Invitation to Tender

Survey on Public Attitude and Awareness of Ireland’s European Union Structural Funds Programmes, 2007-2013

March 2016

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www.nwra.ie

www.southernassembly.ie
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BMW</td>
<td>Borders, Midland and Western</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAGGF</td>
<td>European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERDF</td>
<td>European Regional Development Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESF</td>
<td>European Social Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESIF</td>
<td>European Structural and Investment Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>FIFG</td>
<td>Financial Instrument for Fisheries Guidance</td>
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<tr>
<td>FOI</td>
<td>Freedom of Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEAT</td>
<td>Most Economically Advantageous Tender</td>
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<tr>
<td>NDP/CSF</td>
<td>National Development Plan / Community Support Framework</td>
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<td>NSRF</td>
<td>National Strategic Reference Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>NUTS</td>
<td>Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics</td>
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<td>NWRA</td>
<td>Northern and Western Regional Assembly</td>
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<tr>
<td>OP</td>
<td>Operational Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RfT</td>
<td>Request for Tender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPG</td>
<td>Regional Planning Guidelines</td>
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<tr>
<td>S&amp;E</td>
<td>Southern and Eastern</td>
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</table>
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background
The Southern Regional Assembly and the Northern and Western established on 1st January 2015, are two of three Assemblies in the Republic of Ireland following on from the dissolution of the BMW and Southern & Eastern Regional Assemblies. The former 8 regional authorities and 2 regional assemblies were consolidated under the Government’s regional reform process under the Local Government Reform Act 2014 to form the Southern, the Northern and Western and the Eastern and Midland regions.

The principal functions of the Regional Assemblies are:

- Manage and monitor EU programmes of Assistance;
- To co-ordinate, promote and support strategic planning and sustainable development of the region
- To promote effective local government and public services in the region, in conjunction with the National Oversight and Audit Commission
- To prepare and oversee the implementation of Regional Spatial & Economic Strategies (RSES).

Following the regional reform process the Assemblies have:

- A stronger role in economic development through the adoption of regional Spatial and Economic Strategies, which will replace the regional planning guidelines (RPGs), with participation by relevant government departments and state agencies, in the formulation of, and adherence to, the regional strategies. The strategy will be developed for the entire Southern and the Northern and Western Regions respectively, but will contain chapters for each Strategic Planning Area.
• A new role in linking local economic development with regional and national planning through oversight of Local Economic and Community Plans and involvement in regional economic fora in conjunction with relevant interests.

• An important role in promoting and supporting balanced regional development through management of European Structural and Investment funds programmes (ERDF) and securing EU funding for specific regional projects, and also forging linkages between these functions and spatial and economic strategy.

• Preparation of reports on aspects of local authority performance at the request of the National Oversight and Audit Commission.

The headquarters of the Northern and Western Regional Assembly is in Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon and for the Southern Regional Assembly, in Waterford City.

1.2 Vision, Mission Statement and Core Values of the Southern Regional Assembly

**Vision:** “A prosperous Region where there is a good quality of life for all its citizens, is attractive to visit, work and reside in, and where our natural resources are valued and respected”

**Mission Statement** “The Northern & Western Regional Assembly aims to enhance the socio-economic development of Northern and Western Region of Ireland, supported by Regional Spatial and Economic Plans, facilitated by the implementation of European Structural Funds and the coordinated execution of targeted regional programmes and initiatives in collaboration with our stakeholders”
Mission Statement: “The Southern Regional Assembly commits to facilitating greater cooperation and coordination between local, regional, and central government and other State agencies. The Assembly will strive to drive social, economic and sustainable development of the Southern Region”

Core Values: The Southern Regional Assembly is committed to a set of values that help to define us, the way we conduct our business and the way we serve our communities during the lifetime of this Corporate Plan. The following values serve as our guiding principles over the course of the next five years:

- Ethical
- Transparent
- Responsible
- Sustainable
- Openness
- Inclusive
- Innovative
- Effective
- Efficient
- Communication

1.3 ERDF Co-funded Regional Programmes
Over the period to 2013, Ireland was allocated €901m in European Union Structural Funds. Of that amount, €750m was earmarked for two Regional programmes and the national European Social Fund programme. The regional breakdown of this sum is €458m for the BMW Region and €292m for the S&E Region. The fund and programme breakdown for the ERDF BMW Regional OP 2007-2013 is €229m; for the ERDF S&E Regional OP 2007-2013, €146.60m. For the ESF OP 2007-2013 for the BMW region is €228.7m; and for the S&E Region is €146.6m. The Regulations governing the Structural Funds require Member States to prepare Operational Programmes (OPs) to implement the strategic priorities set out in the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF).

