**Contract 6**

**Reference:** CSEC (SEND) 16-17/06

**Title:** Support to enable effective participation of young people in special educational needs and disability decision-making.

**Contact Details**:

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**Background and description of the services required**

On 1 September 2014, Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 took effect, offering simpler, improved and more consistent help for children and young people in England with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The new system is:

* replacing statements of SEN and learning disability assessments with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans - setting out in one place all the support families will receive;
* requiring councils to publish a ‘local offer’ showing the support available in the area to all children and young people who have disabilities or SEN;
* requiring better co-operation between councils and health services to make sure services for children and young people with SEN and disabilities are jointly planned and commissioned;
* giving parents and young people with EHC plans the offer of a personal budget;
* introducing mediation for disputes; and
* introducing a legal right for children and young people with an EHC plan to express a preference for state academies, free schools and further education colleges.

On 26 January 2016, the Children’s Minister Edward Timpson, announced a package of additional support for implementation of the SEND reforms in England during 2016-17. This included:

* £35.8 million in [implementation funding for local authorities in 2016 to 2017](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-reform-funding-for-local-authorities-2016-to-2017), recognising the additional duties placed on them as a result of the transition to EHC plans
* £27.3 million for the [Family Fund Trust](http://www.familyfund.org.uk/) to support low income families with disabled children
* £15 million to fund the [independent supporters programme](http://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/independentsupport), helping to support families and young people to navigate the system, and creating positive experiences for them
* £2.3 million for [Parent Carer Forums](http://www.nnpcf.org.uk/), which bring parents together to provide invaluable support and advice for families

To complement this programme of delivery support, the Government is now seeking applications for a new contract to enable effective participation of young people in special educational needs and disability decision-making in 2016-17.

A summary of the requirements for this contract is provided at Annex A. Further information is contained within the Invitation to Tender documentation.

To request a copy of the documentation, please e mail the contracts mailbox at: [SENDcontracts2016-17@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:SENDcontracts2016-17@education.gsi.gov.uk), quoting the contract title and reference number above. In the subject line of your e mail, please include the words ‘Request for ITT documentation’.

**Estimated Contract Start Date (subject to change): 25 April 2016**

**Contract End Date: 31 March 2017**

**Estimated value or range of values**:

The maximum estimated value of the contract covered by this notification is

up to £500k inclusive of VAT.

**Deadline for receipt of tenders (time and date)**:

Three hard copies of all completed tenders must be received by Angela Overington no later than 10.00am on 21 March 2016 at:

The Department for Education

0-25 SEND Unit

Level 1, Sanctuary Buildings

Great Smith Street

London SW1P 3BT

An electronic PDF version must also be submitted no later than 10.00am on

21 March 2016 to the contracts mailbox at:

[**Contracts2016-17.SEND@education.gsi.gov.uk**](mailto:Contracts2016-17.SEND@education.gsi.gov.uk).

**Attachments**

At Annex A are some of the key contract requirements for this tender.

**Whether suitable for SMEs**: Yes

**Whether suitable for VCS**: Yes

**Any other info**:

There may be an option to extend this contract for a second year depending on the contractor’s performance, the availability of funds and an ongoing need for the services provided.

**The estimated date for award is 21** April 2016.

**Annex A: Key Contract Requirements**

**Contract 06: CSEC (SEND) 16-17/06: young people’s Participation**

While young people’s views have been a key influence within SEN and disability legislation and implementation, there is still work to be done at national and local level to ensure that:

* 1. young people with SEND understand the changes to the law and how it affects them;
  2. practitioners understand how to involve young people with SEND in decisions about their support and care; and
  3. young people with SEND are able to influence national and local policy and practice development and their voices are embedded within strategic participation locally.

There is a need to improve the current level of engagement of young people with SEND, working towards a consistent national standard over time.

* 1. **Contract Requirement 1– Initial scoping work on young people’s participation (16-25 year olds)**

We would like the successful bidder to undertake initial scoping work to assess the extent of young people’s participation across England, identifying where it is working well and where more support might be needed. This could include a survey, interviews with young people, report writing, and recommendations for future action in 2017-18 and beyond. We would like this work to focus primarily on young people’s participation rather than children under 16, given the specific rights that young people have under the 2014 Act.

