

Equality Mainstreaming Unit: Call for Proposals

To Develop an Equality Mainstreaming Project Focused on Access to Employment or Workplace Equality

The Equality Mainstreaming Unit is now inviting applications for funding under the European Social Fund supported Equality Mainstreaming Approach 2007-2013. Funding of up to € 20,000 per project - for one year or less - may be made available to public or private organisations including civil society organisations. The funding is for targeted projects which foster equality across the nine grounds covered by the equality legislation through the delivery of an equality mainstreaming project.

This programme of funding will focus on implementation of equality mainstreaming strategies and successful applicants will have to demonstrate that equality mainstreaming has been implemented.

A maximum of € 20,000 will be made available only on foot of exceptional applications. All projects will be required to engage with more than one project partner in order to ensure maximum equality outcomes.

The project will have to focus on improving access to the labour market (equal access and participation to employment, further education and training, employability programmes) for groups across the nine grounds or on promoting equality in the workplace through a whole organisational approach or an approach across a sector or a region. The closing date for receipt of proposals is 5.00 p.m. **on Friday, 17 May 2013**. Proposals which are delivered late will not be considered.

Proposals should be submitted by e-mail to: uomeara@equality.ie

Please use the subject line "Call for Proposals – To develop an equality mainstreaming project focused on access to employment or workplace equality"

Please read the Full text of the Call for Proposals in the attachment.

Region:

Nationwide

Expiry date:

17/05/2013

Date Entered/Updated:

17/04/2013

Equality Mainstreaming Unit

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1. Introduction - The Equality Mainstreaming Unit

The Equality Authority runs an Equality Mainstreaming Unit, funded by the European Social Fund, which has the objective of supporting greater access to the labour market for groups across the nine equality grounds covered by the equality legislation (for more information on the Equality Mainstreaming Unit, see www.equality.ie).

The specific objective of this unit is to facilitate and support organisational and cultural change within providers of further education and training, labour market programmes, trade unions and employers' networks, small and medium enterprises, and civil society organisations by strengthening their capacity to combat discrimination, to promote equality and to accommodate diversity.

There are, for instance, a number of barriers to participation in vocational education and training, labour market programmes and employment clearly identified in relation to groups covered by the nine equality grounds. These include:

- ***Contextual barriers such as*** public and institutional perceptions of and attitudes towards groups experiencing inequality, with attitudes toward members of the Traveller community being strongly prejudiced in access to further education and employment.

- ***Institutional barriers*** such as inappropriate location, timing and relevance of programmes, low levels of outreach recruitment or potentially discriminatory policies and practices in the workplace.
- ***Informational barriers*** such as weak information strategies to promote awareness of further education and labour market programmes or to promote workplace equality and accommodation of diversity.
- ***Situational barriers*** arising for instance from the cost of participation in further education programmes (e.g. childcare costs, transport) or lack of flexible work arrangements in the workplace, lack of reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities etc.
- ***Personal/Dispositional barriers*** arising from the acquisition of negative or passive attitudes towards education and employment because of previous experiences of discrimination and social exclusion.

The Equality Mainstreaming Unit has been supporting projects to address these types of barriers by developing initiatives that seek to advance equality mainstreaming approaches.

2. Grants Available

There are two strands of grants available. These are as follows:-

Strand 1: Access to Employment through participation in Further Education and Training, Labour Market Programmes

Grants may be provided for the development and delivery of an equality mainstreaming project to support groups experiencing discrimination across the nine equality grounds to improve their employability in the labour market through access to further education and training or labour market activation programmes. Projects should clearly define what barriers the funding seeks to diminish or remove and the equality mainstreaming strategy that will be implemented to address these.

While the following list is not exhaustive, here are some examples of what could be funded:-

Institutional barriers - a project could work in collaboration with providers of further education and training to implement an **equality action plan** to tackle barriers such as: timing and location of courses, the operation of restrictive eligibility criteria based on duration of unemployment and welfare status, lack of outreach recruitment etc. An employability programme could focus on developing a programme of work placement for Travellers in the private or public sector.

