



Bray & North Wicklow
Area Partnership

FAMILY: ADULT & CHILD ENHANCED SERVICES

Understanding and Enhancing Local Family Support Services: A Human Learning Systems Approach

CALL FOR TENDER BIDS

MAY 2025



1. BACKGROUND TO THE TENDER

The Family: Adult & Child Enhanced Services (F:ACES) Initiative is a collaborative community-based project being resourced through the Department of Children, Disability and Equality (DCDE) Local Area Based Child Poverty Action Plans Pilot Programme.

The overall objective of the F:ACES Initiative is to -

Undertake a systematic approach to identifying and analysing drivers of child poverty, adopting an early intervention and prevention approach from pregnancy to four years, in targeted adjacent neighbourhoods in the Bray and South-East Dun Laoghaire Rathdown areas and through local collaboration and interagency working, to examine existing best practice and what can be done differently, locally and nationally, to improve outcomes for families and children impacted by intergenerational experiences of poverty and disadvantage.

The key outcomes to be achieved include the following:

- A. Drivers of child poverty and their inter-connections are identified, understood and charted for wider dissemination and action as necessary.
- B. A coalition of target group families, local groups and agency service providers input their experience, expertise and know-how, in working together as a learning community collective to enable ongoing and sustainable effective integrated action.
- C. Innovative methodology is deployed and will provide for system mapping and embedding of the Human Learning Systems as development tools to inform and improve local services.
- D. Enhanced pathways are made available to families to exit poverty circumstances with positive impacts on health, wellbeing and general quality of life conditions.
- E. Practice learning, involving positive developments and more challenging experiences, are captured, recorded and made available for wider dissemination.

The Pilot Programme is currently scheduled to run over a two-year period with the F:ACES Initiative commencing operation in 2025 and is co-ordinated by a Research and Community Networking Specialist (RCNS). The RCNS leads the coordination of research and engagement activities across the project, ensuring evidence, insights, and lived experience are effectively gathered and shared by connecting partners, aligning efforts, and supporting knowledge exchange to keep the project responsive to community needs and priorities.

The principal tasks to be undertaken through this Call for Tenders involve taking a lead in a participatory, process focused collaborative research programme designed to deeply engage families, community groups and service providers using the Human Learning Systems model approach and associated collaborative working that underpins services co-design processes positively impacting early years outcomes.

The F:ACES Initiative is being overseen and progressed by a consortium of local organisations in the catchment area with Bray & North Wicklow Area Partnership, (BNWAP) acting as lead agency for the development and implementation process. In this regard BNWAP, on behalf of the F:ACES Initiative consortium group, will be the contracting agency for the work to be undertaken through the tendering process.

2. SCOPE OF THE PROCESS

The intention in this process is to understand and document the service landscape as it relates to children, parents/carers and family supports. The development of the learning process will be shaped and informed by Human Learning Systems, (HLS), principles and practice. The research and learning produced will provide a clear picture of what services are being delivered within and/or as related to the catchment area, how they are organised, their effectiveness in meeting needs, the services interconnections, the adaptability of existing services to better address changing needs, evidencing real needs of children and families, pinpointing any service gaps and bottlenecks, charting local perceptions and views on the what, who and how for identified services locally, etc. By adopting Human Learning Systems (HLS) principles and practices, this work will create opportunities for inclusive and accessible consultations with families, parents/carers, children, and service providers. The engagement process will be grounded in real lived experiences, focusing on what currently works well. This collaborative approach will also initiate the co-design of enhanced service provision and intervention strategies. In this context, the scope of work to be undertaken will include:

1. **Detailed Stakeholder Analysis:**

- Conduct a comprehensive analysis of current research and policy, and of stakeholders - including but not limited to families using family support services, community groups, representatives from preschool services and DEIS School groups, staff from state services including HSE, Tusla, Gardaí, Local Authorities, Department of Social Protection, staff from third sector agencies including Barnardos, Community Creches, Local Development Companies (LDC's), Family Resource Centres (FRC's) with a study of their roles, interests, influence, and potential impact on child poverty.
- Use techniques such as snowball network sampling and interest/influence matrix to ensure thorough stakeholder engagement.
- Document the relationships and connections between stakeholders, including the flow of people, information, and resources.

2. **Facilitated Learning**

Design and facilitate the necessary number of structured group sessions required with stakeholders including;

- Families with lived experiences of poverty
- Relevant community groups
- Statutory service providers/practitioners
- Steering Group

It is envisaged that the facilitated sessions for the steering group will incorporate continuous learning on the principles of the Human Learning Systems (HLS) approach. These sessions will build a shared understanding of how HLS can inform and enhance strategic thinking and decision-making. The learning will be directly applied to the ongoing development and delivery of the Local Area Child Poverty Action Plan (LACPAP), supporting more adaptive, people-centred, and evidence-informed practices.

