



Invitation to submit a tender to evaluate the services delivered by Respond and produce a best practice guide.

Closing Date for submissions: By 2pm on 24th June 2022

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1. Invitation to tender

Respond wishes to contract a consultant/ researcher or organisation to conduct an evaluation of its Services Department. As a learning organisation we are anxious to add to our knowledge and understanding of the work that we do and the services we provide. Current services include Early Childhood Care and School Age Care, Family Support, Day Care Services for Older People, Refugee Resettlement Services, and Homeless Services for Families. This is an open invitation to tender, seeking applications from suitably qualified individuals and teams.

2. About Respond

Respond's vision, is that 'every family and individual in Ireland will have high quality housing as part of a vibrant and caring community'. Our guiding principles; a human right to housing and; social justice, underpin our approach to delivering this vision. In practice, this means we provide homes and family and community programmes that support people to succeed, both as individuals and as part of a wider community. Respond, is an Approved Housing Body (AHB) and service provider and works all around Ireland. Founded in 1982, the organisation celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2022. Approximately 14,100 tenants live in over 6,400 homes across the 26 counties.

3. About Respond Services

The provision of housing fulfils the basic need for shelter. It is a long term investment and does not exist in isolation, but is part of a community impacted by the wider socio-economic context. Some areas, estates and communities around the country are significantly affected by poverty, inequality and disadvantage. This is not just caused by the lack of access to appropriate housing, it is perpetuated by lack of access to essential services including healthcare and education.

So whilst it is vital that we supply much needed social and affordable homes, it is also essential that we create communities that are sustainable into the future. This means providing housing with a community infrastructure. We recognise that local services can be the glue that creates and binds a community together and work to promote social inclusion, integration and self-sufficiency.

Respond provides a range of these services for families and individuals within our communities. This includes the aforementioned services; emergency accommodation with 24/7 support for families who are homeless in six Family Homeless Services, three Day Care Services for Older People, 17 Early Learning and School Aged Care, Family Support and Refugee Resettlement Services. Our aim is to provide person centred services to support people to achieve their goals and reach their full potential.

Respond's guiding principle of social justice informs our service provision focusing on creating a more just and equal society, where families and communities are empowered to reach their full potential.

We believe the real outcomes from our services will:

- Improve lives.
- Support vibrant communities.
- Empower our tenants and services users to reach their full potential.
- Address and respond to the root cause of social problems, poverty and deprivation.
- Contribute to the wellbeing of society.
- Value human rights.
- Maintain sustainable communities.

In striving to achieve social justice, and improve the opportunities and outcomes for our tenants and communities into the longer term, we recognise that we have to tackle the root cause of social problems and change the mechanisms that perpetuate inequity. Therefore our services are developed with a focus on providing early intervention and prevention.

In supporting the development of sustainable communities we aim to provide homes and services that are adaptable to meet the needs of individuals and families through their lifecycle. This means adopting inclusive design principles that support flexibility in both the physical environment and for services that support the diverse needs of individuals and communities. Respond has committed to embedding 'value for money' principles in all we do, ensuring our approach considers the social impact of our work

Our current Strategic plan commits us to:

- Providing 'high quality services in the heart of the community, including Family Support, Early Learning and School Age Care, Day Care for Older People and Refugee Resettlement Services. We will work with partners to explore the future provision of services that address identified needs.'
- Working to 'prevent and alleviate homelessness and to support families and individuals who are homeless on their path back to independent living through the provision of emergency accommodation with 24/7 wrap around support'.

Our Strategy also commits us to '*delivering an evidenced based approach to service provision, with services tailored to meet individual and community needs realising Respond's vision of vibrant and caring communities, working in partnership with other service providers as appropriate.*'

4. Evaluating the Services

We now wish to undertake an independent evaluation to deepen our understanding and knowledge about the services we deliver. This will progress Respond's objective of becoming a learning organisation through assessment, evaluation, reflection, learning and implementation. It will build on existing expertise, experience and knowledge and will involve collaboration within and across teams. It will draw on existing internal research work and will be complementary to continuous change programmes already in place, for example, work being undertaken to become a trauma informed organisation. Of particular relevance is our ongoing work to develop an evidence based approach to Respond's tenancy management service in supporting our mission of 'creating safe, sustainable and thriving communities' and developing '*The Respond Way*'. It will support us to develop new services; evolve and improve existing services; provide a robust framework in selecting service options and; support building links with potential partners.