Informational barriers - implementation of **equality action** that would seek to develop a targeted information strategy in partnership with a statutory provider and in consultation with groups at risk of discrimination (through outreach, liaison with CIBs, social media etc.)

Situational barriers - the project could focus on identifying barriers arising from the cost of participation in education and training programmes and implement a programme to effect the design and implementation of a training or active labour market programme by carrying out an **equality audit/review** of mainstream provision.

Dispositional barriers - the project could focus on implementing an equality action plan in services to unemployed people to implement an equality programme which could include an

equality review of service provision and equality awareness raising training for frontline staff.

Projects should demonstrate a partnership approach with NGOs, or with trade unions and/or employers' representative structures, or with other relevant stakeholders such as FAS (soon to become SOLAS), INTREO, Department of Social Protection, the Further Education Sector, Public Sector Bodies etc.

The partnership approach should seek to improve the equality competency of all stakeholders involved.

Projects may have a sectoral approach. A sectoral approach refers to the involvement in the project of several partners in a specific labour market or further education sector or the involvement of more partners on a regional spread.

Strand 2: Promoting Workplace Equality

Grants may be provided for the development and implementation of an equality mainstreaming approach to promote workplace equality and equality competency. This approach may be realised through the testing or implementation of an existing equality tool (see www.equality.ie).

While the following list is not exhaustive, here are some examples of what could be funded:-

- Enhance workplace conditions on one or more of the nine grounds e.g. development and implementation of equality policies with involvement of staff, management and trade unions.
- Carrying out an Equality Review of workplace policies and practices and implement an equality action plan on foot of the review.
- Promoting Equality Awareness in the Workplace through a whole-organisational approach.
- Promote Equality competency of Employers and/or Trade Unions around specific barriers to employment for groups across the nine grounds or on discrimination in the workplace.

Projects should demonstrate a partnership approach with NGOs, or with trade unions and/or employers' representative structures. The partnership approach should seek to improve the equality competency of all stakeholders involved.

Projects may have a sectoral approach. A sectoral approach refers to the involvement in the project of several partners in a specific employment sector or the involvement of employers or other stakeholders in a regional context.

This strand may include equality mainstreaming approaches through the specific implementation of an equality review and a related action plan. A review can cover the whole organisation or a specific set of policies and practices.

NB Organisations are only eligible to submit one application under one strand of the Measure.

3. The Selection

The project proposals will be approved by the National Framework Committee for Equal Opportunities at the Level of the Enterprise.

The project will be selected using the following criteria:

A. Nature of the project (50/100)

- a) Quality of the proposal.
- b) The proposed actions should relate to labour market disadvantage, access to employment or discrimination in the workplace.
- c) Coverage of one or more grounds of the equality legislation.
- d) Evidence of the potential to engage key actors in the area on which the project is focused.
- e) Clear evidence of a partnership approach as set out in the description of the Strands (Section 2 of this document).

B. Capacity to integrate an equality mainstreaming approach into the project (20/100)

- a) Evidence of the relevance and potential of the proposal to integrate an equality mainstreaming approach into the workplace, or into further education or training services or into a labour market programme.
- b) Capacity to implement relevant equality actions as a result of this project.
- c) Expected impact on the experience of groups under one or more of the nine equality grounds in relation to labour market disadvantage, access to employment or discrimination in the workplace.

C. Leadership to drive forward and sustain project in the future (20/100)

- a.) Active support and participation of senior management among proposed partners.
- b.) Capacity of the project partners to maintain a commitment to equality mainstreaming beyond the life of the project.

D. Cost (10/100)

- a) Value for Money.
- b) Size of network/number of affiliated members/ implementation potential or nature of the sectoral approach, national or regional.

4. Project Management approach

Projects will be monitored using an action plan agreed with the EMU to include defined responsibilities, timeframes, actions and expected outputs. The Equality Mainstreaming Unit will reserve the right to be involved in steering groups and committees set up for the implementation of the project and will provide technical assistance and expertise while ensuring that an equality dimension is consistently incorporated throughout the project actions.

