



Department for
Communities

An Roinn

Pobal

Depairtment fur

Commonities

www.communities-ni.gov.uk

Instructions to Applicants

Workable (NI) Programme

Competitive Grant Call instructions for the delivery
of in work support for the Workable (NI) Programme

November 2024

Project Title:

DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES – DELIVERY OF IN WORK SUPPORT FOR THE WORKABLE (NI) PROGRAMME

This document should be read in conjunction with the Grant Call Specification Document.

An application shall only be accepted if:

- It is received before **midnight on the closing date of Sunday 22 December 2024** for this competition.
- The submission should be completed in the English language.

- It is complete and fully compliant with the requirements detailed in the grant call documentation.
- Your bid is made by responding to the questions online, available via the Department for Communities website, **<https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/wni-grant-call>**.

Applications for the award of this grant to deliver the Workable (NI) (WNI) programme are welcome from sole organisations and consortiums as long as they meet the requirements outlined in the Specification and Evaluation documents.

Contents

1. Background Information	4
2. Security Vetting	4
3. Right to Reject and/or Disqualify	4
4. False Information	4
5. Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE)	4
6. Evaluation Methodology – how your bid will be evaluated	5
7. How to Structure your application	10
Annex A – Mandatory Grounds for Exclusion	13

1. Background Information

The Department for Communities is formalising a competitive Grant Funding Exercise for the delivery of the WNI Programme and invites applications from organisations for the programme's management and delivery. Please see document entitled "Specification Workable (NI) Programme" for further details.

2. Security Vetting

Applicants must have appropriate security vetting procedures in place and comply with the requirements outlined in the Specification document. This will include having necessary personnel security Access NI checks in place **(Types of AccessNI checks | nidirect)**.

3. Right to Reject and/or Disqualify

Questions relating to the grounds for mandatory exclusions are included within the Application Form in the Eligibility and Minimum Standards section. Applicants are required to complete these questions in full in order for their application to be considered.

Applicants must read the information entitled: Mandatory Grounds for Exclusion which can be found in **Annex A**, before responding to questions.

Where a consortium of multiple organisations is seeking to make a bid for the grant award, a lead provider must be identified and only one response should be submitted in the name of the consortium that is to be awarded the grant. Therefore, all requirements of the grant application process, must be provided for the consortium that the information relates to. In the event of this consortium bid being successful the lead provider is required to take overall responsibility for management and administration of the delivery of the programme.

4. False Information

Applicants must ensure that all information included within their application is accurate. The inclusion of information that is found to be false or misleading may result in the applicant's exclusion from this Grant Award process.

Furthermore, if false or misleading information comes to light after a Grant Award has been awarded, this may be considered as grounds for termination of the Grant Funding Agreement.

5. Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE)

Applicants are advised to seek their own independent legal advice regarding the application of TUPE. Information on TUPE can be found in **Business transfers, takeovers and TUPE: Overview - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)**

6. Evaluation Methodology – how your bid will be evaluated

The selection process will comprise of two stages, i.e. Stage One – Eligibility and Minimum Standards and Stage Two – Award Criteria. Grants will be awarded to the applicants who pass Stage One and have the highest scores following the evaluation at Stage Two.

The Department proposes to make three grant awards to external Service Providers to deliver the Workable (NI) programme across Northern Ireland.

It is anticipated that the expected annual programme budget will be £2,725,000 and this will be paid to providers based on participant demand. **The term of the award of the grant will be four years from the commencement date of 1 April 2025.**

6.1 Stage 1: Eligibility and Minimum Standards

To pass the Eligibility and Minimum Standards stage, applicants must demonstrate that they are eligible to apply and meet the minimum standards as set out in **Table 1** below.

