volunteers) and in which area.

5. The Careers & Enterprise Company should consider options for the provision of additional support to schools to enable them to resource the management and delivery of careers and enterprise activities.

As set out in the Careers Strategy, every school will be required to appoint a Careers Lead by September 2018. This is a welcome move and the Investment Team will have £4m available to provide training programmes and bursaries for at least 500 schools.

The Investment Team trialled a Virtual Wallet approach to funding, giving schools more power to choose services that will work best in their communities and address gaps in their careers and enterprise activity. This has been well received by schools and funding will follow the same approach in 2018.