The bidder should demonstrate:

* Their strategy for scoping the work
* Evidence of how they will link to other research and relevant DfE funded activities
* Detail on the research techniques they will use, and how they will work appropriately with vulnerable or hard to reach young people, including awareness of safeguarding requirements
* Programme and project management techniques

**1.2 Contract Requirement 2 – Raising awareness about young people’s participation**

To set up and manage 3 national awareness raising/good practice sharing events open to local authorities, young people, health, social care, schools and colleges, parents, employers. The events should be geographically spread to ensure maximum take-up, and ideally should involve around 150 participants. They should be co-developed with young people, to determine the objectives, format and presenters. The results of, and materials from, the events should be widely disseminated, and developed in such a way as to allow local areas to replicate events for training purposes.

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Develop a strategy for the delivery of the events on young people’s participation
* Undertake all organisational activities required for the events
* Events should be accessible to ensure wide take up/attendance of key stakeholders (as above)
* Ensure that topics for the events are relevant and evidence-based

The bidder should demonstrate:

* Experience in running events of a national scale
* Evidence of how they will target key audience and ensure wide coverage of and take up from the sector – links to communications strategy below
* Evidence of how they will link to other relevant DfE funded activities
* Programme and project management techniques
* How they will evaluate impact and lessons learnt and feed back to government and stakeholders

**1.3 Contract Requirement 3 – Providing local areas with some support to improve young people’s participation.**

Working within existing regional and local structures to support SEND, we would welcome proposals for how this might best be achieved. For example, this could include:

* Facilitating good practice sharing, and peer to peer support – e.g., putting LAs who are struggling with ensuring effective participation and engagement in touch with LAs that are succeeding
* Developing and disseminating good practice materials
* Providing online and telephone support
* Putting on one or two regional workshops about young people’s participation

**1. 4 Contract Requirement 4 - Development and management of a National Young People’s Group, with membership covering every region in England**

To recruit 10-12 young people with SEND to provide advice nationally on SEND policy and implementation of the reforms. The young people would be offered training and would be regionally based and meet together every two months – ideally face to face. Innovative approaches (such as using skype or other media) for more frequent discussions using sub-groups would be welcomed.

The contractor should develop a programme of activity, in consultation with the young people and the government, which supports effective implementation of the SEND proposals.

Each member of the group would also have some capacity (say 3 days per year) to engage in regional activity (e.g., supporting local and regional events, and gathering feedback from young people groups in their area).

The young people would also act as a conduit for communications.

The bidder should demonstrate:

* Their young people recruitment strategy
* Evidence of the support to be provided to the young people group at national and local level and in working with the Young People Participation expert – see requirement 6 below
* A clear methodology for measuring impact, lessons learnt and providing feedback to government

**1. 5 Contract Requirement 5 –** **To develop and deliver a communications approach**

It is important that communications with young people and professionals working in the sector are clear so that they understand the changes in the law that affect them. Professionals need to understand their duties and how to apply them so that they can engage effectively with young people and that young people are able to participate fully**.**

We would like the successful bidder to:

* Building on existing local and regional communication activity, to provide advice on the most effective mechanisms for ensuring information about young people’s participation effectively reaches target audiences – i.e., young people and professionals working with them.
* Based on that advice, to agree an approach with the Department how best to implement this - being mindful of any restrictions on paid-for communications and marketing.

The bidder should demonstrate:

* Evidence of previous communications strategies on a national and local scale
* How they will ensure that communications are based on need
* How they will ensure that communications are co-produced with young people
* How they will ensure that communications are fully accessible
* How they will ensure that communications are disseminated effectively to have far reach/usage
* How they will evaluate impact of the approach

**The winning bidder will be in charge of their own communications planning and spend. However, in line with Cabinet Office advice, they will need to clear their communications proposals with the department’s communications teams to ensure VfM and appropriate governance.**

**1. 6 Contract requirement 6 – Pilot Young People Engagement Participation Teams**

To develop ‘pilot’ Young People Engagement Participation Teams in up to 3 separate regions, covering different types of area (for example rural/urban, low/high deprivation, north/south). These should include at least one young person with SEND (who would be a member of the National Young People’s Group – see requirement 4 above) and one participation expert (who might also be a young person with or without SEND). The Teams would:

* Work with existing regional support structures for SEND, including regional leads for Parent Carer Forums
* Gather evidence from across their region of what is working well, identify LAs in need of most support, and develop tools and training to help LAs
* Target particular local areas – in most need of support - in that region to support basics of young people participation, running local workshops, helping to set up a local young people group

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| The bidder should demonstrate:   * Evidence of how they would recruit the teams * Evidence of how they would select which regions to work with * Evidence of how they would support teams, in particular in helping embed them within existing local structures * Evidence that they are able to play a key role in assuring and evidencing good participation practice * Evidence to inform future decisions about this model and its sustainability |