Table 1 – Eligibility and Minimum Standards

Eligibility and Minimum Standards	
Eligibility and Minimum Standards	
Selection Criteria – Pass/Fail	
Exclusion Pass/Fail	Applicants must confirm that they should not be excluded from applying on the grounds outlined in the Mandatory Exclusion clauses stated in Annex A .
Registration on Government Funding Database & Grant Funders' Passport Pass/Fail	The applicant must confirm they are registered on the Government Funding Database (GFD), or will apply to register, and will sign a Grant Funders' Passport declaration to confirm that the following documents, as applicable, are up-to-date and fit for purpose for the application period: <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 (This documentation will be validated prior to final appointment of the successful bidder(s) and a signed Grant Funders' Passport declaration must be submitted.)
Scope of Delivery Pass/Fail	The applicant must confirm (either solely or as part of a consortium) that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are able to deliver the Workable (NI) Programme to participants across the whole of Northern Ireland.
Company Experience Pass/Fail	The applicant must list (either solely or as part of a consortium) the following: <p>Services undertaken, within the last three years of assisting people with a broad range of disabilities to sustain suitable employment. This should include learning disability, mental health conditions, sensory and physical disability, and neurodivergent.</p> Please ensure that the list of services clearly detail the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project title • Date undertaken and who it was for • Value This response must not exceed 6,000 characters.

All applicants must initially confirm that they are not guilty of any of the offences stated in **Annex A** below and hence not prohibited from applying on the grounds for mandatory exclusion. Applicants must also provide an assurance that they possess the necessary documentation required for the Grant Funders' Passport declaration, as detailed in the Table above, and be registered on the Government Funding Database (GFD), or will apply to register. **(Organisation Registration Details (nics.gov.uk))** (Such documentation will be validated prior to final appointment of the successful applicants and an appropriately signed and authorised Grant Funders' Passport declaration must be submitted.)

This stage will also comprise of questions to determine that the applicant can meet a minimum standard of delivery. They must demonstrate that they possess the necessary skills and experience to deliver the Workable (NI) programme support across Northern Ireland.

Responses to Eligibility and Minimum Standards will be assessed on a pass/fail basis. Applicants will be assessed on their ability to meet all eligibility and minimum standards detailed in this section using the following definitions.

Pass – Where the applicant has confirmed they should not be excluded and fully demonstrated their ability to meet all of the minimum standards; and

Fail – Where the applicant has failed to confirm they should not be excluded and have not fully demonstrated their ability to meet all of the minimum standards.

A failure on any of the pass/fail criteria will constitute elimination from the process.

6.2 Stage 2: Award Criteria

Applications will be assessed against the award criterion as outlined in **Table 2** below.

Applicants must not make assumptions that the panel has prior knowledge of their organisation or their service provision. Applicants will only be evaluated on the information provided in their response.

Table 2 – Awards Criteria and Overall Weighting percentages

Award Criteria		Overall Weighting %
AC1	Programme Manager Experience Employment Support Manager (ESM) Roles and Responsibilities in Annex A of the Specification	30
AC2	Employment Support Officer(s) Experience Employment Support Officers (ESO) Roles and Responsibilities in Annex A of the Specification	40
AC3	Methodology	15
AC4	Contingency and Systems Support	15
Total		100

The highest weighting has been given to the experience of the proposed team of Employment Support Officers as they will be providing support to people with disabilities and their employers and will also be responsible for drawing up client Action Plans. The second highest weighting has been given to the experience of the proposed Programme Manager who will be responsible for managing the programme. Methodology and Contingency and Systems Support have been weighted evenly due to their equal importance.

Further information on responding to the award criteria is outlined in **paragraph 7.2** below.

6.3 Key to Scoring

To ensure consistency and equity in approach the evaluation panel will assign scores using the scoring key below:

Table 3 – Scoring Key

Score	Indicator
0	Failed to address the criterion.
1	Poor proposal to address the criterion.
2	Limited proposal to address criterion.
3	Acceptable proposal to address the criterion.
4	Good proposal to address the criterion.
5	Excellent proposal to address the criterion.

6.4 Threshold Score

If applicants score 1 or 0 in any of the award criteria detailed above in 6.2, then it shall be deemed that they have failed to meet the specification and their application will be eliminated from the Grant Call process.

6.5 Funding

The funding model will be set by the Department for Communities and not through the Grant Call process. The funding model is as follows:

Table 4 – WNI Funding Model

Successful application and action plan	£500 one-off payment
In Work support payments	£290 monthly per client
Progression (paid after 13 weeks sustained employment)	£300 one-off payment

6.6 Tie Break

In the event of two or more applicants being awarded the same overall score and ranking joint third, the total combined of AC1 + AC2 experience section score will be used to differentiate third place. If two or more bidders still tie, the score for AC 2 – Employment Support Officers Experience will take precedence over the total combined experience score.

