

**The National Council for Special Education**

**REQUEST FOR TENDERS TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY ENTITLED:**

**Initial Teacher Education for Inclusion**

Date: April 2015

Issued by:  
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## **SECTION 1: Background Information and Invitation to Tender**

### **1.1 The National Council for Special Education**

The National Council for Special Education (NCSE) supports an inclusive education system that enables children and adults with special educational needs to achieve their potential.

The NCSE was formally established under the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs (EPSEN) Act 2004. The Act sets out the functions of the NCSE and further details on our roles may be viewed on our web-site [www.ncse.ie](http://www.ncse.ie).

Undertaking research is a key function for the NCSE. This research provides an evidence base to inform policy advice given to the Minister for Education and Skills and underpins good practice guidelines and information developed for schools and parents on special education matters.

### **1.2 Background to the Research**

There has been major reform in initial teacher education recently. From September 2012, all concurrent (undergraduate) programmes of initial teacher education must be of four years duration and from September 2014, all consecutive (postgraduate) programmes of initial teacher education must be of two years duration.

The extension in programme duration has enabled changes to the content and certain elements within ITE programmes have now become mandatory. Two of these elements are inclusive education and differentiation (Teaching Council, 2011). These elements or areas were already included in many ITE programmes. However, requiring these to be mandatory is an important and significant development to ensuring that all student teachers have an understanding of how to support students with special educational needs, particularly as it is estimated that one in four children in Ireland has a learning or special educational need (McCoy et al, 2011).

In addition to this, as part of student placement, all ITE must provide a minimum of two placement settings incorporating a variety of teaching situations, class levels and school contexts. As far as is practicable and appropriate, the placement should include different age groups of students including those with special educational needs and the student should experience mixed ability teaching situations and team teaching/co-teaching situations.

The OECD has suggested that the quality of teachers and their teaching are the most important factors in student outcomes (OECD, 2005). Furthermore, an OFSTED report (2006) indicated that the key factor contributing to pupils' progress, including those pupils with complex needs, is access to experienced and qualified specialist teachers, while the World Health Organisation more recently, outlined that the appropriate training of mainstream teachers is crucial if they are to be confident and competent in teaching children with diverse educational needs (WHO, 2011). This issue has been also been highlighted in NCSE policy advice papers (NCSE 2011, 2012 and 2013), with recommendations on teacher education a common one across our advice papers.

The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (EASNIE) recently completed a project exploring how all teachers are prepared through initial education to be inclusive. The project involved a number of tasks over a three year period including a review of the international literature, detailed country reports and extensive consultation with over 400 stakeholders in education across Europe. One of the outputs from this project was a

Profile of Inclusive Teachers, which sets out the necessary competencies, attitudes, knowledge and skills required by all teachers working in inclusive settings (EASNIE, 2012).

### **1.3 Research Aims**

As the reform to ITE has now commenced in both the concurrent and consecutive programmes, the NCSE would like to establish what the components of inclusive/special education are within Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes in Ireland and to explore if the recent changes prepare newly qualified teachers to be inclusive using the indicators set out in the EASNIE's Profile of Inclusive Teachers.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

1. What are the components of inclusive/special education within Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes in Ireland for primary and post-primary teachers?
2. Do the recent changes to ITE prepare newly qualified teachers to be inclusive as identified by European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (EASNIE) Profile of Inclusive Teachers?
3. What is the intended impact of the changes in ITE on outcomes for students with special educational needs (SEN) and do student/newly qualified teachers perceive their learning during initial teacher education makes an impact on outcomes for students with SEN?
4. What gaps are there in how current ITE programmes prepare student teachers to be inclusive as per the EASNIE Profile of Inclusive Teachers and what aspects need to be strengthened to better prepare student teachers to be inclusive?
5. What lessons can be identified from this research for initial teacher education in Ireland and subsequent phases in the continuum of teacher education?