The projects will be expected to keep a complete and consistent audit trail of expenditure and follow public procurement guidelines.

In relation to procurement, project representatives will be expected to inform and involve EMU staff in tendering processes related to the procurement of equality experts to work, if applicable.

The Work Outputs expected include:

- Project management meetings with EMU (at a minimum three per project).
- Provision of interim and final reports based on the action plan structure. The final project report will show evidence of the outputs generated by the project.
- Project representatives will be expected to submit all draft materials to the EMU for equality-proofing before being finalised.
- Project representatives will be expected to contribute material either in writing or orally to EMU publications and conferences.
- Project representatives will share the learning from their project. It is intended that any outputs produced will be used and disseminated by the Equality Mainstreaming Unit with a view to sharing best practice and tools in the area of equality mainstreaming.

5. Timeframe

The projects must be concluded in approximately one year. Duration of contract may vary according to the type of project.

6. Format of Project Proposals

- Outline the proposed approach to the work (max 2 pages).
- Set out the experience and expertise of the personnel to be involved in the work (Max 2 pages).
- Outline a clear breakdown of costs in Euros, exclusive of VAT and expenses as well as the number of days work involved and the daily rate for the individuals involved.

NB The Equality Authority will request the submission of a detailed action plan before the signing of the contract.

7. Ownership

Ownership of any material/training materials/reports/templates etc. produced, which relate to any contract awarded as a result of this call for proposals rests with the Equality Authority.

8. Confidentiality of information

The Equality Authority undertake to use their best endeavours to hold confidential any information provided by applicants in response to this Call for Proposals, subject to the Equality Authority's obligations under law, including the Freedom of Information Acts, 1997 and, 2003. Please note that, in response to a request under the Freedom of Information Act, information not identified as sensitive (with supporting reasons) could be released. **Therefore, in responding to this Call for Proposals, you should identify the specific information which you do not wish to be disclosed, stating the reasons for its sensitivity.** The Equality Authority will consult with you about this sensitive information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request received. The final decision on disclosures rests with the Office of the Information Commissioner.

9. Preparation Costs

The Equality Authority will not be liable in respect of any costs incurred by suppliers in the preparation of proposals or any associated work effort.

10. Closing date for submission of proposals

The closing date for receipt of proposals is 5.00 p.m. on Friday, 17 May 2013. Proposals which are delivered late will not be considered.

Proposals should be submitted by e-mail to: uomeara@equality.ie

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11. Proof of Receipt/Delivery

Arrangements should be made to obtain proof of receipt/delivery of the proposal, by, for example, obtaining a return receipt on your e-mail. Proposals delivered late will not be considered.

Date: 17th April, 2013

Appendix 1

Extract from Article 45, Paragraph 1 & 2 of EU Council Directive 2004/18/EC of 30th April 2004 - (co-ordinating procedures for the award of public works contracts, public supply contracts and public service contracts).

Article 45

1. Any candidate or tenderer who has been the subject of a conviction by final judgment of which the contracting authority is aware for one or more of the reasons listed below shall be excluded from participation in a public contract:

- a) participation in a criminal organisation, as defined in Article 2(1) of Council Joint Action 98/733/JHA(20);
- b) corruption, as defined in Article 3 of the Council Act of 26 May 1997(21) and Article 3(1) of Council Joint Action 98/742/JHA(22) respectively;
- c) fraud within the meaning of Article 1 of the Convention relating to the protection of the financial interests of the European Communities(23);
- d) money laundering, as defined in Article 1 of Council Directive 91/308/EEC of 10 June 1991 on prevention of the use of the financial system for the purpose of money laundering (24).

