**The National Youth Council of Ireland**

**Draft Request for Expressions of Interest**

**Regarding**

**Strategy Planning Exercise**

**October 2022**

##### Summary

The National Youth Council of Ireland is a membership led umbrella organisation that represents and supports the interests of voluntary youth organisations working with over 380,000 young people. We use our collective experience to act on issues that impact on young people. We provide a comprehensive range of advice, information, and training programmes nationally. Additionally, we undertake advocacy with policy makers, legislators, and funders on behalf of our membership to secure an appropriate political, legal, and operational environment for youth work in Ireland.

The National Youth Council of Ireland is a registered charity. In existence for 55 years, The National Youth Council of Ireland has grown incrementally and currently has 30 employees. NYCI is piloting hybrid working this year.

Founded in 1967, The National Youth Council of Ireland developed our first multi-year strategic plan which was a 5-year strategy running from 2007 to 2012. Our next strategy was developed using the ‘theory of social change’ framework (see appendix 1) and ran from 2012 – 2016. The current plan ran from 2017 to 2022. We now wish to commence a new strategic review and planning exercise for the next five years.

1. **Considerations**

In developing the current strategy, The National Youth Council of Ireland applied its existing ‘Theory of Change’ framework. That process also produced a range of desired outcomes for The National Youth Council of Ireland to work to achieve which were accepted at the time to be long-term in nature.

The National Youth Council of Ireland has decided to review for continued relevance the Theory of Change Model that was developed previously, and to use that as a basis to structure this new planning exercise, as opposed to starting completely from scratch.

As a membership serving organisation, it is critical that our members are central to the strategic planning process.

**3. The External Environment**

Some of the external factors that will influence The National Youth Council of Ireland in adopting a new strategy include:

* Uncertainty related to the pandemic
* The longer-term impact of Covid on young people and the youth sector
* The increased challenges of rising inflation and increased cost of living especially the impact on young people
* The risk of recession in the short to medium term
* The continuing war in Ukraine and the arrival of refugees from Ukraine and other areas of conflict and the impact on the youth sector in Ireland as it tries to respond
* The need for youth organisations to meet increased demands for services for young people in communities as their capacity is decreased due to lower numbers of volunteers and increasing challenges to attract and retain suitably qualified staff, and the consequent pressure that this places on them in terms of scale and scope of their activities.
* The increasing need for urgent and critical action on climate justice
* Continuing high numbers of young people and communities experiencing inequality
* The relationship between the youth sector and the state at policy level both at national and local levels – what this means for the youth sector and for The National Youth Council of Ireland.
* The limitations in The National Youth Council of Ireland’s own capacity to respond to the demands placed on us.
* The sustainability of our funding base and how it can be augmented / developed over the course of the next strategy.

In addition to analysis of these and other factors, as well as the review of the ‘Theory of Change Model’ developed for The National Youth Council of Ireland, the planning will also be informed by a review of the implementation of our current strategic plan and getting feedback from members / non-members as well as other stakeholders.

##### The Brief

The National Youth Council of Ireland is seeking Expressions of Interest from individuals or organisation to assist the Board and the senior management team in a strategic review that will result in the production of a new Strategic Plan. This work will include the following elements:

1. An analysis of where we are now as an organisation as we start this process:
   1. Against the Strategic Priority Themes in our current strategy
   2. Against the strategic outcomes actions, we set out for each of those strategic priorities in our current strategy.
   3. Against the actions we identified in the Plan.
   4. In the opinions of:
      1. Our members.
      2. The National Youth Council of Ireland’s staff.
      3. The Board of Directors.
      4. The sub-committees of the Board.
      5. Funders.
      6. Key stakeholders including policy-makers, other non-profit sectoral bodies, other sectors, media.
2. An analysis of our current environment and future trends, as well as strengths / weaknesses / opportunities and threats facing both the youth sector and The National Youth Council of Ireland separately.
3. Review of our funding model and how we can be financially sustainable.
4. Review of our vision and mission
5. Review and rationalisation of our current strategic priority themes?
6. Development of key performance indicators and proposals on how they might be monitored
7. What outcomes do we want to see over the course of the next strategy? What can we learn from the current plan in terms of measuring outcomes, and how can we improve on this for this next phase of our work?