This research will provide a 'sense check' on each of our service areas to frame and pinpoint:

- service aim and purpose,
- develop an evidence base for current service provision,
- evaluate the current service design,
- propose improvements within a framework of 'deliverable objectives and KPI's.

A key requirement of the project will be to utilise a practical and measurable methodology that incorporates:

- research evidence on 'what works' nationally and internationally,
- community needs assessments utilising small area statistics,
- first hand practice knowledge from the ground provided by frontline service providers,
- views and experiences of service users.

Overall, the evaluation will support us to:

- better understand our existing services and provide a knowledge base to develop new services,
- better understand the linkages between our tenancy management work and our services,

- better understand the role and function of Approved Housing Bodies/housing associations in providing support services and comparative analysis with similar organisations operating in other locations or settings,
- evolve and improve existing services,
- provide a robust framework in selecting service options,
- build links with potential partners.

In particular, we propose the evaluation covers the following:

- Profiles and identifies the needs and preferences of service users, tenants and their families and the local communities.
- Identifies what is working well and highlight any areas of refinement in service delivery.
- Identify the internal/organisational interfaces and how these can be strengthened to enhance and streamline delivery for service users.
- Identifies the interfaces with statutory and other services and any gaps within existing service provision.
- Defines formulates and documents a service model for each of individual services identifying the key components of each.
- Identify the levels of current performance and provides a benchmark against best practice using a national and international evidence base for service delivery approach(es) and models in relation to each service.
- Produces a 'roadmap' making specific recommendations on how to plan for and improve future/services.
- Identifies relevant and realistic KPI's and targets for each service area and the components within them.
- Frames each service and relates them back to our strategic objectives and goals.

Using the evidence, information and experience of undertaking this evaluation, an additional requirement of this tender is to develop a best practice model and 'how to guide' on developing and enhancing community based services. This will be a published report which we will make available and disseminate to share the learning and good practice evidence.

5. Management of the research process

A Respond Advisory Group will oversee the research process. The group's role will involve discussing and approving aspects of the evaluation design and instruments, as well as advising and supporting the researchers to undertake tasks that involve Respond staff and service users. It will also advise on the all aspects of the evaluation and in developing recommendations and proposals for implementation as appropriate. Membership of the Advisory Group will include key members of Respond staff. Day-to-day management of the contract will be led by Respond's Policy Manager who will also act as the key contact person.

6. Reporting and Outputs

The appointee will be required to submit regular progress reports and to attend review meetings with the Policy Manager and the Advisory Group.

In addition, the final outputs will include:

- A detailed report of the evaluation process and findings
- A roadmap on how to improve Respond's services
- A good practice guide on developing and enhancing community based services. It is a requirement that this guide is written to a publishable standard.

7. Format of tenders

Applicants should submit a tender document which addresses the points listed below in the order given. The tender document should be no more than 3,000 words (excluding CVs and references, which should be added as appendices). Please find the information headings to be addressed in the tender document below.

7.1 General information

- Name, address, telephone number and e-mail address of the applicant, identifying who will be the principal / day to contact as appropriate.
- Name, address, telephone number and e-mail address of any third parties, partners or collaborators involved in the tender, along with a description of their role or the element of the contract that they will fulfil.
- Confirmation of acceptance by the applicant and any third parties of the conditions of the tendering process as set out.
- A copy of the applicant's Tax Clearance certificate, or, in the case of a non-resident applicant, a statement from the Revenue Commissioners confirming suitability on tax grounds.

7.2 Previous relevant experience and expertise

- Outline of the qualifications and relevant professional experience of each member of the evaluation team. Please add a summary CV of each member of the research team as an appendix to the tender document. Each CV must not exceed two A4 pages.
- In particular, please describe how the team's expertise and competencies relate to the area of work described in the tender, substantiated with evidence such as published work if possible.
- Provide evidence to demonstrate the team's knowledge of current relevant national and international policy and practice and/or methods of acquiring these.
- Outline your understanding of data protection legislation including responding to data access requests, sharing of information etc.

7.3 Methodology

Outline how the project will be undertaken. This should start with an overview of your proposed approach covering the following areas:

- The proposed elements/areas of investigation/examination;
- Methods to be used to investigate each element;
- Approach to identifying and consulting key stakeholders, staff and experts
- Nature and types of data to be gathered;
- Specific approaches and tools to be used to gather data and ensure it is robust;
- Methods used for analysis of data;
- Your approach to ensuring high ethical standards are applied before, during and after the project/research duration.

7.4 Timetable

State the overall project timescale, outlining the key milestones and actions to be undertaken and the calendar / timeframe for each.

