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Planning

Advocacy Helpline and 'Safety Net' Service

Department for Education

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2022/S 000-031260

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocids-h6vhtk-037f40

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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

Rachael6.DAVIES@education.gov.uk

Country

United Kingdom

Region code

UK - United Kingdom

Internet address(es)

Main address

www.gov.uk/dfc

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

Advocacy Helpline and 'Safety Net' Service

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 71356300 - Technical support services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

It is the Department for Education's intention to undertake a procurement exercise to appoint a suitably experienced organisation to deliver The National Advocacy Helpline and 'safety net' service on behalf of the Department from 1st October 2023.

The National Advocacy Helpline and "safety net" service will offer advice to looked after children and care leavers. The services are intended to signpost looked after children to local advocacy support or help those who have been denied local advocacy to make representations and pursue complaints. The service will be active in referring cases back to local authorities and progressing these until satisfaction.

The service will continue to encourage local authorities to provide advocacy services in line with their statutory responsibilities, only stepping in where this proves unsuccessful. It is expected the improved national advocacy 'safety net' will also improve insight and analysis about callers to the service and the issues they raise and will gather evidence about the quality and coverage of local advocacy services. The service will use clear approaches for prioritising limited resources and engage looked after children who might otherwise be difficult to reach.

To provide further information on the opportunity a market engagement webinar will be held on 24th November from 14:00 – 16:00. This will be an online event hosted through Microsoft Teams platform.

This session will include a presentation at which representatives from the Department will provide information to potential suppliers about the proposed scope of the services and how we intend they will be procured.

This will be followed by a Question-and-Answer session where potential suppliers will have the opportunity to ask questions of Departmental representatives.

To register for the event, you will need to be registered as a supplier on the DfE Jaggaer eTendering portal, available at <https://education.app.jaggaer.com/web/login.html>

Once registered the event will be accessible via the 'View Opportunities' link on the Homepage. Select the Opportunity Notice for 'Advocacy Helpline and 'Safety Net' Service Supplier Engagement Event' (SSQ 324) and this will take you directly to the registration page.

The closing date for registering your interest of the market engagement event is 12:00 noon GMT on the 22nd November 2022.

Please use the Jaggaer e-procurement system <https://education.app.jaggaer.com/web/login.html> to submit any questions you may have about the tendering procedure.

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £560,000

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 72253000 - Helpdesk and support services

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

Scope of the Service

The national advocacy helpline and 'safety net' service will address the following objectives:

- a) To provide a national (England) advocacy advice telephone helpline to signpost children to local advocacy, and only provide direct advocacy support where this service is denied locally to looked after children or care leavers.
- b) Where advocacy continues to be denied, to support a looked after child or care leaver to pursue a complaint, likely in partnership with an Independent Reviewing Officer (unless concerns centre on the IRO service itself).
- c) To collect and maintain information about the range and availability of advocacy support provided to local children and young people based on calls to the service, contact with Local Authorities and through networks. Through this knowledge, the service will be able to support swiftly and effectively looked after children to obtain advocacy.
- d) To raise concerns, immediately, where there is a risk to a child's safety or welfare by referring to a local authority's child protection and safeguarding teams (and the police as appropriate).
- e) Where there are persistent concerns about the availability or quality of local advocacy services in a particular area, Ofsted should be informed, and reports made to the Department for Education as part of regular progress and monitoring arrangements.

II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice

2 February 2022

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