

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

# Response to Tender Guidelines

MARCH 2023

This document sets out key details regarding the **tendering process** and the required **form and content of submissions**. Please read this document in full and in conjunction with the 'invitation to tender' cover letter and associated project 'Terms of Reference'.

## 1. TENDER PROCESS

A short tender document is required setting out the contractor's proposal to deliver the aim and objectives as set out in the project Terms of Reference and associated Invitation to Tender cover letter.

This section provides some information on the **tender process**. Section 2 (below) provides further information on the required **form and content** of the response to tender submission.

### 1.1. SUBMISSION OF RESPONSE TO TENDER DOCUMENTATION

Tender documentation must be received by the specified deadline. No late proposals will be accepted.

Proposals should be emailed in Microsoft Word format to [CRice@equalityni.org](mailto:CRice@equalityni.org)

Tenders may be rejected if complete information is not given at the time of tendering.

- The Commission does not undertake to accept the lowest or any tenders or to pay expenses incurred in the preparation or submission of tenders.
- Once commissioned, all documents / results of the study will become the property of the Equality Commission.

## 1.2. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Tenders will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Understanding of requirements and literature;
- Methodology (to include feasibility, robustness and efficiency of approach);
- Timetable;
- Expertise (in relevant policy & research areas) and Experience (in undertaking similar projects);
- Cost

## 1.3. OUTCOMES

The Commission reserves the right to invite selected contractors to attend interview after the submission of tenders.

All contractors will be contacted by letter once the contract has been awarded

## 1.4. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

Under the Freedom of Information Act, the Commission as a public authority may be obliged to disclose information given by you in this exercise if requested.

## 2. FORMAT AND CONTENT OF SUBMISSIONS

For uniformity and ease of evaluation purposes, tenderers should submit proposals in the following format (where appropriate to the supplied terms of reference):

### 2.1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Include an **Executive Summary**, reflecting the structure of the response. This should also include a summary of the costs associated with the project.

### 2.2. UNDERSTANDING OF REQUIREMENTS

Demonstrate concisely your **understanding of project requirements** and of **associated policy and research literature** (where appropriate).

## **2.3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

It is expected that the successful contractor will already be familiar with any relevant research/policy literature and relevant datasets.

Contractors should provide a detailed overview of the methodology which they feel is best suited to fulfilling the objectives of the project.

Contractors must indicate:

- which materials, reports and data sources they intend to use;
- how these will be used and their respective strengths / weaknesses with regard to delivering the aim and objectives of the proposal.

## **2.4. OUTPUTS<sup>1</sup> AND TIMETABLE**

It is essential that all outputs are rigorous, with a clearly described, evidence based, rationale and are accessible to policymakers and, where appropriate, a lay audience.

Contractors are invited to propose a timetable appropriate to the project (indicating key milestones/dates) for delivery of each of the deliverables listed in the Terms of Reference document. The timetable should demonstrate a capability to complete the exercise within the stated deadlines.

---

<sup>1</sup> Draft and Final Reports should reflect the following generic format: executive summary, background, aims & objectives, methodology, findings, discussion, conclusions and recommendations. Reports shall be produced in Arial font, size 12 using normal or bold type to ensure adequate contrast between the type and background. Text should not be printed over a visual image.

The Commission will likely provide feedback on deliverables (aligned to the project terms of reference or subsequent project initiation document) in three broad areas, namely: clarity and structure of document; robustness and validity of argument; and; contribution of the output to higher level / strategic debate.

## **2.5. EXPERTISE & EXPERIENCE**

The names and CVs of contractor(s); their expertise and experience of related research; how each contractor will allocate their time across the project; and their specific roles and responsibilities within it.

In particular, who will be overall project manager and who will be responsible, where appropriate, for: project design, data collection, data analysis, report writing, quality assurance and any presentation(s).

## **2.6. COSTING**

Contractors are invited to outline appropriate costs for the completion of the project. The contractor should present a total cost of the project and related work (including VAT) in pounds sterling. Total costs should not exceed £20K to £25K (inclusive of VAT).

Contractors should include any other information which adds value to their proposal.

## **3. ADDITIONAL OPTIONS:**

While contractors are required to submit a cost-effective bid to deliver the core elements of the work, they may also wish to give consideration to proposing **optional components** which would enhance the scope or reliability of the work.

In instances where additional options are suggested, contractors should set out in detail the rationale for their optional element(s) and provide *additional and separate* costing for these optional elements.