



Údarás Uchtála na hÉireann
Adoption Authority of Ireland

Request for quotation to conduct an independent review of Social Work Services in the Adoption Authority of Ireland

Issued by:

The Adoption Authority of Ireland
Shelbourne House
Shelbourne Road
Ballsbridge
Dublin 4
D04 H6F6

Date of Issue: 07/08/2026

Clarification deadline: Midday 21/08/2026

Response deadline: Midday 04/09/2026

PART A: SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

All tender responses to this competition must be submitted in accordance with the following instructions. Responses must be received by no later than **Friday, 04 September 2026**, at 12:00 midday. Responses that are received late will **NOT** be considered. All responses to this competition must be submitted by email to corporate@aai.gov.ie. Responses received by other means will **not** be considered. It is the responsibility of each tenderer to ensure that their response is submitted in sufficient time.

Any queries or requests for clarifications in relation to this RFQ must be submitted by email to corporate@aai.gov.ie and must be received no later than 12:00 midday on **Friday, 21 August 2026**, unless otherwise notified in writing by the Contracting Authority (the Adoption Authority of Ireland).

The Contracting Authority has taken care to be as clear as possible in the language and terms it has used in compiling this RFQ. Where any ambiguity arises, it is the responsibility of the tenderer to raise a clarification request or query. All responses to queries / requests for clarification will be made available to all tenderers by email. Tenderers should note that the Contracting Authority will not make responses or clarifications to individual tenderers privately.

The Contracting Authority reserves the right, at any time before the tender deadline, to update or amend the information contained in this document and / or to extend the tender deadline. Tenderers will be informed of any such amendment or extension by email. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to issue or seek written clarifications.

If a tenderer fails to comply in any respect with the requirements of this section, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to reject the tenderer as non-compliant, or without prejudice to this right and subject to its obligations at law, the Contracting Authority may take any other action it considers appropriate including but not limited to:

- seeking written clarification from the tenderer;
- seeking further information from the tenderer; or
- waiving a requirement, which in the Contracting Authority's view, is non-material or procedural.

Tenderers must (inter alia):

- (a) Comply with and conform to all requirements set out in this RFQ.
- (b) Follow the format of this RFQ and respond to each element in the order as set out in this RFQ;
- (c) Submit all documentation which this RFQ requires to be submitted.
- (d) Not alter or edit this RFQ in any way.
- (e) Ensure that the tender is submitted by the tender deadline.

Tenderers are reminded that the successful tenderer shall, prior to the award of any contract, promptly supply their Tax Clearance Access Number and Tax Reference Number to facilitate online verification of their tax status by the Contracting Authority.

The successful tenderer will, during the term of the contract, be required to:

- (a) immediately advise the Contracting Authority of any material change to its insured status;
- (b) produce proof of current premiums paid upon request;
- (c) produce valid certificates of insurance upon request.

The successful tenderer must sign and return a signed Contract and Confidentiality Agreement to the Contracting Authority in duplicate, no later than 10 (ten) calendar days from the date of issue by the Contracting Authority, unless otherwise notified in writing by the Contracting Authority. Where the signed Contract for Research Services and Confidentiality Agreement have not been received by the Contracting Authority within 10 (ten) calendar days from the date of issue by the Contracting Authority, then the Contracting Authority may proceed to offer the Services Contract to the next highest ranked tenderer in the competition.

Format of Submissions

Tenderers must complete and return their response **in soft copy format via email to corporate@aai.gov.ie**. The Contracting Authority is not responsible for corruption in electronic documents and tenderer must ensure electronic documents are not corrupt.

Tenderers must ensure that tender responses to the Specifications of Requirement contain comprehensive and relevant information correlating to each cited Award Criterion. Supporting information and supplementary documents may be provided if necessary and relevant to the Award Criteria. If such additional material is provided, its location within the overall tender response shall be clearly highlighted and shall be organised in the same sequence as the award criteria in this RFQ and clearly noted to correspond with each Award Criterion.

Tenderers are reminded that the Contracting Authority is subject to the Freedom of Information (FOI) Acts 2014 and any information provided by them in relation to this RFQ may be liable to be disclosed. If a tenderer considers that any of the information supplied in their tender response is either commercially sensitive or confidential in nature, this should be highlighted and the reason for its sensitivity specified. The Contracting Authority may consult the tenderer about this commercially sensitive or confidential information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information request received. The Contracting Authority accepts no liability whatsoever in respect of any information provided which is subsequently released (irrespective of notification) or in respect of any consequential damage suffered as a result of such obligations.

