

AONTAS Membership Growth in Northern Ireland as part of NALAB

Expansion Brief – Tender

AONTAS is a long established (1969), non-governmental membership organisation that promotes that value of adult learning and advocates for the rights of all adult to quality learning across the tertiary education system. We have an unwavering commitment to educationally disadvantaged adults, we offer solutions-focused advocacy that is evidence-based drawing on research and our extensive meaningful learner engagement activities. Our Strategic Plan: A Vision for Educational Equality (2019-2022) is informed by principles of: social justice, feminism, partnership, valuing diversity, advancing equality and supporting social inclusion.

We continually strive to be offer work of the highest quality as an inclusive, informed, dynamic organisation which will act as a cooperative, trusted, critical friend to the Department of Further and Higher Education, Innovation, Research and Science. We continually engage with learners and educators from further education and training, community education and higher education on a weekly basis, affording us key insights into practice. We have expertise in educational equality and we advocate strongly for community education, as the most inclusive, yet underfunded part of the education system.

AONTAS membership includes organisations and individuals committed to educational equality for adults: 400 members [all 16 Education and Training Boards (ETBs), over 120 community education organisations, adult learning/access departments of Higher Education Institutions, social justice NGOs, educators and learners across the Island of Ireland].

Northern Ireland Membership Growth

AONTAS has a growing membership of over 400 organisations and individuals committed to lifelong learning and we're seeking to build our membership base in Northern Ireland. Our mission is to advocate for the right of all adults in Ireland to quality learning throughout their lives, and to promote the value and benefits of lifelong learning. As part of our current Strategic Plan, we're seeking to create an inclusive lifelong learning society and build a thriving community education sector. It is essential to us, that this includes stakeholders across the island of Ireland.

Aim:

The aim of this initiative is to build the membership of AONTAS in Northern Ireland in addition to supporting collaboration across the 5 nations for NALAB (Network for Adult Learning Across Borders).

Programme Objectives and Activities:

Stakeholder Engagement:

- Identify 40 suitable stakeholders for membership including statutory and non-Government organisations, voluntary groups, community education providers, tutors and learners
- Strategically engage with a minimum of 15 suitable stakeholder organisations mapping their location and type of service provision across the whole of Northern Ireland and secure AONTAS membership
- Invite stakeholders to meet as a network online or face to face creating a supportive collective environment for future work including participation in the AONTAS Community Education Network (CEN), and introduce AONTAS CEO or an AONTAS representative
 - This meeting will take place in 2021 and will be used to identify advocacy issues for Northern Irish groups and indicate resources and supports that stakeholders would like AONTAS to address or provide
- Communicate progress and keep AONTAS CEO or dedicated AONTAS representative informed of activities

Publication:

- Develop a publication highlighting the need for cooperation across Ireland, in addition to the 5 nations, that details the work of this activity and presents the voices of NI stakeholders on their view of the future of adult learning

Communications and Events:

- In partnership with AONTAS create and implement a communications campaign highlighting the work of community education organisations in Northern Ireland
- Support an online conference of NALAB

Research

- Potential for Northern Irish community education organisations to be included in AONTAS research including the CEN census – showcasing the collective work of groups across the island of Ireland

Advocacy

- Develop, in collaboration with AONTAS, an evidence-based advocacy paper to promote lifelong learning and educational equality for adults across the island of Ireland in a post-Brexit context

Benefits of Collaboration:

- Support NI practitioners through the already established Community Education Network (CEN)
- Identify what supports groups in Northern Ireland need
- Support the development of Forum for Adult Learning NI (FALNI)
- Run more collaborative events for shared learning
- Support the building of structures in N Ireland post BREXIT
- Ensure that adult learning has a space in the programme for government, working group of Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) for adult learning

Methodology:

An inclusive participatory model should be utilised in this programme with methods focussed on building the capacity of stakeholders in the adult learning sector. This should be based on the AONTAS principles as shown:

OUR PRINCIPLES



SOCIAL JUSTICE



SUPPORTING
SOCIAL INCLUSION



PARTNERSHIP



VALUING
DIVERSITY



ADVANCING
EQUALITY



FEMINISM

Timeline:

Dates	Activity/Output:
Q4 - 2020	Identification of stakeholders and update on engagement process
Q1-2021	Network meeting with NI stakeholders and AONTAS
Q2 - 2021	Publication
Q1 - 2021	Communications Campaign
Q2 -2021	Advocacy Paper

Tender Requirements

Tenders for this work must include:

1. Name of applicant, address and contact details. In the case of consortia, please assign one person as the principal contact / for organisations please provide details on the organisation.
2. A statement outlining the understanding of the brief (max 1,000 words)
3. Personnel involved – details of all personnel who will be involved, including a CV which outlines their qualifications/experience.
4. Description of proposed project approach, methodology, actions and timeframe (max 1,500 words)
5. Examples of two relevant previous projects along with a separate referee, including contact details, for each project.
6. Costs – detailed per day cost and any associated costs, including VAT.
7. Notification of any potential conflicts of interest
8. An up to-date copy of the tenderer's Tax Clearance Certificate and relevant insurances.