If, when applying the tie breaker, a clear result is identified (i.e. the tie breaker score differentiates the applicants who have the same score for the initial evaluation of bids), the selection process will be terminated at that step.

Use of Next Ranked Provider

In the event any subsequent grant agreement is terminated in accordance with the provisions of the terms and conditions and/or special terms and conditions, the Department reserves the right to offer the next ranked provider in this process, the opportunity to enter

into a grant agreement, provided the original terms offered by that applicant remain unchanged from those originally offered by that applicant during the course of this process. Should this not be the case and/or the next ranked provider declines, the Department reserves the right to approach the next ranked providers in turn on the same basis. This will continue until all ranked providers have been exhausted or if the Department determines, at its sole discretion, to launch another Grant Call process. This right will exist throughout the 4-year agreement period.

7. How to Structure your application

7.1 Citizen Space

Your application response must be submitted via Citizen Space, a consultation and survey platform utilised throughout the Northern Ireland Civil Service. Details, including our Privacy Policy can be found on www.communities-ni.gov.uk/dfc-privacy-notice. Responses must not include reference to URL's, appendices, cross referencing, embedded files, or any other form of attachment or supplement, unless specifically requested.

Applicants must note that responses to each criterion are standalone and **must not** be cross referenced to other sections of the application response. The Evaluation Panel may **not take** account of information presented in another part or section of your application when scoring your response to each criterion.

Where character limits have been applied, this will be clearly stated in the instructions below. **Should an applicant exceed the character limit permitted, any information provided beyond the character limit permitted will not be considered.**

Any clarifications regarding the Grant Call competition must be communicated by e-mail to healthandworksupportco-ordination@communities-ni.gov.uk. Clarifications are to be submitted no later than 6 December 2024. Any requests for Clarification received after this date may not be responded to.

7.2 Responding to the Award Criteria

Applicants must respond to each criterion by providing a detailed methodology as outlined in **Table 5** below.

Table 5 – Responding to the Award Criteria

Award Criteria	
AC1	<p>Programme Manager Experience</p> <p>The proposed Programme Manager must provide details of their individual involvement through one example (completed in the last three years) of having successfully managed an employment programme for people with disabilities, like the one detailed in the specification. The example must include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme title. • Start and end dates of programme. • Description of programme and objectives & budget. • The individual’s specific role and responsibilities within that programme including methodology used to demonstrate their experience and their knowledge of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended, and the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006 in relation to employment. <p>Please upload your response in the Criteria 1 field as shown on the Citizen Space questionnaire.</p> <p>This response must not exceed 12,000 characters.</p>
AC2	<p>Employment Support Officers’ Experience</p> <p>Given the specialist nature and scale of the Workable (NI) programme, the applicant must provide eight named Employment Support Officers who have collectively supported people with a broad range of disabilities. This should include learning disability, mental ill-health, sensory and physical disability and neurodivergent within the proposed team. Each of the proposed Employment Support Officer(s) must demonstrate their previous relevant experience, by way of one example completed within the last three years of having been involved in the delivery of an Employment Programme through providing support to people with disabilities, like the one detailed in the specification. The example must include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme title and overview of the services delivered and the objectives. • Programme Start and End dates. • Details of the specific roles and responsibilities undertaken by the proposed Employment Support Officer in delivering the example given to demonstrate their experience and their knowledge of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended, and the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006 in relation to employment. • Details must include the range of disabilities that the Employment Support Officer has supported. <p>Please upload your response in the Criteria 2 field as shown on the Citizen Space questionnaire.</p> <p>Each example provided must not exceed 32,000 characters.</p>