Conditional tenders: Responses which deviate from the requirements and specifications as outlined in this RFQ and its appendices, may be rejected and eliminated from further consideration. Unsolicited communications from tenderers will not be entertained during the tender process.

Important Notices

The Contracting Authority may cancel this competition at any time prior to a Contract for Research Services being executed. Any notification of preferred bidder status by the

Contracting Authority shall not give rise to any enforceable rights by the tenderers. The award of a Service Contract does not confer exclusivity on the successful tenderer.

In this paragraph 2.1(d) “Data Protection Laws” means all applicable national and EU data protection laws, regulations and guidelines including but not limited to Regulation (EU) 2016/679 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (the “General Data Protection Regulation”), and any guidelines and codes of practice issued by the Office of the Data Protection Commission or other supervisory authority for data protection in Ireland from time to time.

The Contracting Authority will be a Data Controller (where Data Controller has the meaning given under the Data Protection Laws) in respect of any Personal Data (where Personal Data has the meaning given under the Data Protection Laws) required to be provided by the tenderer in response to this RFQ.

The tenderer, as Data Controller in respect of any Personal Data provided by it in its Tender, by submitting a Tender confirms that all Data Subjects (where Data Subject has the meaning given under the Data Protection Laws) whose Personal Data is provided by the tenderer have consented to the processing of such Personal Data by the tenderer, the Contracting Authority, and the Evaluation Team, for the purposes of the participation of the tenderer in this competition or that the tenderer otherwise has a legal basis for providing such Personal Data to the Contracting Authority for the purposes of its participation in this mini-competition.

PART B – AWARD CRITERIA

The contract will be awarded to the tenderer submitting the most economically advantageous tender identified following application of the award criteria and weightings detailed hereunder.

Award Criterion		Maximum Possible Marks	Minimum Marks Required to Pass (60%)
1	Understanding of requirements and proposed methodology	300	180
2	Relevant experience and expertise	250	150
3	Quality of proposed review approach and deliverables	350	210
4	Cost	100	N/A
Total		1000	N/A

***Minimum Marks Required to Pass**

Tenderers **MUST** achieve the minimum marks required in respect of **EACH** of the qualitative award criteria as set out in the award criteria table above. Tenderers that do not achieve the minimum marks required for each of the qualitative award criteria shall be eliminated from this competition.

The specification of requirements in relation to the above criteria is explained below in Part C – Specifications of Requirements. The tenderer's response to the Specification of Requirements as detailed in Part C and pricing in Part D of this document will be marked against the award criteria above.



Scoring Methodology for Qualitative Award Criteria

The table below sets out how marks for the qualitative (non-cost) award criteria are awarded.

5	Excellent response with very few or no weaknesses and provides comprehensive, detailed, and convincing assurance that the tenderer will deliver to an excellent standard.
4	A very good response that demonstrates real understanding for the requirements and assurance that the tenderer will delivery to a high standard.
3	A satisfactory response which demonstrates a reasonable understanding of requirements but does not provide sufficient convincing assurance to award a higher mark.
2	A response not meeting the minimum requirement where reservations exist. Response lacks full credibility and/or convincing detail, leaving the Contracting Authority to determine that there is risk associated with selection of the tender.
1	A response where serious reservations exist not meeting minimum requirements . This may be due to insufficient detail provided and fundamental flaws, or is seriously inadequate or lacking in credibility with a high risk of unsuccessful delivery.
0	Response completely fails to address the criterion under consideration.

The 0-5 scoring methodology, set out above, will be used to score tender responses. A score will be awarded to the tenderer's response to each award criterion or sub-criterion (as applicable) from 0 to 5. That score, or multiplier, will be used to calculate the marks to be awarded.

Scoring Methodology for Pricing

Pricing proposals shall be evaluated using the following mathematical formula. The lowest priced compliant quote that meets all minimum requirements described in this document will attain the highest marks available under this criterion. The marks of all other compliant tenders will be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Marks Awarded} = \frac{\text{The price of the lowest-priced tender}}{\text{The price of the tender in question}} \times \text{Total Mark Available}$$

PART C - SPECIFICATION OF REQUIREMENTS

Introduction and Purpose

The Adoption Authority of Ireland invites submissions from suitably qualified and experienced providers to undertake an independent review of Social Work Services.

