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**Invitation to Tender for Research and Consultancy Services**

**R0617a: Equalities Impact research**

**Context**

This project is being commissioned by London Councils. London Councils is committed to fighting for more resources for London and getting the best possible deal for London’s 33 councils. We lobby for local governance for London boroughs, promoting their leadership of local communities and services and arguing for the tools necessary for them to do that job. We also act as a catalyst for effective sharing of practice, knowledge, information and services between boroughs.

This project will provide a foundation for prioritising future influencing on critical areas of Government policy in terms of equalities at an important time for London local government. The work will initially offer a broad context to equalities issues related to housing, employment and skills, taking a cross-cutting approach to these policy areas and considering their cumulative impact on the equality of Londoners. This rapid review will then be used to prioritise key areas for more detailed research that will focus on areas where London Councils can work with partners at a local, regional and national level to affect positive change for Londoners.

**Proposal**

This project will look at the cumulative impact of national policies relating to housing and work on the equality of Londoners.

The exact areas of focus will be narrowed down as part of the first phase of research, but areas of particular recent interest might include:

* The impact of ‘right to rent’ checks introduced under the Immigration Act 2016, and to what extent this has led to an increase in discrimination of BAME British and migrant groups in London – this could include learning from the West Midlands pilot as well as experiences of boroughs and partners since its implementation[[1]](#footnote-1)
* The social and economic impact of limited access to the Private Rented Sector on opportunities for low-skilled workers and young people seeking access to apprenticeships
* Differential outcomes in terms of apprenticeship starts, completions and wage levels by household income, ethnicity, gender and disability
* The impact of welfare changes on Londoners’ ability to access suitable housing and be supported into work.

Providers will need to have a comprehensive understanding of equalities issues relating to London, an up-to-date knowledge of recent relevant policy changes in order to bring the right level of focus to this project between Phases 1 and 2.

**Methodology**

**Phase** 1: Rapid literature review and data trawl on the equalities impact of issues relating to housing, employment and skills in London, with particular focus on points of crossover. The parameters of this phase should be proposed by the providers and finalised in consultation with London Councils.

This broad overview should then form the basis of a prioritisation exercise to finalise the focus of Phase 2 of the work, working closely with members and officers from London Councils to select the most appropriate areas of further study.

**Phase 2**: Detailed examination of 2/3 much more focused policy areas, which might include an examination of the impact of recent policy changes and/or a focus on the cumulative impact of multiple policy areas on particular Londoners. This phase will include roundtable events with a broad range of stakeholders, the collection of written evidence and, where appropriate, interviews in order to gather new qualitative and quantitative evidence of impact on the equality of Londoners. This Phase should include the collection of case studies involving key stakeholders within boroughs, the voluntary sector and communities. Specific scope for each of these meetings will be set in advance to ensure evidence aligns clearly with the aims of the project.

**Phase 3:** A written report that draws together the broad overview from Phase 1, and the different strands of focus from Phase 2 into a cohesive whole. This will include recommendations that provide a foundation for influencing and shaping both regional and national government policy. Providers will also support London Councils to communicate the findings to relevant stakeholders as determined by London Councils, through a presentation summarising the project, its findings and implications for London.

**Project Costs and Timetable**

This project is being included in the government’s Contracts Finder database to comply with recent changes in national procurement policy which specifies that any procurement opportunities and contract awards above certain low thresholds (£25,000) are published on [Contracts Finder](https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder).

Costs should be clearly presented and be inclusive of all fees, direct and indirect costs, expenses but exclusive of VAT.

You should indicate based on the timings below how you would envisage the project progressing based on your suggested methodology:

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| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | Date |
| Deadline for receiving tender | 5 July: 12.00pm |
| Contractors informed of outcome | w/c 17 July |
| Contract awarded | w/c 17 July |
| Inception meeting | w/c 24 July |
| Phase 1 | w/c 24 July |
| Phase 2 | w/c 14 August |
| Phase 3 | w/c 30 October 2017 |
| Report Presentation | November/December 2017 |

**Reporting Procedures and Project Management**

The project manager for this assignment is Doug Flight; tel: 020 7934 9805; doug.flight@londoncouncils.gov.uk

We would expect regular updates on progress both to the project manager and the steering group for this project, including weekly progress updates (by phone or email).

We expect to comment on all draft outputs and this should be reflected in your cost and time schedule.

Final outputs may be distributed internally and to key external stakeholders and made available on our websites.

**Tender Requirements**

We expect the providers have the following skills and experience:

* Expert knowledge and understanding of housing, employment and skills policies as they relate to the equality of Londoners
* Experience of complex social research in a political environment
* Existing contacts and good relationships with London boroughs and other relevant stakeholders such as community and charitable organisations
* Knowledge of London regional and local government and the particular housing, skills, and employment context of London as it relates to equalities

Providers should be able to give independent and expert advice and analysis and should not have a direct conflict of interest in the outcome of this project.

Bidders should provide the following information in their tender:

1. The size and nature of your organisation (if relevant) and your experience of directly relevant consultancy work
2. Your understanding of the aims and objectives of the project and how it interacts with the current policy context
3. An outline of your proposed methodology and approach to tasks outlined in this document
4. Experience of the individual(s), including their role on the project and tasks if relevant (CVs should be included separately in an annex, max 2 pages each)
5. Arrangements for project management, reporting and quality control
6. Research timetable with key milestones, including any risks that may affect the timing or delivery of outputs and contingencies
7. Clear structure of charges including day/hour rates, time spent on tasks, expenses. VAT will be paid at the applicable rate (an example of a clear cost structure is given in annex 2).

