**London Inclusion Charter research - clarification questions & responses**

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| **1, Can you let us know whether or not a university like ours could lead on this contract? We would probably be partnering with a VCSE, but we will decide the potentially best consortium once we’ve seen the full tender information** | If the joint providers meet the core capabilities within the spec, they will be eligible to apply. |
| **2, Can you give us a clearer idea of what is expected from the Research Partner in regard to working with the 96 participating schools? Is there an expectation that ALL 96 schools need to be visited and focus groups conducted? Given the tight framework of the project, our idea was to invite all 96 schools to take part in an online survey, and in addition, between us (the research partner) and the YPAG, conduct in-person one to one and focus group interviews with a sample of schools. Will this methodology/ strategy be acceptable to the VRU?** | The VRU appreciate the tight timescales for this piece of work. We are currently engaging with a range of stakeholders across all 32 boroughs to inform an engagement strategy for selecting/sampling schools, which will be adapted once the Research Partner is on board. The Research Partner would not be expected to conduct focus groups / site visits to all schools, the expectation is for the bidders to propose a feasible and robust approach to capture the voices of as many children/young people and education senior leaders/frontline practitioners as possible within the timescale and budget. |
| **3, As we devise our own strategy for delivering this project, it would be useful to get an idea of the availability of the YPAG. We envisage that YPAG will be central to this research project and take a lead in gathering data from other young people and professionals. We will facilitate training in methods, ethics and field-research data recording/ analysis so as to empower them to become researchers themselves. It would be useful to know the availability of the YPAG and also how many (numbers) we will have access to?** | There are 11 YPAG members involved in this project. Their availability tends to best in the evenings (5-8pm) online and on occasional Saturdays/ school holiday days. We currently have a day with them on 14th October and 4th November where training slots could be used. As the timeframe to conduct the research is short, the VRU's Research, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning team will have already supported the YPAG with initial training around developing a research methodology with a focus on both surveys, and how to conduct interviews and focus groups by the time the research partner starts. |
| **4, Can you clarify whether the focus will be on primary or secondary schools or both?** | Both. Our current engagement plan includes having at least 3 schools in every London borough (including a Primary school, secondary school and alternative provision/pupil referral unit) confirmed to contribute to the research. The VRU envisage that the focus will be slanted towards secondary, only because they will have more to offer in terms of their understanding around the issues affecting inclusion. |
| **5, In regard to speaking with key stakeholders, can we clarify whether we are able to research a sample of professionals and parents/ carers across the cohort?** | Within the spec, we highlight that the Charter should be informed and shaped by the two groups: Children and young people and Education senior leaders/frontline practitioners. If within the timeframe and budget the Research Partner is also able to engage parents/carers this would be desirable but not essential. The VRU does have mechanisms through its Parenting programmes to engage with parents, including its Parent Carer Champion Network. |
| **6, We anticipate a considerable amount of administration involved in this project given the high number of schools and personnel involved and given the tight framework. In regard to establishing contacts and communicating with the schools and relevant professionals, will the Internal Project Team from the VRU and the YPAG assist with this process? ie; setting up appointments, sessions and meetings or will the research partner need to take a lead on this?** | The YPAG would not be able to lead or assist on this. The VRU project team will be able to assist in providing contacts/pathways to local authorities and with mainstream schools and those in an alternative education setting to enable participation, however it will be the responsibility of the research partner to set up appointments, sessions and meetings. |
| **7, Have all 96 schools already been contacted and have they agreed to take part in this research?** | The VRU is currently engaging with a range of stakeholders across all 32 boroughs to inform an engagement strategy for selecting/sampling schools. The VRU's Project team are in the process of securing 96 schools for participation, ready for when the research partner is in post. |
| **8, Will we get creative, production and logistic support from the VRU regarding the making of the film to include the voices of young people and practitioners for the Inclusion Charter? Are we expected to lead on the video content, as part of this research project, or will the VRU take a lead on this, and we will facilitate workshops and focus group interviews which will provide content for the production?** | The Research Partner will not be responsible for creating or producing the video output. The research partner is responsible for facilitating and capturing the content of the video through the research methods agreed (eg. surveys, focus groups, interviews etc). The VRU's comms team will work with YPAG and the project team to develop the final video output which will be based on the research findings. |