### **1.5 Research Tasks**

Answer the research questions above. This should include, but is not limited to, the following tasks:

- Describe the components of inclusive/special education within Initial Teacher Education programmes in Ireland for primary and post-primary teachers. This exercise should include (this list is not exhaustive):
  - Module rationale, overview and content, learning outcomes, number of ECTS credits associated with modules, total student contact time, time allocation per week, student workload, school placement, teaching and learning strategies (modes of delivery), teaching resources, student assessment strategies, recommended reading lists, details from other modules that address universal approaches to inclusive/special education etc.
- Determine if the recent changes to ITE prepare newly qualified teachers to be inclusive as identified by the EASNIE.
- Outline the intended impact of the changes in ITE on outcomes for students with special educational needs (SEN) and determine if student/newly qualified teachers and principals perceive their initial teacher education makes an impact on outcomes for students with SEN.
- The above two exercises should include, but is not limited to, the following components:

- Views of student teachers in their final year of training, followed up during their induction year and again during their second year as qualified teachers (from both undergraduate and post-graduate programmes) from a range of ITE providers in a range of educational settings over the next three years.
- Views of ITE providers and school principals at each of the stages where relevant.
- Review appropriate documentation/records.
- Set out briefly the relevant policy and provision context in Ireland for understanding the findings of this research.
- Provide a report for each year of the study and an overall report at the end of the study.
- Identify key lessons from the research evidence for initial teacher education in Ireland including any gaps identified between how current ITE programmes prepare student teachers to be inclusive and the EASNIE Profile of Inclusive Teachers and lessons for subsequent phases in the continuum of teacher education.

## 1.6 Expected Outputs

The key outputs from this study will be:

- comprehensive reports from each year of the study of publishable, peer review standard
- brief stand alone, user-friendly summary reports from the study highlighting key findings and implications.

Progress / interim reports will be expected and these will be scheduled on the basis of a formal work plan to be agreed with the successful tenderer.

Successful tenderers must comply with the NCSE Report Structure Guidelines and Style Guide.

## 1.7 Expected Timelines and Budget

The estimated budget for this study is approximately €195,000 (excluding VAT). It is envisaged that the study will commence in August and an overall draft report will be submitted in December 2017. A report on the first task will be required in 2015 and a report on the findings for each year of the empirical piece of the study will also be required and these will be scheduled on the basis of a formal work plan to be agreed with the successful tenderer.

### References

- 1 Banks, J, and McCoy, S. (2011) *A Study on the Prevalence of Special Educational Needs*. Trim: NCSE.
- 2 European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (2012). *Teacher Education for Inclusion: Profile of Inclusive Teachers*. Denmark: EASNIE
- 3 National Council for Special Education (2011) *The Education of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children in Ireland*. Trim: NCSE
- 4 National Council for Special Education (2012) *The Education of Children with Challenging Behaviour arising from Severe Emotional Disturbance/Behavioural Disorders*. Trim: NCSE
- 5 National Council for Special Education (2013) *Supporting Students with Special Educational Needs in Schools*. Trim: NCSE
- 6 OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) (2005) *Teachers Matter: Attracting, Developing and Retaining Effective Teachers*. Paris: OECD.
- 7 Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) (2006) *Inclusion: Does it Matter Where Pupils are Taught?* <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-allby/Documents-by-type/Thematic-reports/Inclusion-does-it-matter-where-pupils-aretaught>
- 8 Teaching Council (2011) *Initial Teacher Education: Criteria and Guidelines for Programme Providers*. Maynooth: Teaching Council.
- 9 World Health Organisation (WHO) (2011) *World Report on Disability*. [http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2011/9789240685215\\_eng.pdf](http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2011/9789240685215_eng.pdf)

## 1.8 Checklist for Tenderers

The format for tenders is outlined in detail in the next section. However tenderers are advised to ensure that submitted proposals contain **all the relevant information required** and are reminded that;

