

**Invitation to Tender to Conduct a Review of the
Children's Rights Alliance and the Development of its
Next Strategic Plan**

January 2020

1. About the Children's Rights Alliance

The Children's Rights Alliance unites over 100 members working together to make Ireland one of the best places in the world to be a child.

We change the lives of all children in Ireland by making sure that their rights are respected and protected in our laws, policies and services.

We identify problems for children. We develop solutions. We educate and provide information on children's rights. We unite our members and put pressure on Government to put children first.

Our work has had a real impact for children in Ireland. This includes:

- A referendum to strengthen children's rights in the Constitution.
- The establishment of Ireland's first Ombudsman for Children.
- Representing children at Social Partnership on the Community and Voluntary Pillar.
- A new practice of placing separated refugee children in safer care settings.
- An end to the detention of boys in adult prisons.
- A legal prohibition on the practice of female genital mutilation in Ireland.

You can learn more about the work of the Children's Rights Alliance [here](#).

2. Strategic Plan 2017-2021

The Children's Rights Alliance current Strategic Plan runs from mid-2017 to mid-2021. You can review the summary of the Strategic Plan [here](#).

Priority Issues and Objectives for 2017-2021

Four priority issues for the lifetime of the plan which were selected reflecting the interests of our members, gaps in the protection of children's rights, current opportunities for change, financial constraints and where the value and expertise of the Children's Rights Alliance is needed. We then embedded these within our six strategic objectives. The four priority issues are:

1. Child poverty rates are a significant socio-economic rights issue for children. The rates of consistent child poverty doubled from 6% in 2008 to 11.5% in 2015. A strong, united voice across society is needed for concerted action and radical rethinking of how we address child poverty which makes this a priority for this plan. This is core work for the Alliance and child poverty can be addressed across the strategic objectives for this period. It will be addressed specifically through strategic Objective 2, ensuring the Government implements a 'whole of government approach' with concrete actions and plans to reduce the numbers of children living in consistent poverty.

2. Early years' reform is a priority for this plan because the timing is right to put a push on policy development and investment in the early years. The driver from a children's rights perspective is to ensure that law reform and policy is not solely motivated by labour activation measures, but ensures that it is about the best interests of the child. It also provides leverage for the development of universal services, early intervention and prevention, re-orientating national budgeting approaches, investing in services and educational reform in order to achieve better outcomes for children (see Objective 3).

3. Access to justice for children and young people is essential for the protection and promotion of children's rights. With the securing of the children's rights referendum, the reform of the Guardian ad Litem system and the recognition of the need for child friendly courts, now is the time to make a concentrated effort to this critical area for realising rights. This work will be progressed through both the core areas of the organisation's work – monitoring and influencing policy and legislation and specifically through a body of funded work under strategic Objective 4.

4. The rights of refugee children to protection, survival and development are seriously at risk in Europe and in Ireland through the direct provision system. As a very vulnerable group, with no political weight, they need a spotlight to be placed on their experiences and lives and pressure to be built within government and in the Oireachtas to address the inhumane direct provision system and provide a reception approach that respects their rights. This work will be progressed under strategic Objective 5, placing a spotlight on grave violations of children's rights which is central to the mission of the Children's Rights Alliance. Other grave violations once identified will be progressed under this strategic objective, organisational capacity allowing.

The six strategic objectives set out below been developed with the aim of progressing the realisation of children's rights and ensuring a measurable improvement in the State's response on each of the Alliance's priority issues.

1. To secure changes in law to give meaningful effect to children's rights.
2. To shape national policy to give meaningful effect to children's rights and drive momentum across the State to meet its obligations to children and young people.
3. To drive home the need to invest in children early and build political support for greater access to quality services to ensure that children's rights are fulfilled.
4. To promote access to child-friendly justice in civil, criminal and administrative proceedings.
5. To put a spotlight on serious children's rights violations, in particular, the rights of children seeking international protection and in direct provision.
6. To continue to build a strong membership and ensure that the Children's Rights Alliance has the people, systems, structures, procedures and resources in place to deliver on our strategic objectives.