| **9, Is there any possibility of an extended timeframe for the project?** The timetable, particularly for analysis, doesn't allow for in-depth analytical work with the data that will surface or allow for proper analysis between and across the different data sets. Experiences of exclusion and practices in school are much more nuanced than suspension and permanent exclusion (and deal with how 'at risk students' are responded to early on in the journey toward permanent exclusion as well as forms of exclusion less evident in schools' data, like: managed moves, internal alternative AP, internal isolations etc) The current timetable risks having a less useful, insightful research product at the end of the process. | No extension is possible to the timeframe for the project. |
| **10, We’re unclear on desired methodology (qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods), please could you clarify.** While the spec requests qualitative research, qualitative research by definition cannot undertake meaningful work with thousands of young people.  There is not enough time in the timetable outlined to build, test, roll out and analyse survey data from young people in schools, alongside qualitative data.  It would be useful to be clearer on the methods you envisage and why benefit is seen in including thousands of students within this timetable & budget | The emphasis is on a methodology, which is appropriate for the budget and timescales. The VRU envisage that a mixed methods approach is most feasible, with surveys designed to capture the views of pupils and practitioners across participating schools, supplemented by qualitative insight from focus groups, interviews etc. |
| **11, Is there scope to prioritise peer research in the methodology?  We want to prioritise the meaningful involvement of young people in this project, potentially through a peer-research methodology that trains and supports young people to conduct research on the charter within their own schools. We’d need more time to train and support them properly. This connects to our question regarding the speed of the timetable, this time the fieldwork component** | The YPAG have previously received light-touch peer-research training (both external and internal) around designing a research methodology, qualitative vs quantitative data, data collection methods and creating and analysing surveys so they would be able to participate in peer research. The VRU would encourage the incorporation of peer research in the methodology and if time permits it would be desirable to further upskill and support them in this area. |
| **12, What age range of young people do you want to hear from?** | The focus is on children and young people across primary and secondary schools (up to 18 yrs.), however we wouldn’t expect to go much lower than age 10, but will be led by the research partner on what is appropriate and feasible. |
| **13, Would your school contacts be able to distribute surveys to young people within schools?** | Yes, it is anticipated that the VRU will have a commitment from at least 96 schools to contribute to the research, through surveys and focus/groups/interviews. Depending on the agreed approach with the research partner the in-school dissemination processes agreed ahead of contract will need to be finalised by the research partner after they are in post. The VRU envisage that once a survey is finalised the research partner would disseminate to the participating schools, who would ensure this was completed according to sampling numbers pre-agreed. |
| **14, Would all qualitative research need to take place in the schools, or would there be the possibility of doing some outside / online? (Presume the former but keen to know if we could do this in a way more comfortable for young people)** | Yes, qualitative research (e.g. focus groups, interviews etc.) can also take place online as long as it fits within the timescales and budget. |
| **15, Would you be interested in us going beyond your schools’ channels to hear from experts working with young people? (Youth workers, social workers, etc.)** | If deemed feasible within the time constraints and budget. |
| **16, In what level of depth do you want to hear from people? Would you be happy to go in depth with kids from a smaller number of schools (say 10 or 12 schools) and then something lighter touch with those from a much bigger selection of schools e.g. a survey?** | The emphasis is on a methodology, which is appropriate for the budget and timescales. The VRU envisage that a mixed methods approach is most feasible, with surveys designed to capture the views of a bigger selection of pupils and practitioners across participating schools, supplemented by more in-depth qualitative insight from focus groups, interviews etc. |
| **17, In our output, how general vs. specific would you like us to be? Is this about broad principles of inclusive education or specific ideas for better inclusion (or both)?** | The VRU project team have been working with YPAG to discuss the focus of the Charter. The Research Partner will be expected to work closely with YPAG and key stakeholders to delineate how broad or specific the principles will be. The VRU envisage that the guiding principles with be high level, to ensure wider buy in, but that a range of promising practice will sit behind them to demonstrate the specific ideas for better inclusion. |
| **18, Would you be interested in data points as an output – for example quantified response to ideas e.g., 60% of young people think the problem is x or that this is a good solution?** | Yes, the specification emphasises concise, accessible outputs. The research partner will work closely with the YPAG and wider project team to explore and interpret results, generating a short report outlining key findings. The ambition is towards a concise easily interpretable output that will inform the Inclusion Charter as part of suite of supporting documents. |
| **19, What would the research partner role in a video be? We infer from the brief that this is more about guiding the messaging of the video, rather than providing content?** | The Research Partner will not be responsible for creating or producing the video output. The research partner is responsible for facilitating and capturing the content of the video through the research methods agreed (e.g. surveys, focus groups, interviews etc). The VRU's comms team will work with YPAG and the project team to develop the final video output which will be based on the research findings. |