

The Electoral Commission

Expression of interest (EOI) request for The Electoral Commission

Contract Reference: C0151-BD-COMMS Partner led action research projects: engaging under-registered groups in democracy

Expression of Interest (EOI) scope

1. The Electoral Commission requires information on your capability and capacity to provide the services detailed below.
2. Any supplier which does not respond to this EOI within the stipulated timescales will exclude themselves from the bidding process for this project.
3. Please advise if you are interested in bidding for this opportunity.

Please note: No formal tender response is required at this stage, either as a project proposal or as a price submission. Please just confirm interest to participate to the procurement contact indicated at the end of the document.

Intended Procurement timetable

Publication of EOI: 19/09/2024

Return date for EOI: 03/10/2024

Invitation to Tender issued: 07/10/2024

Tender submission date deadline: 28/10/2024

Contracts awarded and all bidders notified: w/c 04/11/2024

The Electoral Commission and voter engagement

The Electoral Commission is the independent public body which oversees elections and regulates political finance in the UK. We work to promote public confidence in the democratic process and ensure its integrity.

We also use our expertise to make and advocate for changes to our democracy, aiming to improve fairness, transparency, and efficiency.

Our voter engagement work aims to promote greater consistency in political literacy education, increase knowledge and understanding of democracy, and increase voter confidence to engage in our democratic system.

To date, we have worked with partners to develop a range of resources designed to educate voters and under-registered groups about how to register to vote, ways to vote and changes in legislation (such as the introduction of the voter ID requirement).

Who can apply

- We will commission civil society organisations to develop and evaluate projects that will increase democratic participation.
- Organisations must be registered with the **Charity Commission**.
- Impartiality is at the centre of the Electoral Commission's role. Organisations must demonstrate a clear understanding of impartiality, and how they plan to deliver their initiative in an impartial way.

Partner led action research projects: engaging under-registered groups in democracy

Lot 1 - Democratic Engagement Projects

Large scale projects with proven impact

We will award up to £50,000 (including VAT) per project to organisations in England who have a proven track record and can demonstrate considerable impact when engaging under-registered groups in democracy. We envisage commissioning up to four projects, and payment will be made by purchase order.

Lot 2 - Democratic Innovation Projects

Small scale projects, including piloting new approaches

We will commission organisations who want to pilot new and innovative approaches to democratic engagement. We envisage supporting a range of projects worth between £5,000 and £10,000 (including VAT) from this stream, and payment will be made by purchase order. We envisage commissioning up to 8 projects, and payment will be made by purchase order.

Specification

The aim of this work is to support organisations to engage with their existing audiences who are not currently registered to vote, and to raise awareness of the new voter ID requirement. We will support organisations who ensure under-registered groups have an active involvement in every element of the project to foster a deeper understanding of the democratic process. Successful projects will:

1. Increase the likelihood of registration in under-registered groups;
2. Increase awareness of the voter ID requirement and the availability of the Voter Authority Certificate; and
3. Build our understanding of what works and what doesn't, and what has the most impact in increasing awareness of the electoral system.

We welcome a wide range of initiatives. We will encourage innovation and creativity from partners, while being mindful of best practice in education and community engagement and taking learnings from existing evidence. Initiatives could include traditional education interventions, initiatives to upskill professionals, events, tech-based solutions, and awareness raising activities.

All projects must be fully delivered by 31 March 2025.

Under-registered groups and those with low photo ID ownership

Our [research \(2022\)](#) has demonstrated there are lots of factors which affect whether someone is registered to vote, from age to how long they have lived in their home. Our research shows that the following characteristics impact a person's likelihood of being registered.

Age

- Only 16% of 16-17 year olds in Great Britain were registered
- 70 % of 18-34 year olds, in England were registered

Nationality

- 70% of EU citizens in Great Britain were registered
- 68% of Commonwealth Citizens were registered

Ethnicity

- Registration in Great Britain is highest among those from a white ethnic background
- Since 2019, registration rates have increased for every group except those from Black ethnic backgrounds where it has fallen from 75% to 72%

Table 1: Registration across Great Britain

Year	2018	2022
White	84%	87%
Asian	76%	80%
Black	75%	72%
Mixed	69%	72%
Other	62%	71%

Disability, particularly non-physical disabilities

- 84% of people with a mental or learning disability in Great Britain were not registered

Socio-economic status

- 81% of people from the lowest-income socio-economic group (DE) in England were registered, compared to 89% the highest (AB).

Geography

- People living in an urban setting are less likely to be registered with 89% being registered in Great Britain

Housing, particularly if they rent privately

- Those who have recently moved house are less likely to be registered
- Only 39% of those who have lived at their current address for less than 1 year are registered
- 49% of people who rent their homes are registered in England, compared to up to 95% of homeowners

People with mental health challenges

- Like other groups such as disabled people who are vulnerable to social and political exclusion, we are concerned that people with a mental illness may also be under-registered. Research (UKRI, 2024) suggests that more than 500,000 people are living with a severe mental illness (SMI) in England, with more than 1.85 million people in contact with mental health, learning disability and autism services at the

end of November 2023. This potentially represents a sizeable under-registered group.

We know that some groups are more likely to experience barriers created by the voter ID requirement and may need support to access photo ID required to vote in person at some UK elections. This includes:

- Older people, particularly those over 85
- Trans and non-binary people
- Disabled people
- Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities
- Homeless people and those in refuges

We are particularly interested in supporting organisations that work with low socio-economic communities. Research carried out during the 2024 general election suggests that the voter ID requirement affected some people more than others. People from lower social grades who did not vote were more likely to say it was because they did not have any accepted ID than those in a higher social grade.

Indicative evaluation criteria

1. Lot 1 (up to £50,000 including VAT)

Any resultant tenders will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- **Quality - Written Proposal (80%)**
 - Ability to deliver outcomes (40/ 100 score)
 - Timescales (20/ 100 score)
 - Team and risk management, budget and value for money, and safeguarding practices (40/ 100 score)
- **Detailed budget breakdown (20%)**

2. Lot 2 (up to £10,000 including VAT)

Any resultant tenders will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- **Ability to deliver outcomes (40%)**
- **Impact and evaluation (20%)**
- **Timescales and budget (20%)**
- **Safeguarding practices (20%)**

Please note that the evaluation criteria are subject to change during the development of the Invitation to Tender.

Right to cancel or vary expression on interest

The Electoral Commission reserves the right to:

- Cancel all or part of this EOI at any stage and at any time; and
- Amend, clarify, add to or withdraw all or any part of the EOI at any time.

Next steps

If you are interested in applying for this tender, please register your interest.

1. Register on the portal

The expected invitation to tender will be published on the Electoral Commission's Procurement Portal, please register as a supplier by following this link <https://intendhost.co.uk/electoralcommission>

2. Contact procurement, register interest

Once you have registered on the portal, please contact us stating which lot/s you intend on applying for. There is no need to formally respond to the tender at this stage with an application.

Contact details

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