We will evaluate your response against the evaluation criteria given below.

70/30: 70% quality and 30% cost

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| --- | --- |
| **Evaluation criteria – Quality [70% of the total]** | **Weighting [100%]** |
| 1. Understanding of the aims and objectives of the work, the policy context and key issues; specifically:
* Knowledge of London regional and local government and the equalities work undertaken at different levels of London government.
* Understanding of recent policy changes in housing, skills, and employment in the London context that may have an impact on the equality of Londoners.
* Understanding of the broad range of stakeholders whose views and experience should inform local decision making related to equalities.
 | 25% |
| 1. Experience of undertaking similar projects, including:
* Experience of working with local and regional government, sub-regions (or combined authorities).
* Experience of undertaking work examining the impact of policy decisions on equalities, and making well-evidenced recommendations.
* Experience of presenting complex social research to experts as well as local government officials and politicians.
* Experience of and existing relationships with a broad range of stakeholders invested in creating and promoting equalities.
 | 30% |
| 1. A clear methodology and approach to the tasks set out in this document, including:
* How the views of stakeholders will be sought and incorporated into this work and approaches to achieving board consensus to the project proposals.
* How a broad and high-level review of equalities issues in London will provide appropriate background to, and inform the prioritisation of, areas of more detailed research in Phase 2.
* A detailed, clear timetable for achieving the tasks within the overall timescale outline in this document.
 | 45% |

**Format of Tender Response**

If you wish to apply, **an electronic copy of your tender response with completed FOI and Equal Opportunities documents** (available on the website) should be sent to tenders@londoncouncils.gov.uk quoting reference number **R0617a** to arrive by **12pm on Wednesday 5 July 2017.** Bidders should ensure that they have received a confirmation email of receipt of tender by the deadline. **All submission documents should be provided in Microsoft Word format.**

If necessary, you may seek clarification on the procurement process or the specification by email via Sorcha.Rooney@londoncouncils.gov.uk Enquiries will not be answered if received within **2** days of the date for submissions of tenders. Bidders should note that responses to each enquiry will be copied to all organisations bidding (though will not identify the originator of the enquiry) through the London Councils and Contracts Finder website.

If you are aware that the submission of your tender may give rise to a potential conflict of interest, please inform the officer to whom you are making the application.

***Full instructions to bidders are also provided in Annex One. Bidders are advised to read all instructions before submitting their tender.***

**Freedom of Information Act**

You should be aware that the information you submit may be subject to a request for information. The provision of any information to external parties by London Councils is determined by statutory conditions provided for in the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

**Equality Opportunities**

The successful contractor will be required to comply with London Councils Equal Opportunity Policy and bidders should complete the Equal Opportunities Questionnaire with their tender submission.

**Terms and Conditions**

Please see accompanying terms and conditions and confirm acceptance in your submission.

**Annex One: Instructions to bidders**

1. **Tender Submissions**
	1. All pages of the bidder’s tender should be sequentially numbered (including any annexes and supporting documents).
	2. Bidders are advised to submit tenders by email to tenders@londoncouncils.gov.uk quoting reference **R0617a.**
	3. The tender must not arrive later than the date and time stipulated. Tenders received after that time may not be considered unless the bidder can prove that the tender was dispatched in sufficient time to meet the deadline.
	4. By submitting a tender, the bidder agrees to keep that tender open for acceptance by London Councils for 90 days following the closing date.
	5. London Councils does not accept suppliers’ Terms and Conditions.
2. **Amendments to Tender Documents**
	1. Prior to the deadline, London Councils may modify the tender documents by amendments in writing. London Councils may extend the deadline for tenders to allow for significant amendments to be fully assessed and taken into account.
	2. The bidder may modify the tender prior to the deadline for receipt by giving notice in writing or by email.
	3. No tender may be modified after the deadline for receipt.
	4. The contractor may not transfer, assign or sublet the contract, or any part thereof, without the prior written consent of London Councils. If such consent is given the contractor will remain liable for the performance of the contract in it’s entirely as if such assignment or sublet had not taken place.
3. **Tender Charges**
	1. Charges must be in pounds sterling and be inclusive of all costs but can be exclusive of VAT.
	2. Charges shall be fixed for the duration of the Contract and will not be subject to any variation unless detailed in the Contract document.
	3. London Councils shall not be liable for any costs incurred in the production of the tender submission.
4. **Tender Evaluations**
	1. London Councils intends to commission the most economically advantageous tender and reserves the right to accept or reject all or any part of any tender.
	2. London Councils does not bind itself to accept the lowest charged tender.
	3. London Councils reserves the right to change the timing or any other aspect of the procurement process or to cancel the procurement process at any stage without prior notice.
5. **Intellectual property rights**
	1. All information provided by London Councils shall be treated by the Contractor as confidential except where prior written consent has been given by London Councils that such information may be disclosed. The dissemination of information within your organisation should be on a need-to-know basis.
	2. All intellectual property rights arising from the work will reside with London Councils.

**Annex Two: Example of cost structure**

**Example of cost table**

**Below is an example of a clear cost structure. Other cost breakdowns will be accepted; however a clear structure that will allow London Councils to easily assess value for money – including cost per stage and/or days/hours per person - should be used.**

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1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluation-of-the-right-to-rent-scheme> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)