The purpose of this review is to provide an objective assessment of the effectiveness, quality, governance, and sustainability of the Social Work Team and to identify opportunities for future development over the next two years.

The last comprehensive review was undertaken in 2022. A further review is now required to assess progress since that time, consider current operational challenges, and provide assurance regarding the delivery of safe, effective, person-centred social work services. The anticipated budget available for this work is €36,000 (inclusive of VAT as applicable).

Background

Social Work Services provide essential support to individuals and families in the areas of tracing and mediation.

Since the previous review in 2022, there have been ongoing changes in:

- Service demand and complexity.
- Workforce pressures.
- Professional practice requirements.
- Organisational priorities.

The organisation wishes to commission an independent review to understand current performance, identify areas of good practice, and develop a clear service development roadmap.

Objectives of the Review

The successful provider will undertake an independent assessment of Social Work Services against relevant professional standards, recognised good practice, and organisational expectations.

The key objectives are to:

- Assess the effectiveness and quality of current social work service delivery.
- Review progress against recommendations arising from the 2022 review.
- Identify current strengths, challenges, risks, and developmental opportunities for the service.
- Assess governance arrangements, accountability structures, and quality assurance processes.
- Review workforce capacity, capability, workload management, and sustainability.
- Examine supervision arrangements, professional support, and continuous learning.
- Provide practical recommendations to support service improvement and future planning.

Scope of Work

The review should include, but not be limited to, the following areas:

Governance and Leadership

Assessment of:

- Governance structures and reporting arrangements.
- Leadership capacity and oversight.
- Accountability frameworks.
- Risk identification and escalation processes.

Service Delivery Model

Review of:

- Service structure and operational arrangements.
- Quality of service delivery.
- Demand management processes.
- Multidisciplinary working arrangements.
- Service user focus and outcomes.

Quality and Practice Standards

Assessment of:

- Quality of assessments and interventions.
- Case management processes.
- Case recording and documentation standards.
- Compliance with relevant professional standards.
- Quality assurance and audit arrangements.

Workforce and Capacity

Review of:

- Staffing establishment and skill mix.
- Caseload management.
- Recruitment and retention challenges.
- Succession planning.
- Workforce sustainability.
- Training and professional development requirements.
- Potential for diversification.

Supervision and Professional Support

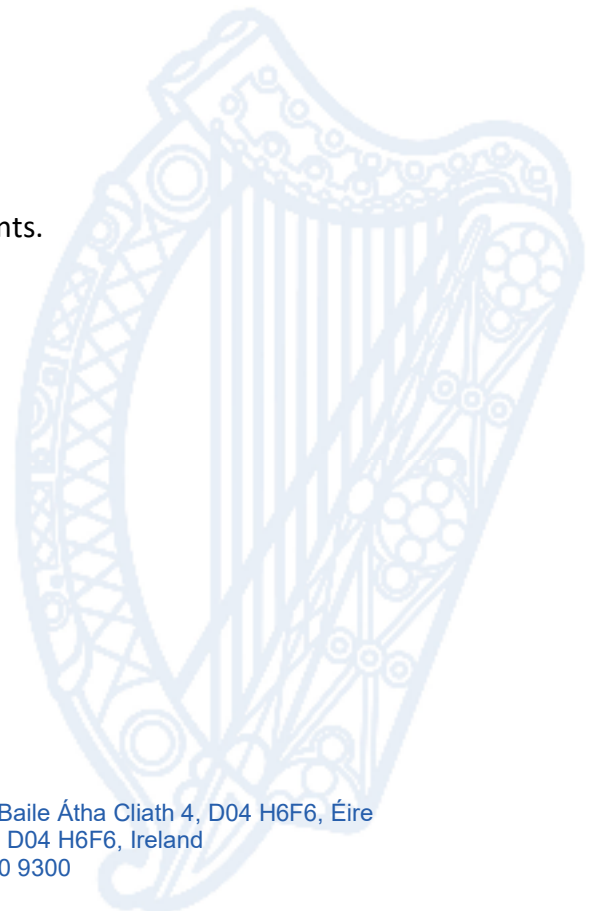
Assessment of:

- Frequency and quality of supervision.
- Reflective practice arrangements.
- Support for professional decision-making.
- Staff wellbeing and resilience supports.

