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Planning

Children's Social Care – Sector Capability, Capacity and Skills

Department for Education

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-003474

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-04db06

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Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

Department for Education

Sanctuary Buildings, 20, Great Smith Street

London

SW1P 3BT

Email

emilie.wilkinson@education.gov.uk

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UK - United Kingdom

Internet address(es)

Main address

<https://education.app.iaggaer.com/web/login.html>

I.3) Communication

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Ministry or any other national or federal authority

I.5) Main activity

Education

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

Children's Social Care – Sector Capability, Capacity and Skills

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 72220000 - Systems and technical consultancy services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

The purpose of this PIN is to initiate market consultation; it is not a call for tenders. The PIN is intended to:

1. Raise awareness with the market of a potential future procurement process, and to enable time for organisations to begin early discussions with the Department for Education (the department) and each other as to how they may be able to deliver any future contract.
2. Inform the market that the department will be undertaking market consultation activity, to gather information about the supply market; to explore potential delivery models and associated benefits of those models; and to inform its understanding of the risks and issues relevant to managing transition to, and mobilisation of, any new service arrangements.

This will consist of an online event which will take place on 20 February 2025, time to be confirmed. If you are interested in joining this event, please contact emilie.wilkinson@education.gov.uk and sahir.igbal@education.gov.uk who will arrange for an online invitation to be issued in due course. We intend to share the questions and answers from the events with all potential suppliers.

This PIN, and the online event, relate to the department's interest in providing a support offer to help local authorities (LAs) improve their data and digital maturity with respect to children's social care (CSC) services, to help achieve the strategic objectives set out in the Children's Social Care Data and Digital Strategy (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childrens-social-care-data-and-digital-strategy/5106bf76-259a-474c-acd3-b187812007c6>): supporting strong data culture and leadership; supporting systems and technology to meet sector need; and improving the data we collect, share, and use. There is an estimated budget of £750K - £1m for year one (25/26), with expectations (subject to future funding decisions) to grow spend to approximately £2m per year for a further 2 years.

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £4,000,000

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 48612000 - Database-management system

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

We are looking for a supplier (or consortia of suppliers) to scope, test and begin delivering a support offer to the sector, as a centre of excellence for children's social care data and digital, to help build the sector's data and digital capacity. We expect it to involve:

- working with the department and LAs to co-develop a vision and action plans for a data and digitally mature sector
- providing expertise on CSC data and digital, including hands-on support with specific LAs
- helping LAs optimise how they configure and tailor their digital case management systems
- developing and maintaining tools and resources that meet the needs of users
- research to provide a more detailed picture of CSC data quality, identifying where to focus improvements
- facilitating knowledge sharing, innovation, and collaboration between LAs, to share guidance, best practice and ideas – creating spaces where LAs can learn from each other both about what works and what does not, and how to utilise future technologies
- career and skills development to grow capability and capacity – training programmes and guidance that support continuous professional development, upskilling (including potentially around the use of AI), and those joining the profession; with shorter data/digital skills training/courses as well as longer ones (e.g. apprenticeships) to make building a data or digital career within LAs more achievable and attractive

We expect 25-26 to focus on some specific deliverables, as well as working with the department and LAs to more fully scope the Centre of Excellence and agree priorities and deliverables for future years. In addition to the scoping, deliverables are likely to include:

- o hands on support and resources to help LAs improve how they configure their case management systems and potentially provide support with procurement
- o engage with LAs who expect to tender for a CMS in the near future to identify and action any opportunities to maximise the benefits of the procurement
- o building data and digital capacity/capability e.g. via apprenticeships and training; and
- o delivering events

We are interested in views from those who may be interested in bidding for this work about what could be delivered in 25-26.

The supplier will need to:

- have a deep understanding of LA children's social care delivery, including the data and digital functions which support it
- have a wide, existing network of LAs (and specifically with children's services) that they can engage with on this work
- have firm technical knowledge about current and future capabilities of systems to meet the needs of children's services data storage, movement, and processing; and user experience for social work/practitioner recording and case management
- have ability to provide specialist data and digital skills support specific projects within LAs, with a clear vision for how they can exit the work post-delivery and leave the LA on a better sustainable footing
- be able to explore the long-term development of LA data and digital capability and capacity by understanding how support, expertise, forums, and training, including provisions for LA leadership, could be provided

It should be noted that this work would proceed alongside other activity the department is doing as part of its children's social care data and digital strategy

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/childrens-social-care-data-and-digital-strategy/5106bf76-259a-474c-acd3-b187812007c6#:~:text=is%20being%20used,-,Our%20strategic%20objectives,requiring%20action%20far%20beyond%202025>). We expect the supplier to work with the department over the course of the contract to ensure that the specifics of activity and priorities are aligned as findings and outputs from other projects are delivered.

II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice

3 March 2025

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.3) Additional information

This procurement will be run either on PCR15 or PA23 regulations, depending on the date of publication