

LONDON 2012 OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES -

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY FOR LOCAL FIRMS

WITH the Beijing Olympics now under way, Business Link has launched an information campaign urging Bristol-based firms to look at opportunities presented by the London 2012 Games.

The 2012 Games will be one of the UK's biggest commercial opportunities of recent times with contracts worth more than £6 billion covering 75,000 projects.

Business Link is acting as the lead organisation to help firms across the region get in shape to benefit from the opportunities available to them.

A DVD featuring 1968 gold medal-winning hurdler David Hemery has been produced as a key element of a special Business Link programme funded by the South West of England Regional Development Agency to identify opportunities and explain what businesses must do next.

Business Link director Nick Weaver said: "The London 2012 Games presents an unprecedented opportunity to promote South West businesses to new markets, providing a unique global showcase for our products and services.

"We are keen to stress to local firms that there is no existing supply chain in place for the London 2012 Games. They have the opportunity to join the network of suppliers that is taking shape.

"But it's critical that businesses start their preparation at the earliest possible date.

"Contracts are already being issued and will only be offered to those businesses, or groups of businesses that meet specific criteria."

It is estimated up to two million contracts will be available for businesses from all sectors, including construction and associated trades, tourism, manufacturing, catering, merchandise, retail, business and financial services, media and creative industries.

"Local businesses of all sizes really can benefit," said Nick Weaver. "Of the contracts awarded so far, 50 per cent have gone to firms outside London and 68 per cent have gone to small and medium sized firms."

The starting point for businesses is to register with CompeteFor, the online 'dating agency' for Games-related opportunities.

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Businesses of any size can use the CompeteFor brokerage service and by registering their basic details they will be able to view opportunities and gain access to Games-related business news and events.

To apply for contracts listed on CompeteFor as a supplier, firms must complete and publish a full business profile. Once this is created, they can track their activity and search for partners.

Nick Weaver is keen to stress that the London 2012 Games are “far more than just a four week event”.

He added: “They offer the opportunity for local businesses in a wide range of sectors to really boost their performance.

“For some local businesses this may well be their first opportunity for a major contract, for others the 2012 Games could provide an introduction to partners and investors that will take them to the next level of regional, national and international exposure leading to sales in new markets.

“The experience of getting businesses ready for the 2012 Games could be more important than actual sales achieved. It can offer businesses the opportunity to transform themselves and the experience could move them to a higher level of performance with new market opportunities and greater knowledge of their sector and the wider marketplace.

“It is particularly important for businesses in the food and drink, hospitality, service and the creative industries to understand fully what the Games could mean for them.

“Getting into shape to maximise the opportunity will result in local businesses improving their performance, profitability and value – so the benefits are not just for the Games themselves, but the long term.

“Our message to local firms is don’t wait for things to happen but take control of the situation and be pro-active in fully realising the benefits for your business – grasp this golden opportunity for your company.”

To find out more how Business Link can support your business contact the Information Team on 0845 600 9966.