- The NCSE application form **must be used** to submit a proposal and all the required information should be provided in the correct format by the tender deadline.
- Joint tenders are welcome, however, the Principal Investigator must be clearly identified and lines of responsibility and roles between collaborating bodies and personnel must be clearly outlined.
- Relevant knowledge, expertise, skills and qualifications among the proposed researchers must be clearly identified as required.
- Proposals should clearly outline how the tenderer understands the aim of the research, its policy and or legislative contexts and how the key tasks will be undertaken.
- Proposals should include a clear description of the proposed methodology, which should be both robust and transparent.
- Any ethical implications arising should be clearly identified, and an outline of how these issues will be addressed should be included as required in the application form.
- Any conflict or perceived conflict of interest must be outlined and how the applicant would address such conflict(s).
- Detailed costings are required on a per diem basis for each of the personnel involved in the study and detail should also be provided on the number of days each member of the research team will contribute to the study.
- Administrative or overhead costs should be also itemised and outlined separately. If a per diem rate for any of the personnel includes an overhead cost, this should be indicated.
- The estimated budget for this project excludes VAT. Prices and rates quoted should be in euro and be exclusive of VAT. The VAT rate(s) applicable should be indicated separately.

## SECTION 2: Format and Submission of Tenders

### 2.1 Format of Tender Proposal

To make the selection, the capability and suitability of tenderers will be assessed. Tenderers should include sufficient information to permit the awarding authority to evaluate the competency of the service provider. This information should be provided as required, and within the word counts indicated, in the tender application form.

The awarding authority reserves the right to seek additional information and / or interview tenderers in connection with its assessment of their tenders, but will not be held liable for any costs incurred in this regard by tenderers.

### 2.2 Submission of Tender Proposals

All those wishing to tender are required to submit:

- six (6) hard copies of the required tender proposal (on the NCSE application form) together with

- six (6) hard copy CVs each for the principal investigator and individual research team members (**please note that individual CVs should not exceed 3 A4 pages in length**).

Tenders should be submitted in a sealed envelope clearly marked: “*Tender Proposal: ITE for Inclusive Education*”. The name and address of the tenderer should also be clearly marked in the top left corner of the envelope. Tender proposals should be sent to: Jennifer Doran, Head of Research and Communications, National Council for Special Education, 1 – 2 Mill Street, Trim, Co. Meath. Ireland.

Tenders may also be submitted electronically via the etenders website.

**Tenders should arrive not later than 16.00 hours GMT on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2015**

Tenders which are received late will not be considered. Please note that once tenders have been submitted, no individual negotiations will take place and the awarding authority’s decision will be final.

### **SECTION 3: Further Information and Queries**

Every effort has been made to ensure that this documentation contains all the necessary information for completion of tenders. However, in the interests of equity, requests for additional information, clarification on the content of this document and all other queries of substance (other than in relation to purely factual or procedural matters) must be made in writing or by email. Any additional information elicited will be made available to all potential tenderers who have obtained a copy of this document from the NCSE.

Any queries should be submitted by **email or in writing only, not later than 16.00 hours on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2015** and addressed to: Jennifer Doran, Head of Research and Communications, National Council for Special Education, 1 – 2 Mill Street, Trim, Co. Meath, Ireland. Email: [jennifer.doran@ncse.ie](mailto:jennifer.doran@ncse.ie). Queries can also be submitted via [www.etenders.ie](http://www.etenders.ie).

### **SECTION 4: Evaluation of Tenders and Award of Contract**

#### **4.1 Qualification Criteria**

Tenders will be examined initially with reference to the following:

- (a) Completeness of proposals and tender documentation as specified in this tender invitation.
- (b) Stated ability of the tenderer to meet all the requirements specified in this tender invitation.
- (c) A statement that none of the circumstances listed in paragraphs 1 and 2 of Article 45 of EU Directive 2004/18/EC apply to the tenderer (*Appendix A*).
- (d) Evidence of technical capacity and financial standing to be provided with the tender application.