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1 While the Border, Midland and Western Regional Assembly and the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly are dissolved for technical reasons the programme areas/regions are not aligned with the new Regional Assembly geographies. This alignment will follow in future programmes post 2021.

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Regional Operational Programme Priorities 2007-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BMW Regional Programme</th>
<th>S&amp;I Regional Programme</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Innovation, ICT &amp; the Knowledge Economy</td>
<td>1. Innovation &amp; the Knowledge Economy</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Environment &amp; Risk Prevention</td>
<td>2. Environment &amp; Accessibility</td>
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</tbody>
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Fifty percent of the funding was allocated to labour market activity by the European Social Fund (ESF) and fifty percent to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The balance of €151m is for smaller Territorial Co-operation programmes, including PEACE and European Territorial Co-operation programmes.

Since joining the EU in 1973 Ireland has received approximately €18.2 billion in Structural Funds/Cohesion Policy Funds (this includes the €1.2bn ESIF to be disbursed under the 2014-2021 programme period). Background information on Ireland’s European Union Structural Funds programmes are available on the following websites – www.nwra.ie; www.southernassembly.ie; www.esf.ie; and www.eustructuralfunds.ie
2. Overall Objectives of the Research
For the EUSF programme period 2000-2006 the NDP/CSF Information Office commissioned three Public Awareness Research Surveys on the NDP/CSF in 2001; 2002 and 2004. (Appendix 1: Headline findings of previous attitude and awareness surveys)

This research provided a benchmark for levels of awareness amongst the general public. For Ireland’s EU Structural Funds Programmes 2007-2013, the two regional assemblies updated this research in 2009 with a report published in February 2010 Report on Public Attitudes and Awareness of Ireland’s European Union Structural Funds Programmes, 2007-2013.

The two regional assemblies now wish to update this research for the final report of the Regional Programme by undertaking a survey, which would measure the following amongst the general public (see also Appendix II)

- Ascertain the level of knowledge/awareness of Ireland’s EU Structural Funds Programmes;
- Assess the level of knowledge/awareness of projects delivered;
- Determine the level of knowledge/awareness of different EU Funds and their contribution to economic and social development;
- Measure the level of knowledge/awareness of the Operational Programmes; and
- Ascertain the level of knowledge/awareness of different EU Funds.

The Report will provide a series of recommendations based on the survey results taking into account of the current communication strategy for the European Structural and Investment Funds in Ireland.
Tasks for the Consultant

It is envisaged that the successful tenderer will undertake the survey in May 2016. Cognisance should be taken that the previous surveys were conducted in the autumn.

The following is an indicative list of tasks that the successful consultant will undertake:

- Interviews should be undertaken face-to-face and have a reasonable geographical, gender, age and socio-economic spread;
- Review previous questionnaires and redesign for new requirements. This should allow for analysis of key questions against previous surveys;
- It should include specific proposals in relation to:
  i. **Survey Design**: the size of the sample, the geographical area to be covered, the method of sampling and the statistical population;
  ii. **Questionnaire**: the subject areas that the questionnaire will examine;
  iii. **Survey Implementation**: the method of surveying, interview techniques and technology to be used, measures to ensure that the survey rates are as high as possible and quality control procedures.

The successful consultant will:

- Agree the methodology with the Steering Committee;
- Undertake survey in May 2016;
- Provide a detailed written report on findings including a comparative analysis against key questions in previous surveys;
- Provide a regional breakdown of findings at NUTS II and NUTS III level;
- Advise on any changes required to existing activities to support the successful implementation of the communications plan for the programme based on the research findings; and
- If required give presentations of findings.
The survey must be undertaken during May 2016. Top line result will be required by 15\textsuperscript{th} June 2016. The draft final report must be presented to the Steering Committee by Thursday 30\textsuperscript{th} June 2016. The final report must be submitted to the Northern and Western and Southern Regional Assemblies in a PDF format and Microsoft Word version for publication on the various websites connected to Ireland’s European Structural and Investment Fund Programmes. The successful consultant will be required to present the findings of the survey at a meeting of the OP Monitoring Committee of the Northern and Western Regional Programme in the NWRA headquarters in Ballaghaderreen, Co. Roscommon and at a meeting of the OP Monitoring Committee of the Southern Regional Programme, at Assembly House, Waterford.
3. Content of Proposals
Tender documents must provide the following information:

1. Details of the proposed approach and methodology to be used during the research.
2. The expertise and experience tenderers will apply in bringing the project to a successful conclusion.
3. Timescales for delivering the research findings, including top line research and completed written report.
4. An all inclusive tender price for the assignment. A breakdown of costs must be provided for three different representatives samples.

