



Community Work Ireland working collectively to support and promote community work as a means of addressing poverty, social exclusion and inequality, and advancing human rights

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# Collective Action in an Era of Social Distancing: Community Work in the New Normal

## Background

Established in 1981 as the Community Workers' Co-operative (CWC), Community Work Ireland is a national organisation that promotes and supports community work as a means of addressing poverty, social exclusion and inequality, promoting, protecting and advancing human rights and ultimately achieving social change that will contribute to the creation of a just, sustainable and equal society.

CWI provides secretariat support to the All-Ireland Endorsement Body (AIEB) and supported the publication of the *All Ireland Standards for Community Work* in 2016 (Standards). The Standards provide the foundation and guiding framework for community development in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. They articulate and re-emphasise the key values and associated knowledge, skills and qualities for the practice of effective community work.

## Current Context

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, CWI has been active in supporting responses from the community sector in general and in tracking community work responses specifically.

One of the concerns highlighted by CWI work has been the challenges posed by the ongoing restrictions to community work practice. In that context CWI applied for support from the Rethink Ireland Innovation Fund to address the challenge for community work in marginalised communities when normal practice cannot be followed. That application was successful, and CWI now wishes to contract a suitably qualified person to co-ordinate the delivery of the project.

## The Project

Community work is fundamentally based on collectivity - collective analysis of needs and responses to needs identified. This work requires people to meet and interact. This way of working is significantly challenged by the COVID-19 context and the requirement to practice social distancing that is likely to continue for some time. New ways need to be found to practice community work with marginalized communities, who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic and require the support of community workers and community work organisations now more than ever. The project will provide

capacity building to community workers to support the practice of community development in the context of social distancing. This project proposes to develop new ways of practicing community work in a new COVID-19 reality as we move between different stages:

- Scope and identify new ways of practicing that maintains the capacity and ethos of community work to engage and support marginalised communities
- Develop capacity building and upskilling programme(s), and the actions required, for community workers using online forums and other creative digital methodologies
- Design and provide training tools and templates to support the practice of community work;
- Deliver capacity building to community workers currently working in a variety of settings such as Community Development Organisations, Local Development Companies, Family Resource Centres, etc.
- Revise and refine the programme and document the learning

## Project Goals

The goals of the project are to:

Goal 1: Scope out, develop and deliver three capacity building and upskilling programmes to 40 people focusing on the practice of community work in an era of social distancing based on the All Ireland Standards for Community Work.

- Carry out a consultation with CWI members and other community workers on the practice of community work in the new reality.
- Design programmes on the basis of the consultation.
- Deliver three programmes on a pilot basis to community workers working in a range of settings using remote mediums.
- Refine the programme and make them available to a wider audience.

Goal 2: Design and disseminate training resources, tools and templates based on the All Ireland Standards for Community Work to complement the capacity building programmes.

- On the basis of the consultation above, develop a range of tools and templates.
- Disseminate the tools and templates using the CWI website and other online mediums. The intended reach is 150.

Goal 3: Develop online forums including the development of website capacity.

- Develop the CWI website as a training and capacity building medium and as a hub for resource materials including the tools and templates to be developed.

Goal 4: Review the project and ensure replicability and up-scaling.

## Tender

Community Work Ireland are seeking a suitably qualified person to co-ordinate the *Collective Action in an Era of Social Distancing* project. The person will be responsible for:

- Overall co-ordination and delivery of the project goals.

- The design and delivery of a consultation process with CWI members and other community workers.
- The design of programmes-based on the consultation and using the *All Ireland Standards for Community Work* as a framework.
- The identification and recruitment of programme participants.
- The development of a range of tools and templates that will support and complement the capacity building programmes.
- The identification and implementation of online learning and capacity building forums.
- Work with a website developer to ensure that the CWI website is upgraded so that it is fit to support online learning and engagement.
- Preparing reports to the CWI Central Group and Rethink Ireland.

## Project Co-ordinator Specifications

The person will:

- Have a third level qualification in community work/community development.
- Have experience in community work/community development programme design and delivery.
- Have an in-depth knowledge and familiarity with the community development sector.
- Have knowledge of interactive and engaging online training and capacity building forums.
- Have an awareness of the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and on how marginalised communities have been impacted
- Have skills and experience in relation to website management
- Have excellent presentation, communication and writing skills

## Project Management

The CWI Central Group (Board of Directors) will have ultimate oversight of the project. Day-to-day support and monitoring will be carried out by the CWI National Co-ordinators.

## Application

### Budget

The budget for the programme of work inclusive of VAT and expenses is €12,000

### Timeframe

The timeframe for the project is from November 2020 – September 2021

## Process

Expressions of interest should include:

- A detailed outline of the proposed approach.
- Brief details of experience, previous, similar work undertaken and references, including a CV of the individual/s making the proposal.
- Costing and Indicative timescale with respect to each element of the proposed work

Tenders should be submitted by e-mail to [annirwin@communityworkireland.ie](mailto:annirwin@communityworkireland.ie) with the subject line Rethink Ireland Tender by 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Queries by email should be directed to [anniriwn@communityworkireland.ie](mailto:anniriwn@communityworkireland.ie)

## Assessment Process

Each tender received will be assessed on the basis of the following award criteria:

<b>Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the brief</b>	35
<b>Track record in relevant work</b>	35
<b>Availability to carry out the project within the stated timeframe</b>	15
<b>Value for Money</b>	15

All materials developed will remain the property of Community Work Ireland