**Only those tenders which satisfy conditions in relation to the above will be eligible for inclusion in the award process.**

## 4.2 Criteria for Award of Contract

The contract will be awarded to the **most economically advantageous tender** of those meeting the specifications set out in this tender invitation, and not otherwise validly excluded, on the basis of the following award criteria [*scored from 100 marks weighted as indicated*]:

- Quality of proposals for providing the services outlined in this tender invitation (40 marks). Quality will be assessed on the basis of:
  - clarity and understanding of the research aims
  - knowledge of the subject area
  - outline and rationale for the proposed methodology
  - appropriate ethical standards.
- Expertise, skills and experience of assigned personnel in providing the type of services described in the tender document (35 marks) including:
  - demonstrated and extensive research, data analysis and report writing skills
  - demonstrated experience of managing projects of this scale within expected timeframes and budgets
  - knowledge and understanding of special education issues.
- Proposed cost/value for money (15 marks)
- Timescale and evidence of a planned approach to the management of the phases and tasks involved and the efficient completion of the project (10 marks)

During the evaluation period, clarification may be sought in writing from tenderers. Responses to requests for clarification may not materially change any of the elements of the tenders submitted. No unsolicited communications from tenderers will be entertained during the evaluation period. A number of the most competitive tenderers may be invited to make presentations on their proposals for the purpose of elaboration, clarification and / or aiding mutual understanding. Any proposed subcontractors may be required to participate in the presentation.

## 4.3 Award of Contract

There will be an appropriate interval after the award decision is notified before a formal contract is put in place with the successful tenderer.

Any conflicts of interest involving a contractor must be fully disclosed to the awarding authority, particularly where there is a conflict of interest in relation to any recommendations or proposals put forward by the tenderer.

## 4.4 Payment Conditions

The following conditions will apply:-

- i. Prices and rates quoted should be in euro and be exclusive of VAT. The VAT rate(s) applicable should be indicated separately.
- ii. Payment for the delivery and implementation work will be on foot of appropriate invoices. Invoicing arrangements will be agreed with the successful contractor, following the award of contract.

- iii. The provisions of the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act 1997, as amended or revised, and the European Communities (Late Payment in Commercial Transactions) Regulations, 2002 shall apply to all payments. Incorrect invoices will be returned for correction with consequential effects on the due date of payment.

#### **4.5 Taxation Requirements**

- i. It will be a condition of the award of any contract under this RFT that the successful Tenderer shall for the term of any such contract, comply with all EU and domestic taxation law and requirements, including but not being limited to Circular 43/2006 issued by the Department of Finance. This Circular and further information is available at [www.finance.gov.ie](http://www.finance.gov.ie) and [www.revenue.ie](http://www.revenue.ie).
- ii. Prior to the award of any contract arising out of this public procurement competition the successful Tenderer shall be required to produce a Tax Clearance Certificate from the Irish Revenue Commissioners. Alternatively, the Tenderer may supply the certificate and registration numbers, as they appear on the Tax Clearance Certificate, to facilitate online verification of their tax status by the Contracting Authority.
- iii. In the case of a non-resident supplier, a statement of suitability on tax grounds from the Irish Revenue Commissioners is required (Tax Clearance Section, Office of the Collector-General, Sarsfield House, Limerick). An application for the Certificate should be made on a standard form, which will be supplied by the Revenue Commissioners. All payments under the contract will be conditional on the contractor(s) being in possession of a valid Certificate at all times.
- iv. In addition, contractors must retain records of tax reference numbers for any sub-contractors where payments exceed €634.87 (including VAT).
- v. In accordance with Government requirements, payments for professional services will be subject to withholding tax as laid down by the Revenue Commissioners.

#### **SECTION 5: Terms and Conditions**

The supply of this request for tender and the overall process of evaluation and selection are subject to the following conditions;

- i. That only tenders submitted in the English or Irish language will be accepted.
- ii. That the awarding authority will not be liable in respect of any costs incurred by tenderers in the preparation of tenders, or any associated work effort.
- iii. That all information provided by the awarding authority will be treated in strict confidence by the tenderer.
- iv. That the awarding authority will treat as confidential all information provided by the tenderer, subject to its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, which became effective on 21 April 1998. If the tenderer considers that certain information supplied should not be disclosed for reasons of commercial or other sensitivity, this should be identified and reasons for it being deemed sensitive given. The awarding authority will subsequently engage in consultations with the tenderer about such sensitive information before making a decision in relation to any request received under the Freedom of Information Act. If no information is identified as sensitive, with supporting reasons, then it is liable to be released in response to such a request.
- v. That the awarding authority reserves the right to update or alter any information contained within this briefing document at any time. Participating tenderers will be so informed.
- vi. That the information supplied in response to this request for tender will be regarded as forming part of any future contract entered into.