*Written submission must be no more than 10 pages*

As part of the selection procedure Tenderers may be required to attend meetings and/or make presentations. Costs incurred for attending any such meetings are not recoverable from the commissioning client.
4. Management of survey on Public Attitude and Awareness of Ireland’s European Regional Development Funds Programmes 2007-2013

4.1 Study Management
The Northern and Western Regional Assembly and Southern Regional Assembly will act as the Managing Bodies for the study. A Steering Committee will be established and will include representation from the Managing Bodies and from the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform representing Member State with responsibility for European Structural Funds in Ireland. This Steering Committee will manage and oversee the work of the Consultant in relation to this contract and exercise a quality control function. The Consultant appointed will be required to meet with and report to the Steering Committee on progress of the study if the Steering Committee so requires. The Southern Regional Assembly will assume the role of client representing the interests of both Managing Authorities for the duration of the contract for this study and will hereafter be referred to as the client.

4.2 Funding
This study will be part-funded by the European Union (ERDF) under the Technical Assistance Priority of the Regional Operational Programmes.
5. Receipt of Tenders/ Query Handling
Four (4) copies of the tender in a sealed envelope, marked "Tender Public Awareness Survey" and with the tendering company’s name and postal address on the outside, to the address below and should be delivered not later than

16:00 hours (local time) on 15th April 2016

Mr. Stephen Blair
Director
Southern Regional Assembly
Assembly House,
O’Connell Street,
Waterford
Post Code: X91 K256

Any requests for clarifications of this RFT should be directed in writing via email to:
Derville Brennan
Research and Communications Officer
Southern Regional Assembly
Assembly House,
O’Connell Street,
Waterford
Post Code: X91 K256

dbrennan@southernassembly.ie

Clarification requests should be made by post or e-mail and must be received by 8th April 2016 at 16:00. Details of queries and answers will be
distributed to all prospective Tenderers. Tenderers are requested to provide an e-mail address to facilitate this process.
6. Notice of Tender Conditions

**Format of Tender**
Tenderers must address all the requirements and must be in the format requested below. Tenders not submitted in this format will not be considered.

**6.1 General Information**
The following must be supplied:

a) Name, address, telephone number and e-mail address of tenderer; and

b) Confirmation of acceptance by the tenderer and any third parties of the conditions of tender described in Section 2 of the invitation to tender.

**6.2 Proposals**

**6.2.1** Textual response on a point by point basis outlining how the requirements specified in section 2 will be met.

**6.3 Schedule of Costs**
All costs must be quoted in **Euro (€)**, exclusive of VAT and the tender price schedule must take the following format:

a) Tenderers are to quote a **Lump Sum Fixed Price Tender** for the provision of services as set out in section 2, including a daily rate for each person involved.

b) A per diem rate should be included in the event of any additional work that the client considers necessary.
c) The price will also include any minor amendments to text provided in the written report.

d) Confirm that the tender holds good for 30 days after the closing date for receipt of tenders.

e) Indicate the applicable rate of VAT in respect of the services being proposed.

6.4 Contract
A contract will be concluded with the tenderer whose tender is deemed to be the most economically advantageous. The successful proposal will form the basis of this contract.

Please note the following:

(a) All works carried out shall be governed by the Laws of Ireland and subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of Ireland.

(b) The client may cancel the tender process at any time prior to a contract being entered into.

6.5 Other information.
Tenderers should provide any other information which may be relevant to this proposal with their tender submission.
7. Evaluation of Tenders

7.1 Tenders will be evaluated on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) by reference to the following:
   a) Proposed cost of providing service (40 marks).
   b) Extent of relevant experience in providing the type of services described in Section 3 (30 marks)
   c) Resources allocated, this refers to the input, expertise and responsibilities of the persons employed on the evaluation and the ability to deliver within the timeframe indicated in Section 2 (30 marks)

7.2 During the evaluation, clarification may be sought by phone call or email from tenderer. Responses to requests for clarification must not materially change any of the elements of the tender submission. A number of the most competitive tenderers at award stage may be contacted by telephone or to attend an interview/presentation for the purpose of elaboration, clarification and / or aiding mutual understanding.

7.3 Consultants may be short-listed for interview on the basis of the written tenders before a final decision on tender selection.

