

Advice Workforce Development Programme

Call for tenders to produce a roadmap which will enable the development of a London-wide Advice strategy



Introduction

We warmly welcome your interest in this tender. London's social welfare advice sector encapsulates a diverse group of people, organisations and networks. It ranges from independent specialist legal advice centres, to a lone adviser located within a small charity. It also includes networked organisations like Citizens Advice and law centre charities, and larger teams inside local and national employers.

Research to date has highlighted several complex and interconnected challenges facing the advice sector, ranging from the rising demand for advice services, to shrinking funding, insufficient infrastructure, gaps in organisational capacity, and workforce development challenges.

A key recommendation arising from our research¹ is to enable the production of a London-wide Advice Strategy, developed by a broad range of stakeholders, cross-sector, and is capable of addressing the sector's challenges in a systemic way.

Several current factors have begun to present a valuable opportunity for us to develop a new strategy and vision for the advice sector. These include: (a) the launch of programmes seeking to address particular issues identified by the research, such as the Advice Workforce Development Fund², and the Cost of Living Crisis Prevention project; (b) the endorsement by the London Health Board of the principle that free social, welfare and legal advice should be available to any Londoner who needed it, and that they would work to ensure that London's Integrated Care systems have plans in place for such provision; (c) greater collaboration among the funder community, and focus on co-production with civil society (e.g. London Funders' Propel initiative, and the Collaboration Circle); and (d) a changing political landscape (e.g. new government, greater devolution); to name but a few.

We are now seeking the support of a consultant to generate a "roadmap", which will set out the steps which need to be taken for us to develop a London-wide Advice Strategy, that is shaped, so far as is possible and necessary, by the variety of stakeholders involved.

This work will be overseen by a multi-stakeholder Advice Strategy task-and-finish group³, which is part of the Advice Workforce Development Fund programme, co-chaired by representatives of London Citizens Advice and the GLA, and funded by Propel funders⁴.

¹ The two key reports are: [Advising Londoners](#) (ASA, 2020), and [Mind The Gap...](#) (LLST, 2022).

² Please see Appendix B, below, and/or visit the programme's website: awdf.org.uk.

³ You can access the task-and-finish group's terms of reference via the programme website [here](#).

⁴ The programme's funders include the National Lottery Community Fund, City Bridge Foundation, Trust for London, Legal Education Foundation and Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

The contract will be with the London Legal Support Trust (LLST), which facilitates the AWDF programme.

Key Information Summary Box:

Project timescale	Sept 2024 – Dec 2024
Primary contact	Chris Scutt – christopher@llst.org.uk
Deadline for tender proposals	Thursday 29 August 2024
Approximate budget	£10,000

The Work

We have identified three stages in the journey towards an advice strategy: (1) creation of a roadmap setting out the proposed activities needed to develop a London-wide advice strategy; (2) implementation of the roadmap; and (3) production of the strategy.

The main focus of this tender is on the creation of the roadmap, with scope to make a start on implementation.

The deliverables, between September – December 2024, will consist of the following:

- A roadmap proposing outputs/milestones required to develop the strategy
- The roadmap should include a stakeholder engagement plan, outlining the levels and methods of engagement each stakeholder group will need at different stages of the strategy's development (e.g. co-design vs consultation), and a communications plan
- A needs analysis, drawing upon existing evidence gathered by the sector, which will lead to a problem statement, and inform the purpose, vision and scope of the strategy.

You will work closely with members of the London-wide Advice Strategy task-and-finish group, who will support and contribute to the content of these deliverables. For day to day support, the consultant will work with the co-chairs of the group alongside LLST in developing the roadmap.

Please note that the work described within this tender is not to develop a strategy itself, but rather to lay the infrastructure, in the form of the roadmap, which will enable the development of the London-wide Advice strategy.

What we are looking for

We are seeking proposals from individuals/organisations or teams with the following knowledge, skills and experience:

- Knowledge and experience of strategy development – particularly the planning needed before the strategy is developed
- Experience of producing stakeholder engagement and communications planning

- Knowledge and experience of taking into account the needs and perspectives of a wide range of stakeholders
- Experience of writing concise reports for different audiences – and presenting findings in a clear and concise way
- Experience of working with the voluntary and community sector – and an understanding of the needs of the social welfare advice sector in particular
- Experience of working with equity-led groups
- Understanding of systems thinking, and connections between different sectors and themes
- Commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion in every aspect work.