2. Any economic operator may be excluded from participation in a contract where that economic operator:

- a) is bankrupt or is being wound up, where his affairs are being administered by the court, where he has entered into an arrangement with creditors, where he has suspended business activities or is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure under national laws and regulations;
- b) is the subject of proceedings for a declaration of bankruptcy, for an order for compulsory winding up or administration by the court or of an arrangement with creditors or of any other similar proceedings under national laws and regulations;
- c) has been convicted by a judgment which has the force of res judicata in accordance with the legal provisions of the country of any offence concerning his professional conduct;
- d) has been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authorities can demonstrate;
- e) has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which he is established or with those of the country of the contracting authority;

- f) has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which he is established or with those of the country of the contracting authority;
- g) is guilty of serious misrepresentation in supplying the information required under this Section or has not supplied such information.

Appendix 2

General Conditions of Tender

Conflicts of interest

Any conflict of interest involving any successful tenderer must be fully disclosed to the Equality Authority, particularly where there is a conflict of interest in relation to any recommendations or proposals put forward by the tender. Failure to disclose a material conflict of interest may disqualify a bidder or cause the termination of a contract and entitle the Equality Authority to seek remedies, such as costs or compensation for loss.

Registerable interests

Any registerable interest involving the successful tenderer and any member of the staff or Board of the Equality Authority, the Minister for Justice and Equality, members of the Government, members of the Oireachtas or employees of the Departments of Justice and Equality, or their agencies or their relatives must be fully disclosed in response to this RFT, or should be communicated to the Equality Authority immediately upon such information becoming known to the contractor, in the event of such information only coming to their notice after the submission of a bid and prior to the award of the contract. The terms "registerable interest" and "relative" shall be interpreted in accordance with section 2 of the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1995.

Tax Clearance Certificates

Before a contract is awarded (in the case of contracts of a value of €10,000 (including VAT) or more within a twelve month period) the successful contractor will be required to promptly produce a Tax Clearance Certificate. Where a Tax Certificate expires within the course of the contract, the Equality Authority reserve the right to seek a renewed certificate. In addition, contractors must retain records of tax reference numbers for any subcontractors where payments exceed €1,000 (including VAT). A successful non-resident contractor or subcontractor will be required to produce a statement from the Irish Revenue Commissioners. Applications may be made in a standard form which will be provided to the successful tenderer in due course. All payments under the contract will be conditional on the contractor being in possession of a valid certificate at all times.

Payment

Payment for all work covered by this request will be on foot of appropriate invoices. Invoicing arrangements will be agreed with the successful tenderer, subject to the terms of the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act, 1997 (No. 27 of 1997 and Directive 2003/35/EC of 29th June 2002).

The following should also be noted:

- No additional fees except those originally quoted will be paid and additional costs will be a matter for the contractors themselves;
- The prime contractor is responsible for all third party dealings.

Under the European Communities (late Payment in Commercial Transactions) Regulations, 2002, the Office undertakes to pay invoices within 30 days of receipt of invoices (or delivery of service whichever is later). However, this is subject to the following:

- The invoice must be properly addressed to the Equality Authority, 2 Clonmel St, Dublin 2.
- Incorrect invoices will be returned for correction with consequential effects on the due date of payment in accordance with the Prompt Payments Act.

Withholding tax

If the successful tenderer, by undertaking the contract for the work, is deemed to carry out a professional service as defined by the Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997, Professional Services Withholding Tax (PSWT) will be deducted at the standard rate of income tax. PSWT deducted is available for set off against a specified person's final tax liability of the period which the relevant payment is charged to tax. In order to facilitate the administration of Withholding Tax the successful tenderer will be required at a later stage to supply one of the following:

- a Revenue and Social Insurance number (RSI), in the case of an individual,
- or
- an income tax number,
- or
- a corporate tax number in the case of a company.

“Funded by the Equality Mainstreaming Unit which is jointly funded by the European Social Fund 2007-2013 and by the Equality Authority”



Ireland's EU Structural Funds
Programmes 2007 - 2013
Co-funded by the Irish Government
and the European Union



EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND



THE EQUALITY AUTHORITY
AN tÚDARÁS COMHIONANNAIS

Investing in your future