3. Evaluation

Since 2012, the Children Rights Alliance has adopted a monitoring and evaluation framework that develops our Theory of Change model to define the changes that are sought over the period 2012-2016 in the form of interim and long-term outcomes, as well as the outputs that contribute to these changes. Our theory of change framework is aimed at realising the rights of disadvantaged and vulnerable children in Ireland by strengthening our influence on law, policy and practice.

The Children's Rights Alliance uses its monitoring and evaluation framework to monitor and track the objectives, outputs and outcomes. This was devised in conjunction with Compass Partnership in 2012. The framework captures information on relevant and unplanned achievements over the year and throughout the Strategic Plan period. The Children's Rights Alliance's framework is informed by the Quinn-Patton framework for effective advocacy and involves: quarterly monitoring of progress

against outputs in annual work plans and conducting an annual review of progress against planned outcomes by the team.

4. Ethics and values

We expect the successful evaluator/team of evaluators to adhere to the Children's Rights Alliance policies and values. The successful evaluator/team of evaluators should also adhere to ethical and professional standards set out by professional evaluation associations, for example the Irish Evaluation Network or to research ethics, for example, those set out by the Sociological Association of Ireland.

5. Accountability and management

The contract for service rests with the Children's Rights Alliance. The primary point of contact for the successful consultant will be Tanya Ward, Chief Executive of the Children's Rights Alliance.

The successful evaluator(s) will be expected to:

- Maintain regular contact with the Chief Executive.
- Attend regular meetings with the Chief Executive and, as appropriate, the staff and Board of the Children's Rights Alliance.
- Be flexible and responsive to the needs of the organisation as they arise.

6. Deliverables and schedule of work

We expect that consultant to:

- Commencement of the project in early 2020.
- Provide regular progress updates to the Chief Executive either in person or by telephone.
- Provide a summary of achievements and gaps in organisational performance across the organisation.
- Outline the operating context (internal and external) in which the Children's Rights Alliance is operating in and the prospective environment against which the next strategic plan will be developed.
- Provide an assessment of the current vision, mission and values of the organisation.
- Conduct a SWOT analysis.
- Review the current theory of change and make any necessary recommendations.
- Develop a set of priority themes with broad objectives and actions for the new Strategic Plan.
- Write up the final strategy taking into account feedback and suggested changes from the Children's Rights Alliance and its members.

7. Tender Guidelines

Tender documents/evaluation proposals should include the following information:

- Demonstrate the tenderer's understanding of the scope and complexity of the evaluation, their ability to meet the objectives and deliver the outputs.

- Respond directly to the Children’s Rights Alliance Terms of Reference while also providing sufficient information to allow the Children’s Rights Alliance to assess the tenderer’s competency to deliver on the requirements of the evaluation.
- Clearly set out the proposed approach to the work and outline the methodology to be used including timescales and deliverables.
- Include personnel details for staff working on the evaluation including experience, qualifications, contact details and two referees.
- A budget with all appropriate costs including all labour (including secretarial services), travel and subsistence and other expenses, VAT and taxes, overheads, insurances, liaison with all relevant individuals and authorities and all subcontractors fees. The appropriate VAT rate should be shown separately if applicable.

8. Competency and expertise requirements

The successful evaluator(s) will:

- Have a proven track record in evaluation and strategic planning including for rights-based and advocacy organisations.
- Demonstrate an understanding of and have experience of organisations working in the community and voluntary sector.
- Provide details of relevant experience and qualifications in delivering on all aspects of the tender and provide two referees.

9. Budget and schedule of payments

The maximum budget for this full evaluation is in the region of €20,000 (inclusive of VAT). Payments will be made in instalments, based on deliverables.

10. Insurance and Tax

The successful consultant will be required to submit evidence of relevant professional indemnity and insurance details and provide a tax clearance certificate.

11. Tender evaluation process

Tender proposals will be scored against the following criteria:

1. Proven capability and experience in research, consultation and relevant field work (400)
2. Methodology (300)
3. Cost (300)

The closing date for receipt of tenders is: **5pm, Monday 10 February 2020**

Tenders will be accepted by email only. The onus is on the applicant to ensure their tenders have been received on or before this deadline.

Requests for further information and completed proposals should be marked for the attention of:

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