

Request for Submission of Tender

for the Evaluation of

Tús Maith: Transitions in Action

A Preschool to Primary School

Partnership Pilot Project

September 2022.



Introduction

Tús Maith: Transitions in Action - A Preschool to Primary School Partnership Pilot Project between the Education Support Centres and the County Childcare Committees (CCCs). (*Who will be known hereafter as the Project Promoters*)

This pilot commits to developing a transitions project under the First 5, Whole-of-Government strategy <https://first5.gov.ie/> to improve the lives of babies, young children and their families. Working with existing resources developed by NCCA <https://ncca.ie/media/2471/transition-research-report-no-19.pdf> ,

LINC <https://lincprogramme.ie/blog/transitions-home-to-pre-school-and-pre-school-to-primary-school>

NCSE <https://www.sess.ie/resources/transition-early-childcare-and-pre-school-primary-school>

The primary objective of the project is to promote positive transitions from preschool to primary school for children of all abilities and backgrounds, meeting the needs of children, parents and educational professionals. The project is a partnership between the Education Support Centres in Donegal, Sligo, Mayo and Carrick on Shannon (Leitrim, Roscommon and Longford) and the County Childcare Committees; Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo and Longford.

This pilot aims to build relationships – new and existing - between the primary schools (teachers and principals) and the preschool services/educators. The voice of the child and the parent will be infiltrated into all aspects of the pilot and will be particularly mindful of best practice by developing new thinking in relation to children who require additional supports. Engagement and working partnerships between the primary schools and the preschool educators is considered essential to ensure the needs of all children are met through targeted actions developed to support the transitions process.

The role of the City & County Childcare Committees

Established in 2001, there are 30 City & County Childcare Committees (CCCs) across Ireland. The key objective of the City & County Childcare Committees (CCC's) is the local implementation of core funding, quality and regulatory supports to the ELC/SAC & Childminding sector on behalf of the Department of Children, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Youth..

CCCs also work on an interagency basis in their local areas with other key stakeholders to ensure collaboration and support in delivering best possible outcomes for children and families in their Early Years & School Aged Journey.

The Role of the Education Centres

Education Centres have a particular remit under the Education Act (1998). In this context they respond to the System's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) agenda on behalf of the Department of Education and to the professional development needs of teachers, school management and parents at local and regional levels. Education Centres are Statutory bodies, funded by the Teacher Education Section of the Department of Education & Skills and are managed by voluntary Management Committees elected annually.

1. Primary Aim of this Evaluation Proposal

To identify strengths and weaknesses in the Tús Maith Transitions Project and to determine the impact of the Transitions Project on children transitioning from preschool to primary school.

This will be achieved both by retrospectively examining data already collected from the Tús Maith Transitions Project in 2021/2022, and also by collating and studying data from the forthcoming iteration of the project for the 2022/2023 school year.

2. Background

Goal C, Objective 9 of First 5, A Whole-of-Government strategy to improve the lives of babies, young children and their families states that 'Children will be supported in their transitions to (and through) ELC settings and onwards to primary schooling'.

It is acknowledged that transitions are an ongoing process for children from a very young age. The primary transition of this age group is the transition from home settings to an ELC setting and leading on to their transition to primary school. Positive transitions are essential to ensure long-term benefits for future learning and relationships. The strategy notes that it is a twofold process with the child being 'ready for school' and the school being 'ready for the child'. It is important also to stress the need for the school to adapt its learning strategies to meet the individual needs of the child regardless of the complexities. This highlights the importance of this pilot project and the potential benefits of creating a relationship and partnership between the preschools and primary schools. This partnership allows for forward planning and the provision of additional support as required ensuring the transition is as seamless as possible. Some children may require more support than others and the child's individual needs should be considered.

The transition from the ELC setting to primary school is recognised as a particularly challenging time for children and their families and that the number of changes – environment, friendships and routine – can be overwhelming for both the children and their

parents. Children with additional needs including disabilities, emotional and physical developmental delays or are from disadvantaged backgrounds require additional support.

The 'First 5 Strategy' notes a number of components which are known to support transitions and to promote and encourage preschool educators and infant teachers to look at the individual needs of the child.

3. Project to Date

In 2021/2022, 34 preschool providers and infant teachers participated in the project which saw initial partnerships formed and small initiatives taking place to help with the transitions project. Four facilitators with expertise in relation to transitions had been employed to work with the partnerships, promoting existing transitions tools including the '[Mó Scéal](#)' templates and identifying successes and challenges in the process.

