

## An invitation to tender for the design and implementation of pilot projects to measure the outcomes of advice

The Advice Services Alliance (ASA) is inviting tenders for the development of pilot projects to measure the outcomes of advice as part of the Working Together for Advice project.

The Working Together for Advice (WTfA) project is funded by the Big Lottery Fund to develop a range of support services to independent advice centres in England. It is a consortium of ASA, Advice UK, Age Concern England, Citizens Advice, Law Centres Federation and Youth Access. The outcomes workstream is one of a total of eight workstreams and is led by ASA.

The overall aim of the outcomes workstream is to enable the advice sector to better demonstrate the value of advice work and its beneficial impact on the lives of advice agency users. It will do this by working with advice agencies to develop and test different methods of surveying clients.

The consultant will be involved in selection of (12) pilot agencies, visiting and working with those agencies to develop survey tools that are appropriate to their needs, supporting those agencies to integrate the surveying work with their existing procedures, carrying out a small number of client interviews either by phone or face-to-face and collating and analysing survey results.

The findings of the pilots will enable ASA to develop best practice guidance for advice agencies on measuring outcomes.

Appendix 1 contains details of the workstream and a list of all the project milestones. In summary the timetable for the work is as follows:

October - December 2008	Select agencies for pilot
January 2009 - March 2010	Carry out pilot fieldwork
April 2010 - June 2010	Analysis of and reporting on pilot results

We anticipate that initial work to set up the pilots will require on average 3-4 days' work with each agency. Therefore there will be an intensive period of work in the first half of 2009. After that, it is likely that the consultant will have to visit the agencies half way through the pilot and at the end of the pilot.

The consultant will work closely with and report to the workstream manager and may be asked to attend workstream management board meetings to report on issues arising from the fieldwork.

The total budget available for the work is in the region of £30,000.

## Person Specification

The consultant will be expected to have:

- Extensive experience of working in the advice sector
- Good knowledge of the diversity of the advice sector (including agencies of different sizes, working with different client groups and doing different levels of work)
- Good understanding of difficulties of managing an advice agency
- Good knowledge of outcomes work already carried out in the advice sector and the wider voluntary sector
- Understanding of what the WTfA project is trying to achieve through the outcomes workstream
- Experience of developing and managing projects
- Understanding of and commitment to equal opportunities
- Good analytical skills
- Good communication skills
- An ability to write clearly and concisely

### The tender

Please submit a maximum of three pages to cover:

1. How you meet the criteria above (if more than one person will be working on the project you may show how, between them, those people meet the criteria)
2. A maximum of 500 words on how you would carry out the work
3. A quote and breakdown of costs

The deadline to receive the tenders is 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008.

They should be emailed to Shanta Bhavnani [Shanta.Bhavnani@asauk.org.uk](mailto:Shanta.Bhavnani@asauk.org.uk) or posted to Advice Services Alliance, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor, New London Bridge House, 25 London Bridge Street, London SE1 9SG.

If you have any questions about the tender, please email Shanta at the address above or call on 020 7939 0775

### Selection Process

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an interview on a date between 8<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September. The successful candidate will be notified by 24<sup>th</sup> September.

## Appendix 1

The overall aim of this workstream is to enable the sector to better demonstrate the value of advice work and its beneficial impact on the lives of advice agency users. It will help advice agencies to define, measure and evaluate the outcomes of services provided to individual users and the wider community.

This workstream will be co-ordinated by ASA, but will involve other members of the consortium.

### Workstream summary

The workstream will focus on:

- piloting approaches to measuring outcomes with advice agencies
- producing generic good practice guidelines for the sector
- producing guidance and training for particular types of advice service, namely for Law Centres and agencies working with young people
- working with policy makers and funders to develop agreed approaches to advice outcome measures

The workstream will seek to ensure that outcomes used by agencies and funders are both rigorous and sustainable. In particular it is important that proposed measurement systems do not impose a disproportionate cost or administrative burden on agencies.

ASA is currently piloting our outcomes framework with an advice agency providing specialist casework services (using other funding), and work with a second agency is planned. The results of this will inform our ongoing programme of work to develop good practice guidance for the sector. However, we lack the resources to test the framework over a wider range of agencies drawn from all network members.

We are therefore applying for funds to expand the pilot to cover a further group of advice agencies. We will engage a consultant to plan, undertake and evaluate the pilot (under the supervision of existing ASA staff).

LCF wishes to test specific outcome measurements with their member agencies, and provide guidance and training, in order to meet the specific requirements of Law Centres and their funders and to demonstrate the need for expanded Law Centre provision.

Youth Access wishes to test specific outcome measurements with their member agencies, and provide guidance and training, in order to meet the specific requirements of young people's advice centres and their funders and to demonstrate the need for expanded youth advice provision.

The work will include discussions with policy makers and funders, in order to agree more consistent approaches to advice outcome measurements.