Process for tendering

To submit your tender for this work, please provide us with the following:

- Details of the proposed team, including CVs and relevant expertise
- Brief proposal of your work, including how you would approach the above-mentioned deliverables and outputs
- Indicative timescales
- Indicative budget (including VAT, where applicable) and break-down of staff costs and days needed for this project
- Consideration of compliance with research ethics, safeguarding and GDPR.

The closing date for submissions is **Thursday 29 August 2024**, and your tender documents should be sent to Chris Scutt at christopher@llst.org.uk.

Interviewing arrangements are to be confirmed at this stage. Ideally we would like the successful consultant to start work from the second week of September onwards.

Contact

If you have any questions about this tender, or would like to know more about the Advice Workforce Development Fund programme in which the work will sit, please contact Chris Scutt at the London Legal Support Trust, via email at christopher@llst.org.uk.

The London Legal Support Trust
August 2024

Appendix A: Who we are

Our work falls under the [Advice Workforce Development Fund](#) (AWDF): a programme supported by a London-wide funder initiative, [Propel](#), which seeks to address the root causes of the issues facing civil societies in London. Most parts of the AWDF focus on addressing the multitude of workforce issues impacting recruitment, training, progression, and retention across the advice sector.⁵ However, a London-wide Advice Strategy is likely to be wider in scope than purely workforce development – important as it is to the sustainability and effectiveness of the sector. We invite you to read more about the background to the AWDF in Appendix B, [below](#).

This tender is being overseen by a task and finish group of the AWDF, made up of sector experts such as advice delivery and membership organisations, funders, public sector representatives, and members who have joined us for their specific knowledge and experience.

What we mean by social welfare advice?

By social welfare advice, we mean organisations that provide free advice to those who need it on the following topics⁶:

- Welfare benefits: eligibility and access to welfare benefits, income maximisation (which focuses on promoting the uptake of welfare benefits).
- Money and debt: advice and guidance on how to avoid debt and how to deal with it when it becomes a problem.
- Immigration: the provision of advice on immigration issues, which is subject to its own regulatory framework.
- Employment: rights at work, for example, around unfair dismissal, unfair treatment, withheld pay.
- Housing: access to social housing, advice on housing rights and eviction (including around the management and condition of accommodation), access to assistance when facing or experiencing homelessness.
- Disability, discrimination and social care advice.
- Additional forms of social welfare advice not described above.

Many (but not all) advice organisations belong to networks and/or membership bodies, and a number will hold accreditation or quality marks relevant to the advice they provide.

These networks, membership bodies and accreditation schemes include the following:

⁵ By advice sector, we mean civil society organisations providing practical support, assistance, advocacy, or representation to people facing various challenges including legal, financial, and social issues. Many of the individuals and families these organisations work with are facing the effects of discrimination, poverty and inequality. Advice organisations will often also seek to identify emerging themes in their caseload, so they are able to use the law in more strategic ways to address an issue at a wider level.

⁶ We have drawn upon the seminal report into advice provision, gaps and strategic challenges in London, [Advising Londoners](#) (ASA, 2020), to determine the scope and definitions of this research (at p.11).

- [Advice Quality Standard](#) (AQS) – by Advice Services Alliance
- [Advice UK](#)
- [London Citizens Advice](#) – making up 28 Citizens Advice charities in London
- [Law Centres Network](#)
- [Advice Workforce Development Fund](#) partners

Appendix B: Background information to the Advice Workforce Development programme

In 2020, a report commissioned by Advice Services Alliance, [Advising Londoners](#), highlighted rapidly increasing demand for advice services (even before the COVID-19 pandemic and cost of living crisis) which were not matched by advice provision. The report also identified key strategic challenges including workforce, funding infrastructure gaps, and recommended coordinated investment in the supply of personnel, and London-wide approaches.

This report was followed by a further piece of research, in 2022, commissioned by LLST, called [Mind the Gap](#) which made a number of recommendations for addressing workforce gaps, including developing ‘Grow our own’, community-based advice training, apprenticeship schemes backed by the Apprenticeship Levy, and more. It also recommended development of sector-wide strategy.

In 2023, Propel funders including the City Bridge Foundation, and Trust for London, responded to the two reports by pooling £4.15m of funding via its “Robust Safety Net” mission to support eight community-led partnerships to test and scale up recruitment, training and development initiatives to attract new people into the advice sector and for existing staff to have clear progression pathways.

You can find out more about the Advice Workforce Development programme via our website: AdviceWorkforceDevelopmentFund.org.uk.