In the 2022/23 academic year the project promoters will build on these partnerships and enhance the work already done by;

- Building on and developing existing relationships between preschools and primary schools. This may mean broadening the scope of the partnerships to include some
- Highlighting areas where the transition process has been difficult and working towards a solution. A particular focus will be placed on work done with children who are identified as being more at risk of difficulty in the transitioning process including; children with disabilities, children from disadvantaged communities and children who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) ensuring relationships are formed with parents.
- Ensuring the voice of the child is included in all work.
- Connecting the work of the Better Start AIM Early Years Specialists and the NSCE Special Educational Needs Organisers and develop a possible model of parental support for transition of children with additional needs.

In addition, a new cohort of preschool providers and infant teachers will be invited to join the project and form partnerships focusing on the transitions process. This cohort will begin the

relationship forming and building stage with their relevant partners. Transition projects will be developed, experiences shared and solution driven discussions facilitated.

(An evaluation of the work done in 2021/22 has been attached for your information).

4. Requirements and Specifications

The Project Promotor funded by the Department of Children Equality Disability Integration & Youth (DCEDIY) is seeking proposals from suitably qualified persons to submit a comprehensive tender for the evaluation of the:

Tús Maith Pilot Project 2021/2022 & 2022/2023.

The evaluation will include a comprehensive literature review on published material and study undertaken to date regarding the transition from preschool to primary school, with a particular emphasis on published material in Ireland but also including analysis of international research.

The evaluation will be underpinned by the principles of good engagement, consultation and communication.

Engagement to:

- Evaluate the impact of the work that is currently being undertaken to promote transitions from preschool to primary school in the current pilot.
- Ensure the voice of parents and children and their participation in the pilot is included in the evaluation.
- Ensure meaningful engagement with preschool educators, infant teachers and other stakeholders by gathering and evaluating their experience of the pilot.

Consultation to:

- Ascertain the opinions of all stakeholders including, preschool educators, schools, parents, children, AIM support staff, SNA's and other relevant stakeholders regarding preschool to primary school transitions.
- Develop and provide strategies for capturing the voice of the child through the preschool to primary school transition process.
- Collate information in relation to projects previously undertaken and document the success and challenges.

Communication to:

- Ensure all those participating in the project evaluation have a clear understanding of the Terms of Reference of the Evaluation.
- Ensure children and parents are informed of the objectives of the project evaluation.

The successful tenderer shall evaluate the Pilot Tús Maith Project, examining and analysing existing national & international literature in relation to transitions from preschool to primary school. The successful tenderer should be prepared to make recommendations in relation to the project clearly highlighting areas of success and areas which have not been successful.

The successful tenderer must adhere to the guidance for transitions programmes as highlighted in First 5, A Whole-of-Government Strategy for babies, young children and their families.

Development of the evaluation may include

- A comprehensive literature review which will include both national and international research.
- Focus groups with Project participants from both cohorts of participants (2021/22 and 2022/2023).
- Focus group with the project promoters (Education Centres and CCC's).
- Focus group with facilitators.

- Consultation with parents.
- Consultation with other stakeholders i.e. Better Start, NCCA.
- Consultation with children.
- Highlights of the success and challenges of the project.
- Recommendations for future work and additional supports required to support the transitions process.

The successful Tenderer should provide the following:

A comprehensive plan which demonstrates a clear

- understanding of the project
- methodology
- timeframe for process & completion of evaluation process
- clear costings

Output: The completed evaluation will be in the form of a written report and include a glossary of terms and abbreviations; in-text hyperlinks to sources of information; and a full reference list. It will be in MS Word format.

Timeframe: The timeframe for commencement of the evaluation is October 2022 with completion date of July 1st 2023.

Budget: €20,000. Price should include actual price and include a complete breakdown of all associated costs. All quotations to be quoted in Euro and show a total to include VAT.

Evaluation Process

The Project Promoters will evaluate and rank tenders which have not been eliminated based on those that meet the pre-conditions set out below.

Stage 1: Pre-conditions that must be met:

Economic and Financial Standing (Pass/Fail) (Tenderers must respond to this tax pre-condition, if the quote is equal to or higher than €10k Ex-VAT)

a. Tax Clearance

Min Requirements that must be met: Tenderers must:

Evidence of a Valid Tax Clearance Certificate

Do not submit evidence of this with your tender but this information must be submitted if requested upon award of contract.