It is envisaged that the person or organisation appointed to work with us to achieve the above will facilitate the various meetings/workshops implicit in the above, write and review any questionnaire related feedback, and conduct necessary interviews. Notes, presentations, and written outputs should be produced during the work by the appointed contractor, who should also work with the resources within The National Youth Council of Ireland to produce the actual plan.

It is also envisaged that a subgroup of the board, with the senior management team will act as a steering group for this work.

**5. Important Dates**

Expressions of interest sought mid November 2022

Appoint preferred supplierearly December 2022

Kick off meeting with full Board January 2023

Period of workJanuary to April 2023

Final Strategic Plan considered by

The Board of Directors of the National May 2023

Youth Council of Ireland

It is envisaged that the new Strategic Plan be formally approved by the Board at the Board meeting in May 2023. It is also understood that in order to meet this timeframe, additional dedicated board meeting(s) may need to be scheduled as appropriate.

**6. What should be included in the ‘Expression of Interest’?**

Interested parties should include:

* Descriptions of their experience in previous similar projects or contracts.
* Provision of references
* Information on current live projects
* An initial overview of the process, timelines, and methodologies to be used.
* The cost including vat for the delivery of the outputs in the sought-after timeline. *(Interested parties should note that The National Youth Council of Ireland is a registered charity and can therefore not claim vat refunds. Therefore, the only cost figure of relevance to The National Youth Council of Ireland will be the cost including vat, should it be applicable.)*
* List of previous clients for whom similar work has been delivered.
* Brief resume/biography of the person(s) who will be actually doing the work.

**7. Criteria for selection**

The National Youth Council of Ireland is seeking to identify the most suitable 3rd party to assist the organisation’s Board and senior management team through completion of the work outlined in this Expression of Interest. The decision will be made based on the closest possible match between the submitted Expression of Interest and our sought-after outputs. The lowest price offer will not necessarily secure the contract.

**8. How to apply**

Expressions of Interest should be submitted to Mary Cunningham, CEO in electronic format before 12 noon on Friday 18th November 2022. Email is: [mary.cunningham@nyci.ie](mailto:mary.cunningham@nyci.ie)

**9. Useful Resources:**

* The current strategic plan for The National Youth Council of Ireland:
* Recent annual reviews:
* [www.youth.ie](http://www.youth.ie)

**APPENDIX 1**

A good Social Change Model has the following characteristics:

1. Clearly describes the challenge that is being addressed, what the organisation is doing to address the challenge (the unique approach) and what effect this intervention will have.
2. Provides a visual mapping of the highest-level activity system for an organisation.
3. Expresses the major outcomes an organisation is seeking to effect and be accountable for.
4. Captures the organisations understanding of what gives it the right to perturb the system within which it is working.
5. Is clearly integrated with other key activities such as strategic planning & choice making, evaluation, communications etc.
6. Can be clearly articulated by the staff, board members and key stakeholders.

**Theory of change**

* NYCI’s measurement framework is based on a theory of change which lays out how NYCI expects to achieve an impact.
* Below is the theory of change for NYCI. It shows the progress from NYCI’s activities to intermediate outcomes and then, longer-term outcomes. It will be useful for all involved in NYCI’s measurement to familiarise themselves with the theory of change.

**Figure 1: key to theory of change**

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**Figure 2: Internal outcomes**

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**Figure 3: Policy outcomes**

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**Figure 4: Practice outcomes**

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**Figure 5: Longer-term impact**



**APPENDIX 2: The Wheel – Social Change Model**