



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Paul Scully MP

Department for Business, Energy &
Industrial Strategy
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0ET

T +44 (0) 20 7215 5000

E enquiries@beis.gov.uk

W www.gov.uk

Darren Jones MP
Chair, Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee
Houses of Parliament
London
SW1A 0AA

3 August 2020

Dear Darren,

LAUNCH OF SMALL BUSINESS LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME (SBLP) AND PEER NETWORKS PROGRAMME FOR SMES

Building on the recommendations of the BEIS Select Committee Report 'Small Business and Productivity' published 5 December 2018, and the recommendations in the Government's Business Productivity Review, I am pleased to announce that BEIS is today launching two new initiatives to support Small and Medium-sized Enterprises' (SMEs) economic recovery from the impacts of COVID-19.

These initiatives represent an investment of around £20 million (£11m for the SBLP and £9 million for Peer Networks – with a possible further £4m for the latter subject to demand) to equip leaders of SMEs with the skills they need to re-start their business, adapt their existing business models to a "new normal", and position themselves for future success. They will be open to established SMEs in England across all sectors – with a focus on businesses that have ambitions to grow. Both programmes offer intensive learning through programmes adapted for the Covid-19 situation to strengthen leadership and improved competitiveness.

The Small Business Leadership Programme (SBLP) is a new national training programme which will be delivered by leading Business Schools. It will support senior leaders to enhance their business resilience and recovery from the impact of COVID-19 and develop potential for future growth and productivity. Participants will develop strategic leadership skills and the confidence to make informed decisions to boost business performance. The curriculum will include leadership, innovation, employee engagement, operational efficiency, and business planning.

The Peer Networking programme will be delivered by Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) with eighteen hours of networking along with additional one-to-one support. The programme brings SMEs together to work through the issues they are facing (access to finance, technology adoption, crisis management etc), and to identify solutions by learning from others in the network.

Further details on both schemes are available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/small-business-support-schemes-small-business-leadership-programme-and-peer-networks>

Thank you for the important contributions that your Committee made to this issue.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Scully', is positioned to the left of a vertical line.

PAUL SCULLY MP

Minister for Small Business, Consumers & Labour Markets
Minister for London