Tax Clearance Certificates are obtainable as outlined above, please confirm.

Yes No

Economic and Financial Standing (Pass/Fail)

b. Insurance

Min Requirements that must be met: Tenderers must:

Confirm that your company has the following insurances in place:

Employer's liability

Public liability

Product liability

Insurance Cert are obtainable as outlined above please confirm

Yes No

Technical and Professional Ability

Tenderers must demonstrate their ability to provide the required service by providing details of two contracts of similar size and nature and or value. Tenderers must provide the name of the Client, the contact person, email and phone number. The experience and qualifications of the key members of the team proposed to undertake the services, with specific reference to their experience in this area, and the balance of skills (including level of involvement) of the overall team for the purpose of undertaking the services as set out in the explanatory and exploratory Phase of the research required.

Tender submissions that have met the above pass/fail criteria will be further evaluated under their responses to the award criteria below.

Stage 2 – Qualitative Award Criteria

The Project Promoters propose to conclude a contract with the Tenderer who has submitted the most economically advantageous Tender (i.e., the highest ranked Tender) when assessed in accordance with the evaluation criteria. If the Project Promoters are unable to conclude a contract with this Tenderer, they reserve the right to revert to the next highest ranked Tenderer, seriatim, and seek to conclude a contract with that Tenderer.

1000 marks in total are available. The costs proposed will be awarded from 20% of the marks available. The quality of the responses to the qualitative element will be assessed out of the remaining 80% of the available marks.

Award Criteria	Weighting of award criteria	Maximum Marks	Minimum Marks Required
Qualitative Criteria			
Ability to meet the Proposed Timeframe The timeframe for commencement of the evaluation is October 2022 with a completion date of July 1 st 2023. Please indicate whether this timeframe is achievable. Indicate possible obstacles to achieving this timeframe and any steps you might take to remediate against these.	20%	200marks	120marks

Quality of your Proposal Tenderers must provide a detailed description of their proposal, in line with the requirements and specifications as set out in pages 6-8 of this tender document. Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methodologies to be used • Specific actions & timeframes • Communication with project Promoters • Review & sign off. (minimum half an A4 page, font size 12)	60%	600 marks	360 marks
Price	20%	200 marks	N/A
See the pricing sheet in the tender response section. The Costs proposed are to be expressed in Euro and should be exclusive of VAT. Prices must be all inclusive and all other costs/expenses). The marks will be awarded by way of the following mathematical formula – the lowest fee(s) proposed divided by the fee offered per individual proposal, multiplied by the maximum marks on offer in this criterion.			
Total Marks	100%	1000 marks	60% of 1 & 2 meeting min. marks for each of 1 & 2.

Tenders should note that the project promoters may require as part of the stage an interview with tenders in order to determine suitability to complete the project.

Pricing

The pricing schedule must provide full details in respect of all costs which would be incurred for services offered. All costs must be quoted in Euro currency denominations (€), exclusive of VAT in the first instance and net of any discounts which the tenderer is offering. The applicable rate of VAT and any other taxes or duties which would be incurred should be itemised separately. A breakdown of the total cost should be provided i.e., the number of days, daily rates being charged in respect of each individual to be involved in the project etc. The figure quoted must be the best and final offer for the award of the contract and must be a single fixed figure quotation.

The budget (inclusive of all expenses, additional costs, taxes or duties incurred) should not exceed €20,000.

Methodology for calculating scores for the Qualitative Criteria 1, 2 & 3.

A 5-mark system will be used. A mark will be awarded to each criterion (1,2 & 3) from 0 to 5. This mark, or multiplier, will be used to calculate the score to be awarded.

Score/Multiplier	Characteristic of Response
5	Excellent response, meets all requirements with significant added value
4	Very good response, meets all requirements with some additional value
3	Good response, meets all requirements
2	Poor response, lack of detail, does not meet requirements
1	No response or supporting evidence provided

For example, if a score of 100 is available, the base score is $(100/5) = 20$. If the Tenderer is marked 5 (excellent), a score of 100 marks will be awarded (20×5) . If the Tenderer is marked 2 (fair), a score of 40 marks will be awarded (20×2) . A minimum score of 3 (Good) is required to pass criterion 1,2 & 3.

Tenderers should ensure their proposals contain all the information referenced in respect of the award criteria above and detailed elsewhere in this document. This is to enable the Contracting Authority to make a full and fair assessment of their proposal.