Evaluations of tender submissions will be based on criteria specified in the tender requirements, using the following award criteria:

No	Requirements / Criterion	Weighing Criteria
1	Understanding the Brief	20%
2	Relevant Knowledge, Expertise, Experience, Project Management and Resources Allocated	40%
3	Content and Quality of Proposed Plan and Methodology	20%
4	Cost	20%
Total marks		100%

Minimum scoring required for requirements/criterion is 60% for each.

Tenderers must achieve a minimum score of 60% of the total marks available for each of the individual qualitative criteria (1-4). Any Tender which does not meet this minimum threshold shall be excluded from further consideration.

The lowest cost tender which also meets all of the minimum requirements of the qualitative award criteria, will receive the maximum score achievable under this criterion. The scores of the other valid Tenders will be calculated by using the following formula: Number of marks = the cost of the lowest valid tender divided by the cost of the valid tender in question and multiplied by the maximum score achievable.

1. Understanding the brief

Those tendering should demonstrate in their proposals a good understanding of the brief.

2. Relevant knowledge, expertise, experience and resources allocated

The highest scores will be awarded to the tenderers with the most appropriate knowledge and experience in delivering similar projects. The tenderer must supply a CV of the person who will be carrying out the work.

3. Content and quality of proposed plan and methodology.

This refers to the proposed approach to the design and development given the content in this Request for Tender. Tenderers must demonstrate their capability to bring the contract to a satisfactory conclusion by describing the methodology of approach to accomplish the project's required outcomes within the stated timeframe.

4. Cost

This must include all costs and expenses for the work.

5. Quotations should be inclusive of VAT, and should be quoted in Euro.

All prices quoted must remain valid for the duration of the work.

Following completion of the tender evaluation, the successful tenderer will be notified in writing. Once the offer is accepted, letters will be issued to the unsuccessful tenderer/s notifying them of the result. A tender assessment panel is in place to assess the applications and to award the contract to the successful tenderer. The panel will have to be satisfied that the method and programme of work meet the requirements outlined and are cost effective.

The panel does not commit itself to accepting the lowest cost tender and will not accept any responsibility for any expenses incurred in the preparation and submission of a tender. The panel may cancel the process at any time. AONTAS will not engage in any discussions or negotiations in advance of adjudication. AONTAS is not in a position to provide feedback on unsuccessful tenders.

Budget and schedule of payments

The maximum expected budget for this project is €10,000 (inclusive of VAT). The price will be inclusive of all expenses, travel, subsistence and administration. AONTAS will not make any payments other than the price in the quotation response document. A payment schedule will be agreed with the successful tenderer prior to the commencement of the work based on project deliverables.

Any quotations exceeding this amount must clearly state the reason for exceeding €10, 000 or will not be evaluated and will be eliminated from the process. Quotations with lower pricing will receive a proportionally higher score under the award criteria concerning cost.

Shortlisting and Clarification Meetings

A shortlist of the most competitive applicants may be invited to present or provide further information on their bid prior to selection. An invitation to interview is not an

indication that a contract has been awarded. Applicants attending such interviews will do so at their own expense.

Tax Clearance Certificate

Before the contract is awarded, the successful tenderer will be required to produce a valid Tax Clearance Certificate, and if the certificate should expire within the course of the contract, a new certificate will be required. All payments under the contract will be conditional on the person/organisation being in possession of a valid certificate at all times.

Insurance

The successful tenderer must produce evidence of professional indemnity and car insurance as part of the tender submission and this cover needs to be in place for the duration of the contract for work.

Conflicts of Interest

Any conflicts of interest involving a tenderer must be fully disclosed to AONTAS. Failure to disclose a conflict-of-interest may disqualify a bidder or invalidate an award of contract, depending on when the conflict of-interest comes to light.

Ownership of Material

Resulting from this Work AONTAS will retain ownership of any research, materials and/or documentation resulting from the project. All research, materials and/or documentation must be returned to AONTAS on request or in the event that the contract is terminated. No part of the research, materials and/or documentation may be used without the prior consent of AONTAS.

Closing Date for Receipt of Tender

The closing date is **12 noon on Tuesday, 6th October 2020**. Any tenders received after this time and date will not be considered for adjudication.

Tender Submissions

Should be emailed to: Niamh O'Reilly at: noreilly@aontas.com.

Further Information

For further queries please contact AONTAS CEO Niamh O'Reilly by email at: noreilly@aontas.com.