

Request for Tenders (RFT)

Development of a Cross-Border Collaboration Toolkit for the Community and Voluntary Sector

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1. Background

The Wheel is seeking to appoint a contractor to develop a practical cross-border collaboration toolkit for community and voluntary organisations operating across the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Community organisations frequently collaborate across jurisdictions to address shared social, economic, and community challenges. However, forming and sustaining cross-border partnerships can present practical challenges relating to governance structures, funding systems, regulatory environments, and organisational processes.

The purpose of this project is to develop a clear, practical toolkit that will support community and voluntary organisations to initiate, structure, and strengthen cross-border partnerships.

The toolkit will be designed primarily for community groups, social enterprises, volunteers, and small to medium community organisations, including those with limited experience of cross-border collaboration.

2. Project Objectives

The project aims to:

- Support community organisations to develop effective cross-border partnerships
- Provide clear guidance on governance, partnership structures, and cooperation
- Increase awareness of cross-border funding opportunities
- Share best practice and lessons learned from existing collaborations
- Provide practical tools and templates that organisations can immediately use

The final toolkit should be accessible, practical, and grounded in real-world experience.

3. Scope of Work

The appointed contractor will develop a Cross-Border Collaboration Toolkit for the community and voluntary sector.

The toolkit should comprise approximately 40 pages of written content (excluding design elements). Design, layout, branding and images will be provided by The Wheel, and the contractor will therefore be responsible for developing the toolkit content.

As part of the project, the contractor will be required to pilot the draft toolkit with five community organisations (connections can be facilitated by The Wheel). The contractor will be responsible for designing a short feedback survey, coordinating the pilot, and analysing the feedback received.

Following the pilot, the contractor must produce a short pilot report (approximately 5 pages) summarising survey findings, key learnings, and recommendations, including how feedback will be incorporated into the final toolkit.

The toolkit should be written in plain English, be easy to navigate, and provide clear, practical guidance that community organisations can readily apply.

4. Deliverables

The contractor will deliver the following components.

4.1 Cross-Border Collaboration Toolkit

A practical toolkit of approximately 40 pages including:

Templates and Practical Tools

- Partnership Agreement template
- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) template
- Partnership planning checklist or starter guide

Templates should be practical, adaptable, and suitable for small organisations.

Workshop Plans

Practical plans for 2–3 partnership-building workshops, including:

- Workshop objectives
- Target audience
- Suggested agenda
- Facilitation approaches
- Interactive exercises to support partnership development

Workshops should be designed so they can be delivered by community development practitioners or support organisations.

Governance and Cooperation Overview

A clear, accessible overview of:

- Typical governance structures used in cross-border partnerships
- Key practical considerations when working across jurisdictions
- Financial management and accountability considerations
- Risk factors and mitigation approaches

This section should provide guidance rather than legal advice and should be appropriate for non-specialist audiences.

Funding Landscape Overview

A concise overview of relevant cross-border funding opportunities, including:

- Key programmes and funding sources
- General eligibility considerations
- Practical tips for developing cross-border funding proposals

Best Practice Guidelines

Practical guidance on:

- Building strong partnerships
- Establishing trust across organisations
- Decision-making and communication structures
- Managing differences between jurisdictions

Case Studies

Three short case studies highlighting examples of successful cross-border collaboration. Each case study should include:

- Background to the partnership
- Key activities
- Challenges encountered
- Lessons learned for other organisations

FAQ / Quick Reference Guide

The toolkit should include a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section or “cheat sheet” to help organisations quickly understand key issues when starting cross-border collaboration.

This section should provide short, clear answers to common practical questions, for example:

- Do we need a formal agreement?
- What governance structure works best?
- How do we manage funding across jurisdictions?
- What are the key risks to consider?

This section should be designed as a quick-reference resource for practitioners.

4.2 Pilot Testing and Report

The contractor will conduct a small pilot of the draft toolkit with five community organisations. The Wheel can support the contractor by facilitating introductions to suitable organisations if required.

The contractor will be responsible for:

- Designing a short feedback survey to gather structured input from participants
- Sharing the draft toolkit with five community organisations
- Asking participating organisations to review the toolkit
- Collecting and analysing feedback from the survey

Following the pilot, the contractor must produce a short report (approximately 5 pages) outlining:

- A summary of survey responses and key feedback from participants
- Learnings regarding the clarity, usability and practical relevance of the toolkit
- Recommendations for improvements to be incorporated into the final version of the toolkit
- An explanation of how feedback will be reflected in the final toolkit
- Any broader insights or recommendations that may help inform future cross-border collaboration work

The contractor will then revise and finalise the toolkit based on the findings from the pilot phase.

5. Accessibility and Plain English

The toolkit must be written in clear, accessible language suitable for a broad range of community organisations.

Tenderers should demonstrate their approach to:

- Writing in plain English
- Ensuring content is accessible to non-specialist audiences
- Structuring information so it is easy to navigate and understand

- Supporting accessibility for readers with varying levels of experience and digital literacy

The final document should follow good practice in accessible document design, with clear headings, logical structure, and concise language.

6. Budget

The maximum budget available for this project is:

€9,000 (inclusive of VAT and all expenses).

Proposals should demonstrate a realistic and proportionate approach to delivering the project within this budget.

7. Payment Schedule

Payments will be made in three stages:

- 30% on project initiation
- 40% on submission of the draft toolkit
- 30% on completion of the pilot report and submission of the final toolkit

All payments will be subject to receipt of an appropriate invoice.

8. Timeline

Tenderers should propose a realistic timeline for delivery. It is anticipated that the project will take approximately 10 - 12 weeks from appointment to completion.

Indicative stages may include:

- Project initiation

- Development of draft toolkit
- Pilot testing with community organisations
- Pilot report
- Finalisation of toolkit

9. Tender Requirements

Tenderers should submit a proposal of no more than 8 pages outlining:

Background and Relevant Experience

A short summary of the organisation or individual's background, relevant skills, and experience, particularly in relation to:

- The community and voluntary sector
- Cross-border collaboration or partnership development
- Toolkit development, research, or capacity-building work

Proposed Approach

A description of the proposed methodology for:

- Developing the toolkit
- Conducting the pilot with community groups
- Incorporating feedback into the final toolkit
- Ensuring accessibility and plain English

Project Timeline

An indicative timeline for delivery.

Budget

A breakdown of the proposed costs.

Examples of Previous Work (Optional)

Examples of relevant previous work may be included where available.

10. Evaluation Criteria

Tenders will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

Criteria	Weighting
Relevant experience and expertise	30%
Understanding of the project and proposed methodology	40%
Value for money	20%
Approach to accessibility and usability	10%

11. Scoring Matrix

Each criterion will be scored using the following scale:

Score	Description
0	No information provided
1	Poor – significant gaps or concerns
2	Fair – partially meets requirements
3	Good – meets requirements
4	Very good – strong response with clear evidence
5	Excellent – comprehensive response demonstrating strong expertise

Scores will be multiplied by the weighting assigned to each criterion to determine the final evaluation score.

12. Submission

Proposals should be submitted electronically to aine@wheel.ie by 10 April 2026.

Late submissions may not be considered.