



Invitation to tender for the review, evaluation and recommendation of technology solutions for FLAC Information Line and Remote Clinics.

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Introduction

Free Legal Advice Centres (FLAC), Access All Areas project aims to improve access to justice for those who need it including vulnerable and hard to reach groups through an enhanced and expanded remote legal information and advice service.

In order to achieve this aim FLAC needs to review, evaluate and identify appropriate technological solutions and innovative approaches to support the remote delivery of services including:

1. Telephone Information and Referral Line
2. Free Legal Advice Clinics
3. Traveller Legal Service

About Us

FLAC (Free Legal Advice Centres) is a human rights organisation that promotes equal access to justice. We do this through:

1. **Advice & Information:** Helping people to understand and access their legal rights by providing free & confidential legal information and advice to the public
2. **Analysis:** FLAC we carries out research and analysis on our priority areas of law to use the law to advance the public interest and achieve greater equality, especially for groups who are more marginalised and disadvantaged.
3. **Advocacy:** FLAC campaigns to bring about changes to the law, where it is clear that a law or legal provision is unfair or discriminatory. This can involve taking strategic cases in our priority areas of work that will have a wider effect than just on the individual client concerned.

FLAC is an independent voluntary organisation.

About Access All Areas Project

FLAC has secured funding for our Access All Areas Project. The primary focus of this project in the upgrading of existing systems and the development of innovative technological solutions to support the remote service provision of free legal information and advice.

1. Telephone Information and Referral Line

In 2019, FLAC Telephone Information and Referral Line provided legal information to 12,469 callers. This was an increase of 9% on the number of calls received the previous year. The Information Line has a team of approximately 5 staff dealing with queries. The Information Line operates in the mornings. Staff are currently working remotely and have brought their internet operated phones home from the office. These phones need to be plugged into the broadband modem and so have physical limitations for staff. When we have a change of staff we need to source another phone and send out another phone it via courier to the new staff member.

We want to look at alternatives to the existing system for providing the Information Line Service so that we can involve more volunteers/staff on the Information Line to cater for the increase in demand on our service.

2. Free Legal Advice Clinics

Roughly, 2,500 free legal advice clinics took place in 2019 at 72 locations around the country, 67 of these locations are in Citizens Information Centres. Volunteer lawyers provided 14,526 basic in 72 locations around the country by approximately 580 volunteers. In March 2020 due to COVID-19, FLAC moved from face-to face clinics to phone clinics. From March – June FLAC over 100 FLAC volunteers have provided over 191 phone clinics.

While the phone clinics have temporarily filled the need for legal advice it is not a comprehensive alternative to face-to-face clinics, particularly for certain types of queries. We believe that legal advice clinics by video conferencing will offer an improved quality of service to service users, allowing for better dialogue between the volunteer legal advisor and the service user. This new system should also incorporate a system for the safe digital exchange of documents as in many cases the volunteer advisor would need to see the relevant documents, in order to give the best advice possible. Video conferencing would also allow sign language interpretation services to be used.

3. Traveller Legal Service

The Traveller Legal Service, which was launched in July 2020, is run in co-operation with a Steering Group made up of representatives from the national Traveller organisations, it aims to empower Travellers and Traveller groups to engage with the law as a means of combating discrimination and advancing the rights of Travellers in Irish society. We would like to have the option of provide consultation by video conference.

Invitation to Tender

FLAC is inviting suitably qualified organisations and individuals to tender for the review, evaluation and recommendation of technology solutions for the following:

- Upgrading the Information Line phone system to allow more volunteers/staff to work remotely on the phone line in order to meet the demand for our service.
- Introduction and development of new telephone and video solutions for secure remote legal consultations. The new system will need to be accessible for those with limited technological literacy.
- Introduction and development secure online system for managing and sharing service user remote clinics appointment details. This is currently being managed through on our Salesforce CRM platform.
- Introduction and development of a secure online portal for volunteer and staff training resources and material.

The review and evaluation process will include

- Consulting the FLAC staff and volunteers regarding the experience of delivering Free Legal Advice Phone Clinics.
- Making recommendation for adaption and new technologies for service that comply with General Data Protection Regulation.

Tenders

As a charity, we are particularly interested in proposals that demonstrate value for money.

Proposal requirements and criteria on which a decision will be made:

- Detailed explanation of the approach to the review, evaluation and recommendation of technology solutions.
- Summary of potential benefits to FLAC in selecting you/organisation.
- Information regarding relevant sector experience and experience of comparable clients.
- Names of key personnel that will be assigned to the engagement and their relevant experience.
- Approach to liaison/communication with Access All Areas Project Team.

- Competitive fee quote for the work required. Any expected related outlay should be itemised in the quote.
- General overview of the schedule and timing of the elements of the tender

Tender Response Format

FLAC would like you to respond to the tender under the following headings:

1. Approach to be taken for reviewing existing processes and technological solutions
2. Approach undertaken for proposing solutions to be identified
3. Approach undertaken for carrying out prioritisation session with FLAC to determine how to get value for money with allocated funds.
4. Personnel
5. Schedule
6. Cost

Award Criteria

Costs	50%
Personnel	15%
Schedule	15%
Approach	20%

Timeline

FLAC anticipates that the following timeline

Deadline for receipt of tenders	4 December 2020
Awarding of Tender	18 December 2020
Review and evaluation and recommendations completed	29 January 2021

Please send tenders by email to catherine.hickey@flac.ie with the subject line “FLAC Access All Areas Tender”.

Please note:

- Additional information may be sought at the assessment phase.
- Before final decision, a number of the most competitive tenders may be invited for further discussions on their proposals for the purpose of elaboration, clarification and/or aiding mutual understanding.
- Please note the review and evaluation will be carried out in January and the schedule proposed will have to cater for this date and will be marked accordingly
- FLAC shall not be liable for any costs and/or expenses incurred in respect of the preparation or the submission of any tender documents or associated materials.
- A valid Tax Clearance Certificate is to be supplied with the tender and is to be valid when invoice is being submitted for payment. Details of VAT registration are to be supplied with the tender.
- **FLAC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals submitted and will not be obliged to accept the lowest or any tender.**

If you have any questions or require any additional information in relation to this tender, please address them to Catherine Hickey on Catherine.hickey@flac.ie