



Department for
Communities

An Roinn
Pobal

Department for
Commonities

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Evaluation Methodology Access to Work (NI)

Competitive Grant Call for the delivery of assessment services for people who are blind or partially sighted to include those who are neurodivergent

SELECTION PROCESS AND CRITERIA

The Department for Communities recently undertook an engagement event which identified potential interest from external organisations to act as the delivery partner to deliver assessment services for Access to Work (NI).

It is now appropriate to formalise a competitive exercise to select one preferred delivery partner to deliver assessment services for people who are blind or partially sighted and those who are neurodivergent from those parties which previously expressed interest.

Key principles underpinning the selection process include:

1. The criteria seek to ensure that the preferred delivery partner is suitably structured and qualified to deliver on DfC's policy objectives. However, the process is not intended to be overly onerous or bureaucratic, recognising the potential time and resource constraints faced by external organisations. As such, it is encouraged that respondents provide clear and concise responses to each question (or part question where applicable) **not exceeding 6000 characters.**
2. The process is intended to augment the engagement exercise, providing additional specific detail relating to personnel experience, methodology, allocation of resources and contingency measures, and

the ability to deliver services within the KPI targets. The specific criteria are set out in Table 1.

The selection process will comprise of two stages: Eligibility and Minimum Standards and Award Criteria.

Stage 1: Eligibility and Minimum Standards

In order to pass the Eligibility and Minimum Standards stage, applicants must demonstrate that they are eligible to apply and meet the minimum standards in paragraphs below.

All applicants must initially confirm that they are not guilty of any of the offences stated in the Applicant Grounds for Exclusion document and hence not excluded on the grounds for mandatory exclusion as outlined at **Annex A** of the **Instructions to Applicants** information booklet.

This stage will also comprise of questions to determine that the applicant can meet a minimum standard of delivery. They must confirm that they possess the necessary skills and experience to deliver the assessment services across Northern Ireland. Applicants must also provide an assurance that they are registered on the Government Funding Database (GFD) (Organisation Registration Details (nics.gov.uk)) or be prepared to register on the database prior to the awarding of the grant if successful.

To note: If successful you may be required to provide a copy of relevant business documents such as:

- Copy of Constitution/ Memorandum of Association,
- List of office bearers or Board of Governors,
- Organisation Chart,
- Copy of Audited Accounts or Financial Statement,
- Rental Agreement/Lease or Evidence of Ownership

(this list is not exhaustive)

Furthermore, applicants must illustrate that they can comply with UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR) and Data Protection 2018 (DPA) requirements.

Stage 2: Award Criteria

The information below provides further details on the criteria against which applications will be assessed, provided applicants have passed Stage 1.

The selection process will involve several criteria, each weighted according to its importance. Below are the key criteria, their weightings, and examples of what is expected in each area:

Criterion 1 - AC 1 – Personnel Experience (40%)

(a) Delivering assessment services for people who are: (30%)

- blind or partially sighted and
- those who are neurodivergent.

(b) Stakeholder engagement and management in the delivery of assessment services for people who are: (10%)

- blind or partially sighted and
- those who are neurodivergent.

Delivering assessment services for people who are blind or partially sighted and those who are neurodivergent. This criterion is the most heavily weighted, the importance of experience is essential in ensuring successful service delivery.

Due to the specialist requirement of the role, the personnel experience has been given the highest weighting of 40% as the greater the knowledge and experience of the team of assessors, the more successful the service delivery will be.

Examples of relevant experience could include, but are not limited to:

- Experience with blind or partially sighted individuals
- Awareness of assistive technology for partially sighted individuals
- Assessment of needs and providing training to staff or individuals
- Examples of effective intervention
- Experience with neurodivergent individuals, such as conducting assessments or supporting them in the workplace
- Stakeholder engagement and management experience, including collaboration with employers regarding workplace adjustments

Please provide evidence where possible.

Criterion 2 - AC 2 - Methodology (20%)

A thorough approach to the assessment is vital for meeting this requirement. This section should demonstrate a step-by-step process or a well-defined methodology for conducting assessments. The methodology should also show how your organisation is open to innovation and learning lessons for future delivery.