Tenderers should note that the Project Promoters reserve the right to confirm that the technical capacity of the tenderer remains valid and undiminished, vis-a-vis their proposal, prior to the award of any contract.

Tie Break

In the event of a tie, the Tender with the highest mark for the Quality of the Proposal Criterion will be deemed to be the highest-ranked Tender.

Administrative Requirements

Overall Approach

The Project Promoters intends, following this tender process, to enter into a contract for the delivery of the Services (but does not bind itself to do so).

Procedure

Tenderers are invited to submit Tenders in accordance with these Instructions following which the Project Promoters will, subject to its rights and discretions as set out in these instructions, assess the Tenders submitted and proceed to award the Contract.

Tax Clearance

Prior to the award of any contract the successful applicant shall be required to produce a Tax Clearance Certificate from the Irish Revenue Commissioners. Alternatively, the applicant may supply the certificate and registration numbers, as they appear on the Tax Clearance Certificate, to facilitate online verification of their tax status.

Submission

A project plan should be submitted by 5 pm on 28th September 2022. An outline of the project plan should include:

- a description of the applicant's experience
- a description of the proposed methodology
- clear objectives, actions, outputs and timeframes for delivery
- an outline of potential risks and challenges and how these will be addressed
- pricing schedule.

The Project Promoters are not bound to accept the lowest tender. They reserve the right to reject in whole or in part any or all tenders received. The Project Promoters will not be liable in respect of any costs incurred in the preparation of tenders. An electronic copy of the proposal and accompanying documents should be submitted to: sharon@sligochildcare.ie

Working with the Project Promotors

While all research work conducted for the Project Promotors falls under the responsibility of the Executive Committee, a designated contact person will be appointed on the award of the contract. This contact person will provide the researcher(s) with all relevant information in support of the work.

Information & data handling

Every effort has been made to ensure that this document contains all the necessary information for tender applications. However, in the interests of equity, requests for additional information, clarification on the content of this document and all other queries of substance should be directed to Sharon Boles sharon@sligochildcare.ie by 17:00 hrs on 16th September 2022. Queries may not be made verbally or by any other means and canvassing will disqualify. The Project Promotors will endeavour to respond to all reasonable queries/requests received prior to the closing date for receipt of queries but does not undertake to respond to all queries/requests received. The Project Promotors reserve the right to issue or seek written clarifications.

The Project Promotors reserve the right at any time before the Tender Deadline, to update or amend the information contained in this document and/or extend the Tender Deadline. Participating Tenderers will be informed of any such amendment or extension through their main contact email.

Contract

A contract for the work will be awarded to the successful applicant following the evaluation of the tenders.

Duties

The successful tenderer will be responsible for the complete administration of the project from beginning to end, liaising with the appointed Project Promoters contact.

Publication of research conducted for Project Promoters.

The final product of the study is the property of the Project Promoters/DCEDIY (Funders).

Account Management & Financial Arrangements

The Project Promoters require tenderers to nominate a dedicated liaison who will act as the main point of contact for the duration of the Project. This person shall have the authority to deal with all matters in relation to the contract and be responsible for the satisfactory delivery of the services required.

Final Commission payments will be made in three instalments on receipt of invoices in the name of Sligo County Childcare Committee. The first instalment will be paid at the commencement of the project, the second, halfway through the project at a specific stage decided as agreed before the signing of the Contract, and the third, when the project is completed to the satisfaction of the Project Partners.

Freedom of information

Applicants should be aware that, under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 information provided by them during this public procurement competition may be liable to be disclosed.

Applicants are asked to consider if any of the information supplied by them in their submission should not be disclosed because of its commercial sensitivity. If applicants consider that certain information is not to be disclosed because of its commercial sensitivity, applicants should, when providing such information, clearly identify same and specify the reason for its commercial sensitivity. If applicants do not identify it as commercially sensitive, it is liable to be released in response to a Freedom of Information request without consultation with you. The Project Promoters will, where possible, consult with applicants about commercially sensitive information so identified before deciding on a request under the Freedom of Information Act.

Ownership of Intellectual Property

The Receiving Party acknowledges that all rights in any materials (including, without limitation, these Instructions) provided Project Promotors to the Receiving Party shall at all times vest in and be the absolute property of the Project Promotors.

The process will be overseen by the project management team and as such they will very much rely on the availability, experience and professionalism of the person who submitted the successful tender. Day to day contact for the process will be through the project management team.