<p>AC3</p>	<p>Methodology</p> <p>Applicants must provide a methodology that clearly details how their organisation will implement the service, outlining the plan from initiation through the phases of programme delivery, to guarantee that the client's requirements will be met in full. This must clearly detail how the organisation intends to address the needs of existing Workable (NI) clients with a broad range of disabilities, as detailed in Section 4 of the Specification document.</p> <p>The methodology must also demonstrate how the applicant will have the capacity to support any new and additional clients with a broad range of disabilities that may come on board in future. Applicants must detail what systems will be used to monitor progress against the implementation plan which should include details of what resource is required from the client. The plan must include key dates, goals and milestones to ensure delivery of this service.</p> <p>Please upload your response in the Criteria 3 field as shown on the Citizen Space questionnaire.</p> <p>This response must not exceed 16,000 characters.</p>
<p>AC4</p>	<p>Contingency and Systems Support</p> <p>Applicants must provide clear details of the systems which will be in place to communicate with the client to ensure the smooth running of the programme and enable issues to be dealt with in an effective manner. The answer must clearly detail the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for escalation if problems cannot be resolved at operational level. • Business continuity procedures to ensure delivery of a quality service in cases of unplanned events. (e.g. staff absences, transport disruptions, industrial disputes, severe weather, a pandemic outbreak, systems or utilities failure). • Details of Performance Management Systems and management information and reporting systems to monitor the quality of operational services, critical success factors, and key performance indicators (KPIs). <p>Please upload your response in the Criteria 4 field as shown on the Citizen Space questionnaire.</p> <p>This response must not exceed 16,000 characters.</p>

The Department for Communities cannot provide any guarantee as to the level of business under this agreement. Current participation levels have been included in **Section 4** of the **Specification document** for your information.

Annex A – Mandatory Grounds for Exclusion

Exclusion Grounds

The Department for Communities shall exclude Applicants from the process if they have been found guilty of any of the offences listed below:

Mandatory exclusions

(l) The Department shall exclude an applicant from participation in this grant call process where they have established, or are otherwise aware, that the applicant has been convicted of any of the following offences:

(a) conspiracy within the meaning of section 1 or 1A of the Criminal Law Act 1977 or article 9 or 9A of the Criminal Attempts and Conspiracy (Northern Ireland) Order 1983 where that conspiracy relates to participation in a criminal organisation as defined in Article 2 of Council Framework Decision 2008/841/JHA on the fight against organised crime.

(b) corruption within the meaning of section 1(2) of the Public Bodies Corrupt Practices Act 1889 or section 1 of the Prevention of Corruption Act 1906.

(c) the common law offence of bribery.

(d) bribery within the meaning of sections 1, 2 or 6 of the Bribery Act 2010, or section 113 of the Representation of the People Act 1983.

(e) any offence listed:

(i) in section 41 of the Counter Terrorism Act 2008; or

(ii) in Schedule 2 to that Act where the court has determined that there is a terrorist connection;

(f) any offence under sections 44 to 46 of the Serious Crime Act 2007 which relates to an offence covered by subparagraph.

(g) money laundering within the meaning of sections 340(11) and 415 of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

(h) an offence in connection with the proceeds of criminal conduct within the meaning of section 93A, 93B or 93C of the Criminal Justice Act 1988 or article 45, 46 or 47 of the Proceeds of Crime (Northern Ireland) Order 1996.

(i) an offence under section 4 of the Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc.) Act 2004.

(j) an offence under section 59A of the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

(k) an offence under section 71 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009.

(l) an offence in connection with the proceeds of drug trafficking within the meaning of section 49, 50 or 51 of the Drug Trafficking Act 1994; or

(m) any other offence within the meaning of Article 57(1) (1)(a), (b), (d), (e) or (f) of the Public Contracts Directive:

(i) as defined by the law of any jurisdiction outside England and Wales and Northern Ireland; or

(ii) created, after the day on which these Regulations were made, in the law of England and Wales or Northern Ireland.

(2) The obligation to exclude an applicant also applies where the person convicted is a member of the administrative, management or supervisory body of that organisation or has powers of representation, decision or control in the applicant.

Mandatory and discretionary exclusions for non-payment of taxes etc

(3) An applicant shall be excluded from participation in this grant call process where:

(a) the Department is aware that the applicant is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions; and

(b) the breach has been established by a judicial or administrative decision having final and binding effect in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which it is established or with those of any of the jurisdictions of the United Kingdom.

(4) the Department may exclude an applicant from participation in this grant call process where the Department can demonstrate by any appropriate means that the applicant is in breach of its obligations relating to the payment of taxes or social security contributions.

(5) Paragraphs (3) and (4) cease to apply when the applicant has fulfilled its obligations by paying or entering into a binding arrangement with a view to paying, the taxes or social security contributions due, including, where applicable, any interest accrued or fines.

Available in alternative formats.

© Crown Copyright 2024



Department for
Communities
www.communities-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn
Pobal

Department for
Commonities