Sessions must:

- Explore real-life experiences.
- Identify existing services, gaps and bottlenecks collaboratively
- Build a shared understanding of system strengths and weaknesses
- Facilitation must be inclusive, accessible, strengths based and guide the uniformity of the work.

3. Co-Production and Collaboration

- Consultants are expected to **work alongside** the Research and Community Networking Specialist (RCNS), local stakeholders — families, third-sector organisations and public agencies.
- Solutions and findings must be **co-designed**, recognising local knowledge and strengths.
- The learning will be structured.

4. Focus on Systems Change

- Local Area Child Poverty Action Plan (LACPAP) is aiming to identify **systemic changes** that tackle **structural drivers of poverty**. It is expected that the approach includes systemic thinking looking at root causes, not just immediate issues.

5. Building Capacity Locally

- Wherever possible, consultants should **leave behind skills, tools, and learning** (e.g., training on participatory methods, co-design tools) so local partners and communities can continue the work after the consultancy ends. Feedback loops should be built in (i.e., participants, practitioners and families can hear back how their input was used).

6. Evidence-Informed and Action-Oriented

- Consultants are expected to **use evidence thoughtfully** and **co-produce actionable recommendations**.
- This includes blending **formal research, community intelligence, and policy knowledge**.

7. Link to Future Digital Service Mapping Tender

The learning and insights gathered through the facilitated stakeholder engagement sessions, collaborative research, and evaluation processes under this contract will directly inform the design and commissioning of a future tender for the development of the interactive Digital System Service Map. The outputs from this phase — including system mapping exercises, service analysis, stakeholder feedback, and identified good practices and gaps — will shape the scope, functional requirements, and user interface needs for the Digital System Map, ensuring it is fully informed by lived experience, practitioner expertise, and Human Learning Systems (HLS) principles.

The appointed consultant is therefore expected to document learning comprehensively, and to present findings in a way that supports and enables the next phase of digital development.

3. DELIVERABLES REQUIREMENTS AND TIMELINES

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The contractor engaged to undertake the development and learning process outlined will have regular interaction with the Consortium Steering Group members and designated personnel regarding progress of the work and the ongoing implementation stages. Issues concerning contractual matters will be the responsibility of BNWAP. A formal work orientated report will be required in an accessible format and should include:

- A detailed process report documenting methodology, stakeholder engagement, learning process and systems analysis.
- Facilitated workshops sessions completed with full participation records and learning summaries.
- A practical evaluations and engagement framework / toolkit for use by F:ACES and community partners
- A comprehensive analysis of the related services and stakeholders in terms of good delivery practice, effectiveness and highlighting existing gaps in provision
- Training materials and time-lined sessions for the Stakeholder members.

STUDY TIMELINES

It is expected that the framework elements of the development and learning process will be commenced by week four in June 2025 with a six months window for completion and presentation of the final agreed reporting in November 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 **Friday 20th June**
- Study research and associated work commences no later than **Wednesday 9th July**
- Data collection and stakeholder analysis completed by **14th of November**
- All associated reporting to be completed by **28th November**

4. TENDERING PROCESS REQUIREMENTS & PROCEDURES

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 tender requirements, the F:ACES Initiative overall objective and key outcomes to be achieved.
- A timeline for completing the various elements of the work plan and schedule.
- The number of days proposed to complete the work.
- The number of people who will be engaged in undertaking and completing the work.
- A breakdown of costs per day and total of the fees being charged for completing the work.
- An outline of the bidder's relevant experience, skills and knowledge of the sector and work context. This information should include reference to and details of other similar work undertaken previously.

ASSESSMENT OF TENDER BIDS

The contract for the work 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 the related work as required and within the time frame.
- Appropriateness and effectiveness of the approach and methodology proposed for undertaking and completing the required work.
- Cost effectiveness and value for money
- Track record with respect to undertaking and completing similar contracted work.
- Evidence of capacity to complete all elements of the work within the time frame

BUDGET AVAILABLE FOR THE WORK

A maximum budget of €12,000 is available to cover all associated costs involved in undertaking, completing and the presentation format of the work on Understanding and Enhancing Local Family Support Services. The tender bid should clearly and individually cost each element involved in undertaking and completing the work.

5. CONDITIONS

The competitive tendering process for the award of the contract for the work content completion 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 work content requirements 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 Friday 13th of June 2025** to adeleoneill@bnwap.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 selection process will be held in the week commencing **Monday 16th of June 2025**.

The completed work content report will be the property of the contracting authority and its partners.