7.4 The Consultant will be selected by the two Regional Assemblies.

7.5 The client will not be liable in respect of any costs incurred by tenderers in the preparation of bids.

7.6 The client reserves the right not to accept the lowest or any of the proposals submitted.
7.7 Information supplied by tenderers will be treated as contractually binding. However, the client reserves the right to seek clarification or verification of any such information.

7.8 The client reserves the right to request additional information from the tenderers after the closing date.
8. **General Conditions of Tender**

8.1 This Request for Tender shall form part of the contract documents.

8.2 The client will hold confidential any information provided to it by individuals or others on a confidential basis, subject to the client's obligations under law, including the **Freedom of Information Act, 2014**. If for any reason it is wished that information provided to the client should not be disclosed because of its sensitive nature, then it is incumbent upon the person or body when supplying the information to make clear this wish and to specify the reasons for the information's sensitivity. The client will consult any individual or body so supplying sensitive information before making a decision on any Freedom of Information (FOI) request received. In the event that any information supplied is not identified as confidential, with supporting reasons, then it is liable to be released in response to an FOI request. The client requires that tenderers will treat all information provided pursuant to this invitation to tender in strict confidence. Under no circumstances may information be disclosed to other parties without the express permission of the client. The successful tenderer may be required to sign a formal confidentiality/non-disclosure agreement.

8.3 Tenderers should be aware that national legislation applies in other matters such as Official Secrets, Data Protection and Health and Safety.

8.4 Tenderers must have regard to statutory terms relating to minimum pay and to legally binding industrial or sectoral agreements in preparing tenders.
8.5 Information supplied by tenderers will be treated as contractually binding. However, the client reserves the right to seek clarification or verification of any such information.

8.6 Any conflicts of interest involving a tenderer must be fully disclosed to the client particularly where there is a conflict of interest in relation to any recommendations or proposals put forward by the tenderer. Any registerable interest involving the tenderer and the client, members of the Government, members of the Oireachtas or their relatives must be fully disclosed in the response to this RFT, or should be communicated to the client immediately upon such information becoming known to the tenderer, in the event of this information only coming to their notice after the submission of a bid and prior to the award of the contract. The terms 'registerable interest' and 'relative' shall be interpreted as per section 2 of the Ethics in Public Office Act, 1994.

8.7 Before a contract is awarded the successful tenderer (and agent, where appropriate) will be required to promptly produce a Tax Clearance Certificate, or in the case of a non-resident tenderer, a statement from the Revenue Commissioners confirming suitability on tax grounds.

8.8 (a) The successful tenderer shall be responsible for the delivery of all services provided for within the contract on the basis of a fixed price agreement set at the beginning of the contract. Prices quoted in the tender cannot be increased during the currency of the tender. Similarly, terms and conditions cannot be altered.

(b) The client retains the right to withhold payment where a contractor has failed to meet his/her contractual obligations in relation to the delivery of services to an acceptable level of quality.
8.9 The client will not be liable in respect of any costs incurred by tenderers in the preparation of tenders or any associated work effort.

8.10 Responses to this RFT will be evaluated in their own right. No recognition will be given to information previously submitted.

8.11 The client is not bound to accept the lowest or any tender submitted.

8.12 Tenders must be completed in accordance with the format specified in Section 2. Tenders which are incomplete will not be evaluated.
## Appendix I Headline findings of previous NDP/CSF Attitude and Awareness Surveys

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall NDP/CSF</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>49%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Role of the EU</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Funds – Structural Funds</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Funds – ERDF</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Funds – ESF</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>35%</td>
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<td>Individual Funds – EAGGF</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<td>Individual Funds – FIFG</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>42%</td>
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<td>Individual Funds – Cohesion Fund</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Findings provided from the 2009 survey where it corresponds with the earlier surveys.
Appendix II Indicators for monitoring progress on implementation of Communication Plan for the BMW & S&E Regional Operational Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator Type</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Baseline 2007</th>
<th>Mid-term 2010</th>
<th>Final Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>Level of overall public awareness of the EU Structural Funds Programmes*.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>Level of awareness of the role of the BMW OP*.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>Level of awareness of the role of the S&amp;E OP*.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>Level of awareness of individual Funds (ESF and ERDF)*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>Local press coverage by operational programme/priority.</td>
<td>This is a monitoring indicator designed to monitor transparency of the individual measures. Targets have not been set.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A public awareness survey will be commissioned. The survey will provide figures for public awareness and enable targets to be set.