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# TRASNA INITIATIVE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE FEASIBILITY & MARKET RESEARCH STUDY

## CALL FOR TENDER BIDS

DECEMBER 2020

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# 1. BACKGROUND TO THE TENDER

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The Targeted Resourced Action Supporting Nurtured Activation (TRASNA) Initiative is seeking to undertake a feasibility and market research study to establish the potential for the development of a social economy business that employs ex-offenders, in its workforce for the provision of services/products to meet market openings and identified needs. While the scope of the TRASNA Initiative is to work with ex-offenders across the age groups there will be a particular attention given to engaging those 50 plus years who have fewer avenues to engage in social and economic activity. Under the auspices of Bray Area Partnership and Southside Partnership DLR (also referred to as Local Development Companies – LDCs) an Expert Group has been established to oversee and guide the feasibility and market research study implementation. This study is being supported through the KickStart Fund, a Probation Service grants scheme linked to the Dormant Accounts Fund.

The study will be informed and take cognizance of the Dept. Justice, (including the Probation Service) strategy and associated national policy with respect to social enterprise development and operation. In this regard the following definition of social enterprise is relevant to the studies direction and purpose;

*‘A social enterprise is an enterprise whose objective is to achieve a social, societal or environmental impact, rather than maximising profit for its owners. It pursues its objectives by trading on an ongoing basis through the provision of goods and/or services, and by reinvesting surpluses into achieving social objectives. (It is governed in a fully accountable and transparent manner and is independent of the public sector. If dissolved, it should transfer its assets to another organisation with a similar mission.)’*

**Dept. of Justice ‘Working to Change – social enterprise and employment strategy 2021/23 &**

**National Social Enterprise Policy for Ireland 2019-2022 (additional text)**

In addition to the strategy and policy positions outlined above, the study will also have regard for the inclusion focused ethos of both LDCs in supporting the development of social enterprises with twin objectives involving the provision of employment opportunities to marginalised target groups and the delivery of services, good and products within a spectrum covering both deficient demand and those generating trading income for self-sustaining viability. The provision of tailored training to upskill and build the capacity of the target group with respect to their employment in the social economy business and possible future progression pathways will also be a concern for the study and related developments.

Lastly the study to be undertaken will concentrate on new opportunities presenting for a social economy business including niche products in order to avoid the potential for displacement and/or duplication of existing services.

## 2. STUDY AIM, OBJECTIVES & RESEARCH TASKS

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### STUDY AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The principle aim in carrying out the study is to understand and determine the potential for the development and operation of one or more sustainable social enterprise business ventures supplying a range of services and products that can be delivered by a workforce with ex-offenders as employees.

As part of the funding agreement entered into for the resourcing of the study, there is a requirement to include within the body of the work to be completed the following aspects involving:

1. How the proposed SE will create real and meaningful employment opportunities for people with a criminal conviction.
2. Recommendations for how the SE could sustain and grow the number of jobs for the target group over the next 3-5 years.
3. Identification of supports to enable job retention and training participation.
4. Identification of pathways to support those with a criminal conviction progress to other employment outside of the SE after a specific period of time i.e. creating pathways to further employment as opposed to creating permanent positions, ensuring that new people with a criminal conviction will have the opportunity for employment within the social enterprise.
5. How the SE will avoid the potential displacement/ duplication of existing services.

Within this context therefore the primary objectives include:

- A. To identify a marketable product range and set of services that could be delivered by a social economy business with the profile being pursued by the TRASNA Initiative
- B. To chart the skills set and competencies required of a social economy business workforce to supply a marketable product range and set of services identified
- C. To chart the training plan required to upskill and build capacity of the target group
- D. To outline a legal and operational structure for the social economy business
- E. To set-out the logistics involved in establishing a relevant sustainable social enterprise business

## RESEARCH TASKS

The main tasks within the studies body of work, based on the social economy business profile being pursued by the TRASNA Initiative, involve:

- Studying similar social economy business operations elsewhere and applying the learning to inform development possibilities for the social economy business operation of one or more ventures
- Researching and detailing those products and services for delivery for example with respect to activities involving organic growing; upcycling and use it again items; harmony with nature goods such as honey production etc. and setting out the regulatory framework involved. Equally services and products having a particular relevance to the geographic area being covered by the Initiative should be examined and included.
- Assessing the potential product and services range with respect to generating a trading income for self-sustaining viability and making recommendations accordingly.
- Producing a preliminary costs, sales and marketing plan for the first five years of the business's operation, including a focus on employment sustainment and growth.
- Listing the associated skills and competencies, including transferable skills, required of the workforce and outlining a plan of action to be followed for their acquisition.
- Undertaking an initial investigation of possible locations for siting of the social economy business.
- Identifying funding schemes available to support the establishment and development of the social economy business including job retention and associated training.

### 3. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS AND TIMELINES

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#### REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The contractor engaged to undertake the study will have regular interaction with the Expert Working Group regarding progress of the work and the ongoing compilation process. Issues concerning contractual matters will be the responsibility of Bray Area Partnership. A formal study report will be required in a format ready for publication and should include:

- A contents page
- Summary
- Outline of the methodology deployed
- Findings
- Detailed analysis and conclusions on the possibilities for the development of relevant social enterprise ventures
- Specific recommendations concerning the business developments identified including associated draft business planning
- Appendices as relevant including items such as details of the market research conducted; cash flow statements and projections compiled; training plans etc.

The study and its findings will be a key element in helping to determine the prospects for the development of the social economy business.

#### STUDY TIMELINES

It is expected that the study will commence in March 2021 with a five months window for completion and presentation of the final agreed report in July that year. Working within this timeframe the projected milestone dates will be as follows:

- Contract for the study issued, signed and completed no later than **19<sup>th</sup> February 2021**
- Study research and associated work commences no later than **1<sup>st</sup> March 2021**
- First draft of the study report is presented on **Monday 5<sup>h</sup> July 2021**
- Second draft of the study report is presented on **Friday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2021**
- Final study report is presented on Thursday **29<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

## 4. TENDERING PROCESS REQUIREMENTS & PROCEDURES

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### SUBMISSION OF TENDER BIDS

Tender bids must clearly specify information as follows:

- Details of the proposed approach and methodology to be adopted in carrying out work that is designed to meet the study's aim, objectives and research tasks
- A timeline for completing the various elements of the study work plan and schedule
- The number of days proposed to work on and complete the study
- The number of people who will work on undertaking and completing the study
- A breakdown of costs per day and total of the fees being charged for completing work on the study
- An outline of the bidder's relevant experience, skills and knowledge of the sector and study context. This information should include reference to and details of other similar work undertaken previously.

### ASSESSMENT OF TENDER BIDS

The contract for the study is being awarded by a competitive tendering process. In this regard tender bids will be assessed on related criteria as follows:

- Demonstrated knowledge, experience, skills and competencies to undertake and complete work related to the study as required and within the time frame
- Appropriateness and effectiveness of the approach and methodology proposed for undertaking and completing the study
- Track record with respect to undertaking and completing similar contracted work
- Evidence of capacity to complete all elements of the study within the time frame

### BUDGET AVAILABLE FOR THE STUDY

A maximum budget of €12,300 is available to cover all associated costs involved in undertaking, completing and the presentation format of the study. The tender bid should clearly and individually cost each element of the work involved in undertaking and completing the study.

## 5. CONDITIONS

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The competitive tendering process for the award of the contract for the study will be in-line with the information as set out. All tender bids received will be assessed against the criteria listed. The tender bid deemed most economically advantageous and capable of meeting the study aims and objectives will be selected for the award of contract. The lowest tender bid price will not necessarily be awarded the contract. A contract will not be awarded under this competitive process should no tender bid received be deemed suitable. The successful tender bid submitter must have tax compliant status.

Tender bids must be submitted electronically no later than **5pm on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021** to [peterbrennan@brayareapartnership.ie](mailto:peterbrennan@brayareapartnership.ie) using Tender Bid Submission in the subject line. Late bids will not be considered. It is planned that any interviews of bidders within the section process will be held in the week commencing **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021**.

The completed study will be the property of the contracting authority and its partners.