- vii. All outputs arising from this research including, but not limited to data, reports, information etc. will remain the sole property of the awarding authority, irrespective of whether or not the contract is terminated prior to its completion.
- viii. Progress and final reports will be completed within NCSE templates and must be formally signed off by the Principal Investigator before submission.
- ix. Final payment will only be issued to the successful tenderer once the quality of the work is reviewed under the Council's evaluation framework and signed off by Council.
- x. The awarding body will grant a license to the successful tender to use the material generated in the research for academic, teaching and research purposes three months after the final research report has been signed off. Any publication of material or findings in advance of this may only be done so with the explicit permission of the awarding body.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **ARTICLE 45 OF EU DIRECTIVE 2004/18/EC**

Personal situation of the candidate or tenderer

1. Any candidate or tenderer who has been the subject of a conviction by definitive 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 <sup>1</sup>;
- (b) corruption, as defined in Article 3 of the Council Act of 26 May 1997 <sup>2</sup> and Article 3(1) of Council Joint Action 98/742/JHA <sup>3</sup> respectively;
- (c) fraud within the meaning of Article 1 of the Convention relating to the protection of the financial interests of the European Communities <sup>4</sup>;
- (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 <sup>5</sup>.

Member States shall specify, in accordance with their national law and having regard for Community law, the implementing conditions for this paragraph.

They may provide for a derogation from the requirement referred to in the first subparagraph for overriding requirements in the general interest.

For the purposes of this paragraph, the contracting authorities shall, where appropriate, ask candidates or tenderers to supply the documents referred to in paragraph 3 and may, where they have doubts concerning the personal situation of such candidates or tenderers, also apply to the competent authorities to obtain any information they consider necessary on the personal situation of the candidates or tenderers concerned. Where the information concerns a candidate or tenderer established in a State other than that of the contracting authority, the contracting authority may seek the cooperation of the competent authorities. Having regard for the national laws of the Member State where the candidates or tenderers are established, such requests shall relate to legal and/or natural persons, including, if appropriate, company directors and any person having powers of representation, decision or control in respect of the candidate or tenderer.

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

- (a) is bankrupt or is being wound up, whose affairs are being administered by the court, who has entered into an arrangement with creditors, who has suspended business activities or who 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;

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 351, 29.12.1998, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C 195, 25.6.1997, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 358, 31.12.1998, p.2.

<sup>4</sup> OJ C 316, 27.11.1995, p. 48.

<sup>5</sup> OJ L 166, 28.6.1991, p. 77. Directive as amended by Directive 2001/97/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 December 2001 (OJ L 344, 28.12.2001, p. 76).

- (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.

Member States shall specify, in accordance with their national law and having regard for Community law, the implementing conditions for this paragraph.

3. Contracting authorities shall accept the following as sufficient evidence that none of the cases specified in paragraphs 1 or 2(a), (b), (c), (e) or (f) applies to the economic operator:

- (a) as regards paragraphs 1 and 2(a), (b) and (c), the production of an extract from the "judicial record" or, failing that, of an equivalent document issued by a competent judicial or administrative authority in the country of origin or the country whence that person comes showing that these requirements have been met;
- (b) as regards paragraph 2(e) and (f), a certificate issued by the competent authority in the Member State concerned.

Where the country in question does not issue such documents or certificates, or where these do not cover all the cases specified in paragraphs 1 and 2(a), (b) and (c), they may be replaced by a declaration on oath or, in Member States where there is no provision for declarations on oath, by a solemn declaration made by the person concerned before a competent judicial or administrative authority, a notary or a competent professional or trade body, in the country of origin or in the country whence that person comes.

4. Member States shall designate the authorities and bodies competent to issue the documents, certificates or declarations referred to in paragraph 3 and shall inform the Commission thereof. Such notification shall be without prejudice to data protection law.