Examples to demonstrate this could include, but are not limited to:

- Step-by-step assessment of an individual who is blind or partially sighted and those who are neurodivergent
- Risk management and contingency planning
- Use of technology in assessments
- Flexibility and ability to tailor approaches to meet individual needs

We ask that applicants provide examples and evidence to demonstrate this.

Criterion 3 - AC 3 - Allocation of Resources and Contingency (20%)

(a) Allocation of Resources (10%)

(b) Contingency (10%)

Allocation of resources is critical to ensuring that assessment services can be delivered throughout Northern Ireland.

Contingency planning is essential for ensuring that organisations can quickly adapt to unexpected disruptions,

minimise risks and maintain operational continuity during unforeseen events.

Examples to show this could include, but are not limited to:

- Comprehensive geographic coverage, including a local presence and partnerships with local agencies
- Staff expertise and allocation of resources
- Multi-disciplinary teams and technologies used
- Contingency planning and allocation of resources
- Monitoring and reporting processes

Criterion 4 - AC 4 - Ability to Deliver services within the KPI Targets (20%)

This criterion evaluates the provider's ability to consistently deliver assessment services within the KPI targets.

Examples could include, but are not limited to:

- Workflow and scheduling tools used by your organisation
- Explanation of how you will ensure quality of assessments is not compromised while meeting the **20 working days** target
- Outline of how you will communicate with clients and employers to ensure timely coordination of assessments

If you are interested in this opportunity, please complete the relevant Citizen Space survey with your details.

Table 1

Eligibility and Minimum Standards /Award Criteria and Weightings	
<p>This grant will be awarded to the applicant most suitably qualified to deliver the Department for Communities’ policy objectives in accordance with the specification and financial limit.</p> <p>Selection and Award</p> <p>Selection Criteria – Pass/Fail</p> <p>Award Criteria – 100 marks</p>	
<p>Exclusion</p> <p>Pass/Fail</p>	<p>Applicants must confirm that they should not be excluded from applying on the grounds outlined in the Mandatory Exclusion clauses stated in Annex A of the Instructions to Applicants booklet.</p>
<p>Scope of Delivery</p> <p>Pass/Fail</p>	<p>The service provider must confirm (either solely or as part of a consortium) that they are able to deliver specialist assessment services throughout Northern Ireland for people who are blind or partially sighted and those who are neurodivergent.</p>
<p>Company Experience</p> <p>Pass/Fail</p>	<p>The service provider must confirm (either solely or as part of a consortium) that they have experience of delivery of specialist assessment services for people who are blind or partially sighted and those who are neurodivergent.</p>
<p>Government Funding Database</p> <p>Pass/Fail</p>	<p>Applicants must confirm that they are registered on the Government Funding Database (GFD) or are prepared to register on the database prior to the awarding of the grant if successful.</p> <p>Once successful the service provider must evidence the following documents are up-to-date and fit for purpose for the application period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copy of Constitution/Memorandum of Association • List of office bearers or Board of Governors • Organisation Chart • Copy of Audited Accounts or Financial Statement • Rental Agreement/Lease or Evidence of Ownership <p>They will be asked to confirm they can provide these documents if successful as part of the application survey.</p>
<p>Processing Personal Information</p> <p>Pass/Fail</p>	<p>The service provider must be able to demonstrate that they comply with UK General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR) and Data Protection 2018 (DPA) requirements.</p>

Table 2

Award Criteria	Marks Available
<p>AC 1 – Personnel Experience</p> <p>(a) Delivering assessment services for people who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blind or partially sighted and • those who are neurodivergent. <p>(b) Stakeholder engagement and management in the delivery of assessment services for people who are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blind or partially sighted and • those who are neurodivergent. 	<p>(a) 30</p> <p>(b) 10</p>
<p>AC 2 – Methodology</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>AC 3 – Allocation of resources and contingency</p> <p>(a) Allocation of resources</p> <p>(b) Contingency</p>	<p>(a) 10</p> <p>(b) 10</p>
<p>AC 4 – Ability to deliver services within the KPI Targets</p>	<p>20</p>
<p>Total</p>	<p>100</p>

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