7.5 Schedule of costs

- Quote costs in euro (€).
- The indicative budget is €60,000 exclusive of VAT.
- The budget must show the total costs of the research project, including any expenditure to third parties, collaborators or subcontractors.
- Use the following as main headings for the breakdown of costs, subdivided as required.
 - Salaries (include details for each person involved and note their role or position in relation to the project).
 - Data collection and processing costs, including IT.

- Administration (explain the basis of apportionment of costs).
- Overheads (give details of cost headings for overheads, and explain the basis of apportionment of costs).
- Other costs appropriate to a project of this nature (which must be specified and defined).

8. Requests for further information or clarification

Requests for further information or clarification of any aspect of this process or expectations for this evaluation can be made by email to: reyhana.cushnan@respond.ie. To ensure equitable treatment of prospective tenderers, where such additional information or clarification is provided, Respond will seek to make relevant information available to all. Therefore, please provide a contact email address with your tender to facilitate this information-sharing.

9. Terms and conditions

9.1 Ownership

Respond will remain the sole owner of all end-products including, but not limited to, research data, reports, manuals or other documentation, programmes, information, etc., irrespective of whether or not the project is completed. The contractor's work shall be acknowledged by Respond in materials produced and disseminated on the basis of work completed under this contract.

Proposals for scholarly/academic publishing under the name(s) of the researcher(s) arising from this research can be discussed with Respond, as owner of the data and other products of the research, and are to subject to prior approval in writing from Respond.

9.2 Conflict of interest

Any registered interest involving the contractor and Respond, their staff or relatives must be fully disclosed in the response to this Invitation to Tender, or should be communicated to Respond immediately upon such information becoming known to the contractor. In any case, such information must be made available prior to the award of the contract. The terms "Registered Interest" and "Relative" shall be interpreted as per Section 2 of the *Ethics in Public Office Act 1995*. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest may disqualify a tenderer or invalidate an award of contract, depending on when the conflict of interest comes to light.

9.3 Garda clearance

All researchers who may be required to work directly with children and families throughout this research process will be subject to Garda clearance. If any such researcher has been living or working outside Ireland in the past three years, Respond may also require equivalent clearance.

9.4 Freedom of information

Information supplied in respect of this tender may be disclosed by Respond under the terms of the Freedom of Information Act, unless it is exempt from Disclosure under that Act (e.g. personal information or commercially sensitive information where the public interest in non-disclosure outweighs the public interest in disclosure). Tenderers are invited to indicate if they consider any information supplied to be sensitive. Under Section 29 of the Act, any tenderer must be consulted by Respond before any decision to disclose such information.

9.5 Changes to invitation to tender

Respond reserves the right to update or alter the information contained in this document at any time, but not later than seven days before the closing date for the receipt of tenders. Participating tenderers will be informed as the need arises.

There is no obligation on Respond to accept the lowest cost or any tender, and it may be decided, following the review of the tenders, not to proceed or to proceed with a new invitation to tender or an amended version of the proposed research.

9.6 Submission of tenders

Tenders should be submitted by email attachment as a single PDF or Microsoft Word document (with researcher CVs as appendices) to: reyhanacushnan@respond.ie Receipt of tenders will be acknowledged. **The closing date for receipt of completed tenders is 2pm on 24th June 2022.** Incomplete tenders, tenders that do not follow the format prescribed above, or tenders received after the closing date will not be considered.

10. Assessment of tenders and selection of researcher(s)

All tenders will be evaluated against set criteria as outlined below. Respond in its commitment to quality and value for money will evaluate tender submissions on a cost/ quality basis, with 30% being awarded for cost and 70% for quality. There will be a minimum threshold score of 35 marks for quality. All submissions below this level will be automatically excluded.

1. Overall alignment with research brief and relevant experience and expertise. (15 marks)
2. Methodology. (20 marks)
3. Knowledge and experience of the subject area. (10 marks)
4. Timeframe and evidence of ability to meet deadlines. (10 marks)
5. Budget, taking into account our commitment to value for money. (30 marks)
6. Capacity for project management, administration, and to develop and maintain relationships with the various stakeholders. (5 marks)
7. Ethics and ethos. (10 marks)

Respond reserves the right to seek additional information and/or interview tenderers in connection with its assessment of their tenders. It is anticipated that a number of tenderers will be shortlisted for interview.

The lead contact person and other key members of the research team should be available to attend the interview. Respond will not be held liable for any costs incurred by tenderers in relation to the tender submission or the assessment/interview process.

Respond reserves the right not to award the contract in the event that no tender is found to be suitable.