### Workstream outcomes

1.	Advice agencies will be equipped to measure outcomes more effectively
2.	Outcomes assessment will help agencies to improve the quality and effectiveness of their services

3.	Funders will use improved and more consistent approaches to outcome measurement
4.	The sector will be better placed to make the case for advice
5.	There will be an improved evidence base for Law Centres
6.	There will be an improved evidence base for youth advice work
7.	The development of an outcomes toolkit that can be used by all advice agencies to demonstrate the value of the work they do
8.	The use of outcomes data in the promotion of advice services will enable the sector to maintain effective and influential relationships with decision-makers and reach some of the 4 million people who experience problems but don't seek advice.

### ASA pilot

ASA will design the expanded pilot by drawing on the experience of the initial pilot of 2 agencies and other work being undertaken by members. We will also consult member networks and other interested parties on the design of the pilot. The pilot will cover a broad cross-section of agencies, drawn from members and including generalist agencies, specialist agencies and agencies working with different client groups. The pilot will consider outcomes in relation to different levels of service (e.g. triage, advice and assistance, representation). It will cover both case outcomes (e.g. did the client obtain the benefit to which she was entitled, was homelessness averted) and client outcomes (e.g. improvement in the quality of life or general well being).

The pilot will be evaluated and a report produced covering issues raised, lessons learned and recommendations for good practice. ASA will develop its good practice guidance on the basis of this report and further consultation with the sector.

### Milestones table

<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Prepare workstream monitoring reports	Advice Services Alliance	Quarterly
Submit workstream financial monitoring reports to Grant Funder	All Funded Service Providers	Quarterly
Establish Workstream Board, draft terms of reference and host Board meetings	Advice Services Alliance	Quarter 1 and then quarterly
Recruit and induct workstream staff	All Funded Service Providers	Quarter 1
Review existing good practice and outcome frameworks	Advice Services Alliance All Service Providers	Quarter 2
Consult on and revise young people's toolkit	Youth Access	Quarter 3
Consult on selection process for ASA pilot	Advice Services Alliance	Quarter 3
Recruit consultants to run ASA pilot	Advice Services Alliance	Quarter 3
Commence Youth Access pilot fieldwork, including induction and support for pilot agencies	Youth Access	Quarter 4
Youth Access to develop contact with local authorities and service commissioners, particularly in areas where their pilots are located	Youth Access	Quarter 4
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Select agencies for ASA pilot	Advice Services Alliance All Service Providers	Quarter 4
Select agencies for Age Concern pilot	Youth Access	Quarter 4

Select agencies for LCF pilot	Law Centres Federation	Quarter 4
Review milestones for remainder of Workstream period, and agree amended and/or additional milestones	Advice Services Alliance All Service Providers	Quarter 4
Commence ASA pilot fieldwork	Advice Services Alliance	Quarter 5
Commence Age Concern pilot fieldwork	Age Concern England	Quarter 5
Commence LCF pilot fieldwork	Law Centres Federation	Quarter 5
Consult Youth Access pilot agencies on preferred methods of data analysis, eg through own internal system or via a centrally developed/internal system	Youth Access	Quarter 6
Complete Youth Access pilot fieldwork	Youth Access	Quarter 7
Analyse emerging data from Youth Access pilot	Youth Access	Quarter 7
Obtain feedback from Youth Access pilot agencies and local authorities on tool and usability of the data	Youth Access	Quarter 7
Develop proposals for youth advice outcomes data analysis	Youth Access	Quarter 7
Revise and amend young people's toolkit	Youth Access	Quarter 8
Agree data analysis methods for youth advice	Youth Access	Quarter 8
Develop training programme for wider advice sector on youth advice outcomes	Youth Access	Quarter 8
Pilot and evaluate training for youth advice outcomes	Youth Access	Quarter 9
Launch strategy for informing and working with local authority service youth advice commissioners, including a seminar and briefings	Youth Access	Quarter 9
Complete ASA pilot fieldwork	Advice Services Alliance	Quarter 9
Complete Age Concern pilot fieldwork	Age Concern England	Quarter 9
Complete LCF pilot fieldwork	Law Centres Federation	Quarter 9
Evaluate ASA pilot	Advice Services Alliance	Quarter 10
Evaluate Age Concern pilot	Age Concern England	Quarter 10
Evaluate LCF pilot	Law Centres Federation	Quarter 10
Youth advice outcome toolkit, training handbook and all associated materials made available online	Youth Access	Quarter 11
Run a minimum of 4 further training events for youth agencies	Youth Access	Quarter 11
Publish and disseminate evaluation report on Youth Access pilot	Youth Access	Quarter 11
Develop revised and expanded best practice on-line guidance on outcome measures, based on findings of all pilots	Advice Services Alliance All Service Providers	Quarter 11
Outcomes toolkits can be used by all advice agencies to demonstrate the value of the work they do	All Service Providers	Quarter 11
Use of outcomes data in promotion of advice services will enable sector to maintain effective and influential relationships with decision-makers and reach some of the 4 million people who experience problems but don't seek advice.	All Service Providers	Quarter 11

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