Implementation of Previous Review Recommendations

The provider should:

- Review recommendations from the 2022 review.
- Assess implementation progress.



- Identify outstanding actions.
- Evaluate impact achieved.

Methodology Requirements

The successful provider should propose an appropriate methodology, which may include:

- Review of relevant documentation and policies.
- Analysis of available performance information.
- Interviews with key stakeholders.
- Workshops/focus groups with staff and relevant partners.
- Review of selected case files/audit samples (where appropriate and approved).
- Benchmarking against relevant standards or comparable services.
- Development of recommendations and improvement actions.

The methodology should demonstrate:

- Independence and objectivity.
- Appropriate stakeholder engagement.
- Evidence-based assessment.
- Practical and achievable recommendations.

Deliverables

The successful provider will be expected to produce:

Inception Report

Including:

- Finalised methodology.
- Review framework.
- Stakeholder engagement plan.
- Project timeline.

Interim Findings

Including:

- Emerging themes.
- Areas requiring clarification.
- Initial observations.

Final Review Report

The final report should include:

- Executive summary.
- Methodology undertaken.
- Key findings.
- Strengths and areas of good practice.
- Risks and challenges identified.
- Recommendations prioritised by impact and urgency.
- Suggested implementation roadmap.



- Opportunities for further development.

Presentation of Findings

The provider should present findings to relevant senior stakeholders following completion of the review.

Required Provider Experience and Capability

Applicants should demonstrate:

- Significant experience conducting reviews of social work, health, social care, or similar public services.
- Knowledge of social work governance and professional standards.
- Experience in quality improvement and organisational reviews.
- Experience engaging with multidisciplinary teams.
- Ability to translate findings into practical improvement actions.

Submissions should include:

- Relevant organisational experience.
- Details of proposed review team.
- CVs of key personnel.
- Examples of similar completed assignments.
- Two relevant references.

Project Timeline

The anticipated timeline is:

Completion of review should fall within 12–16 weeks of commencement

Providers should include a detailed project plan within their submission.

Pricing Submission

Providers should provide a detailed financial proposal including:

- Total cost of the review.
- Breakdown of professional fees.
- Expenses and other costs.
- VAT (where applicable).
- Any assumptions or exclusions.

The total proposed cost should not exceed the available budget of €36,000 unless clearly justified.



PART D: TENDER RESPONSE DOCUMENT

Please complete all sections including Tenderer's Statement at Appendix 1

Response to Award Criteria 1 – Understanding of requirements and proposed methodology (300 marks available)

Insert response here

Response to Award Criteria 2 – Relevant experience and expertise (250 marks available)

Insert response here



Response to Award Criteria 3 – Quality of proposed review approach and deliverables (350 marks available)

Insert response here



Response to Award Criteria 4– Cost (100 marks available)

Insert response here



Appendix 1:

Tenderer's Statement

**Adoption Authority of Ireland,
Shelbourne House,
Shelbourne Road,
Ballsbridge,
Dublin 4,
D04 H6F6.**

RE: Request for Quotation for Consultancy Services

Having examined your Request for Quotation (RFQ) including the instructions to tenderers, the selection and award criteria, the requirements and specifications, I hereby agree and declare the following:

- I understand the nature and extent of the services required to be delivered as described in the RFQ.
- I accept all of the terms and conditions of the RFQ.
- I accept all the award criteria as set out in the RFQ.
- I agree to provide the Adoption Authority of Ireland with the services requested in the RFQ.
- I agree that, if awarded a contract, I shall, in the performance of such contract, comply with all applicable obligations in the field of environmental, social and labour law.
- I confirm that I have complied with all requirements as set out in the RFQ.
- I confirm that all prices quoted in my tender will remain valid for the period of time commencing from the tender deadline.
- I shall, if awarded any contract under the RFQ, have in place on the effective date of the contract all insurances (if any) as required by the RFQ.
- I confirm that all data subjects whose personal data is provided in my tender have consented to the processing of such personal data by me, by the Adoption Authority of Ireland and by the evaluation team for this tender or that I otherwise have a legal basis for providing such personal data to the Adoption Authority of Ireland for the purposes of my participation in this tender and that I will provide evidence of such consent and / or legal basis to the Adoption Authority of Ireland upon request.

Signature

SIGNED _____

Print name _____

Address _____

Date _____

