



Tender

'Digital Needs and Digital Inclusion in N.I. – Current Status and Future Potential in the Northern Ireland Community and Voluntary and Social Enterprise Sector'

March 2022



1.0 Background to the Community Foundation for Northern Ireland

1.1 Vision

The Community Foundation for Northern Ireland's vision is for a peaceful, prosperous, shared and just society; and our mission is to connect people who care to causes that matter. In a society where everyone can prosper and live in peace; we encourage and support those who want to give and empower the local community to effect change.

1.2 Values

We work together and with others in line with our values – generous, thriving and together.

Generosity:

We encourage generosity in everything we do; we look out for each other; we deal with everyone with compassion, empathy and understanding. We are flexible in how we work with staff, donors and grantees.

Thriving:

We see the potential within both our staff and the communities we work in and are committed to help both reach their full potential.

Together:

We will only make the change we want to see together. We value participation, working with others and bringing people together.

2.0 Background to the Digital Need Tender

Since 2015 the Foundation has been investing in 'tech for good' through its Techies in Residence programme. The programme matches VCSE organisations with technology partners to build digital products that can have direct benefits for individuals and communities.

We've supported the development of 32 'tech for good' products like these over the five cycles of the programme to date.

A recent evaluation of our Techies in Residence programme and initial scoping with our grantee network has told us that digital technology is having a huge impact on our communities and society. Covid has accelerated this trend enormously. Whilst some of this change is positive, with opportunities for many, there are also challenges for people and communities

2.1 Purpose: The Community Foundation is seeking a suitable (self-employed) individual or organisation to research and report on digital skills and digital inclusion in the VCSE sector in NI.

Definitions

Digital skills

Digital skills are [broadly defined](#) as the skills needed to “use digital devices, communication applications, and networks to access and manage information, from basic online searching and emailing to specialist programming and development. At their core, these skills help people communicate and collaborate, develop and share digital content, and problem solve in a work-anywhere world”

Digital inclusion /digital exclusion [is defined as](#)

“Digital inclusion is the capability of individuals or groups to enjoy the benefits of being online and use technology confidently to improve their day-to-day lives. Those who lack this capability are considered “digitally excluded”.

The VCSE sector in NI

For the purposes of this research, we refer to the VCSE sector in NI, the findings and insights as reported from the voluntary, statutory, and community organisations including staff, volunteers and trustees.

Adoption

“Achieving digital adoption means using your technology for the desired intent and to its fullest capability. Without it, your software investment costs more than it’s worth.” (www.digital-adoption.com)

The contract will commence on 20th April 2022 and it is expected that the final report will be delivered to the Community Foundation by 30th June 2022. We expect the appointed tenderer to update the Community Foundation on a regular basis on work progress throughout this period.

3.0 Tender Specification

3.1 Overview

Research should analyse and report on

- (1) The current digital skills in the VCSE sector in NI
- (2) Digital inclusion and exclusion within the VCSE sector in NI;
- (3) Digital characteristics, capacity, adoption and culture within the VCSE sector

- (4) Identified supports (if any) available for the VCSE sector for opportunities presenting through digital

It is expected that the research will be conducted through a combination of some or all of the methods below:

- Desk research and literature review
- Visits and meetings with key organisations in GB & Ireland
- Survey's
- Focus group discussion(s) with key stakeholders from VCSEs
- Individual engagement with relevant public, private and VCSE sector stakeholders

The key **output** to be delivered at the completion of the research will be a report of no more than 20 pages (excluding appendices), consisting of the following

- Executive summary and recommendation
- Digital skills within the VCSE sector in NI
- Digital inclusion and exclusion within the sector in NI
- Digital characteristics, capacity, adoption and culture within the VCSE sector
- Identified supports (if any) available for the VCSE sector for opportunities presenting through digital

The appointed tenderer will also be required to attend and present their process and findings to the Foundation

It is expected that the appointed Tenderer will work within the Foundation's internal policies, procedures and guidelines throughout, copies of which will be available on request

3.2 Copyright

All copyright, and any other intellectual property on materials provided by the Foundation, or produced on our behalf, shall vest with the Community Foundation. All materials received and created in the course of this project, should be returned to the Community Foundation at the conclusion of the project, in an agreed format.

4.0 Tender Requirements

4.1: Proposals should be no longer than 6 pages and must contain the following:

- Information about the individual or organisation submitting the tender including contact details, overall areas of expertise and relevant past experience;
- If the tender is submitted by an organisation the names, overall areas of expertise and relevant past experience of the people who will be involved in this work;
- A proposed research methodology including indication of key informants and detailed information on research techniques (e.g. how many focus group discussions, key research questions, etc.);
- A timeline of planned activity;
- Project Budget
- The names and addresses of two clients for whom you have completed similar assignments (detailing the nature of the work undertaken for them).

Timeframe: The contract will commence on 20th April 2022 and it is expected that the final report will be delivered to the Community Foundation no later than 30 June 2022

5: Selection Criteria

Tenders will be selected for their ability to demonstrate a high quality and professional approach that offers value for money to the Community Foundation. You should highlight your suitability to fulfil the brief using examples of contracts/roles you have worked on over the last five years.

5.1 Pass or Fail Criteria

NB. Failure to meet the below criteria will result in a proposal not proceeding to scoring

- Demonstration of knowledge and experience in the area of digital technology, digital inclusion/exclusion and research
- VCSE's in the UK, Northern Ireland and/or Ireland
- Confirmation of capacity to deliver the work over the specified timeframe, and to work with the Foundation in the roll out of the contract

5.2 Weighted Scoring Areas:

Criteria	Score
Level of experience in undertaking similar previous work – in line with 4.1 and 5.1 above	30%
Understanding of the brief	20%
Methodology – description of approach to the delivery of the contract output	40%
Value for money	10%

*** In the event of more than one strong tender, the Foundation may invite the individual/organisation who will be delivering for an interview, following shortlisting.**

The person/organisation appointed will report in the first instance to the Community Foundation's Innovation & Voice Programme Officer.

6.0 Making a Response

You should respond to the invitation by supplying a maximum 6 page proposal to gmccaughley@communityfoundationni.org

7.0 Further Information

Contact: Gemma McCaughley gmccaughley@communityfoundationni.org

Please note that all queries will only be accepted via email

8.0 Closing Date

The closing date for receipt of tenders is 12pm on Wednesday 13th April 2022. Tenders received after the closing date and time will not be considered.

*** Note that the Community Foundation is not obliged to appoint the lowest, or any tender.**

The Community Foundation would like to acknowledge and thank Comic Relief for supporting this research project.