

## **Expression of Interest to provide Hosting Services for Sligo Public Participation Network**

<b>Closing date for Submission</b>	<b>15 November 2023 at 12:00 noon</b>
Expression of interest responses to be returned by email to <a href="mailto:sligoppnsecretariat@gmail.com">sligoppnsecretariat@gmail.com</a>	
<b>Closing date for Queries/Clarifications to</b>	10 November 2023 at 12:00 noon
Queries by email to <a href="mailto:sligoppnsecretariat@gmail.com">sligoppnsecretariat@gmail.com</a>	

**Issued: Week of 30 October 2023**

## **Background to this expression of interest**

Sligo PPN is undertaking a process to explore an arrangement for the hosting of the PPN.

What is meant by 'hosting of the PPN'?

This will involve selecting a community and voluntary organisation or state body from within the county to act as administrative host of:

- The PPN budget (i.e. holding and administering the funds of the PPN),
- to act as the employer for PPN staff (i.e. provide the HR function for the PPN such as operating payroll and supervision for 3 PPN staff members), and
- and to act as the office base for the organisation (i.e. providing workspace and access to meeting facilities, receiving of post, etc.).

If this arrangement should proceed, it would be for an initial period of 3 years, subject to satisfactory annual reviews.

Other PPN's that operate under this type of model include Leitrim PPN (hosted by Leitrim Development Company), Dublin City PPN (hosted by Dublin City Volunteer Centre), Wicklow PPN (hosted by Wicklow Travellers Group) and Cork City PPN (hosted by St Joseph's Community Association).

## 1. Purpose of Sligo PPN

A Public Participation Network (PPN) is a structure that brings together Community and Voluntary, Environmental and Social Inclusion groups in each local authority area. Public Participation Networks were established on foot of the report of the Working Group on Citizen Engagement with Local Government published in 2014, which recommended greater input by communities into decision making at local government level. The Local Government Reform Act 2014 provided for the formal establishment of PPNs.

**The primary purpose of the PPN** is to enable the PPN member groups to input into and have their voices heard within the formal decision making structures of the local authority. The PPN is now the main way that local authorities connect with groups active in their area. Whenever the local authority needs people to participate in consultations or sit on the committees like Local Community Development Committees and Strategic Policy Committees, it is obliged to call on the PPN to select representatives from within its membership to serve on those committees.

PPNs therefore provide a mechanism to facilitate the two-way flow of information between the local authority and their groups to influence policy development and the delivery of services to the wider community. Another of the main roles of the PPN is to provide a space for community groups to grow and develop through various training supports. They also act as an information hub, keeping the community informed of relevant local issues, news, events, resources and supports. PPNs collaborate with a host of organisations and service providers e.g. Education and Training Boards, Volunteer Centres or Local Development Companies to facilitate, devise and deliver support to its member organisations.

**The key decision-making body of each PPN is its Plenary**, which is made up of representatives of all the registered member groups of the PPN. Every PPN also has a group called a Secretariat whose members are independent of the local authority. **The Secretariat's main roles is to carry out the decisions made by the Plenary and along with coordinating the activities of the PPN**, ensure the proper functioning of the PPN between Plenaries. PPNs are above politics with membership open to all volunteer-led/not for profit groups which are non-party political and that fulfil membership criteria. PPNs are wholly independent entities, but crucially still remain accountable for their use of public monies and the activities they undertake on behalf of their communities.

Since their establishment, PPNs have been funded jointly by the Department of Rural and Community Development and local authorities.

## 2. Requirements

Requirement	Description
<p><b>Perform the role of employer for PPN Staff.</b></p>	<p>Sligo PPN Secretariat guide the work of PPN staff, agreeing their workplan and salary</p> <p>In terms of the Host Organisation the requirement would be to provide the HR function for the PPN such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operating payroll and associated salary deductions for staff (note salary levels are set by the PPN Secretariat within guidelines set out by funders).</li> <li>• Providing agreed support and liaison for the PPN Resource Worker/Coordinator who in turn will supervise and manage the other PPN staff members.</li> <li>• Facilitating access to a PRSA or Pension scheme for staff (note employer contributions and associated costs will be covered by the PPN).</li> </ul> <p>PPN staff will operate on a flexible resourcing model basis with a balance of in-person and remote working as well as out-of-hours service delivery.</p>
<p><b>Hold and administer PPN Funding</b></p>	<p>This means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Holding and administering the PPN funding that is provided by Sligo County Council and DRCD.</li> <li>• Providing expenditure reports to Sligo County Council and/or the Department of Rural and Community Development.</li> <li>• Including PPN Expenditure in your Annual Audit and in the preparation of your Annual Financial Statements.</li> <li>• Holding the PPN funding in a standalone bank account, or alternatively, having a PPN specific job code for income and expenditure.</li> <li>• Administering the payment of PPN project expenditure.</li> </ul> <p>The level of PPN funding is set on an annual basis by the Department of Rural and Community Development and Sligo County Council.</p> <p>The breakdown of how PPN funding is budgeted is informed by funders and decided upon by the PPN Secretariat in consultation with the PPN Plenary.</p>
<p><b>Provide office space</b></p>	<p>This means providing safe, appropriately serviced and accessible work space accommodation (including meeting room access) for up to 3 people. This can be on a hot desk basis in</p>

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	<p>line with modern hybrid working arrangements and can be negotiated upon discussion of EOI.</p> <p>Facilitating the receiving of post and the use of the office address as an address for PPN correspondence.</p> <p>Remote and field working must also be facilitated.</p>
<b>Annual service level agreement with Sligo County Council and memorandum of understanding with Sligo PPN.</b>	<p>This means signing and reviewing a service level agreement and memorandum of understanding on an annual basis with the relevant parties. These documents set out the roles and responsibilities of all parties and provide for clarity and the smooth operations of the PPN.</p> <p>This also requires attendance at PPN Supervisory Working Group (SWG) meetings four times per year. The SWG is a quarterly meeting of the PPN, the Council and the Host to undertake check-ins and to report on progress of the PPN Work Plan.</p>

### 3. Selection criteria

Sections 3A and 3B provide the selection criteria that will apply to appoint a host for the PPN and will be used to assess proposals submitted.

#### 3A. Pass or Fail Criteria

<b>Essential Criteria</b>
<b>Located within the Sligo</b> local authority area with existing office space in the area.
<b>Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG)</b> status.
<b>Registered with the Charities Regulator</b> with a Registered Charity Number (RCN, formerly CRA number) – not applicable to state bodies.
<b>Companies Registration Office (CRO)</b> returns up to date,
<b>Registered as an employer</b> with the Revenue Commissioners
<b>Tax Clearance Cert / Tax Access Number</b>
Present <b>clean set of accounts</b> and prove company is solvent.

**Note: Failure to meet any of the 7 essential criteria before final awarding of the contract will result in disqualification from the process.**

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### 3B. Scoring Criteria

Applicants must score a minimum of 60% (12 marks) under each of the 5 selection criteria as follows:

#	Criteria	High level indicators	Marking
1	The organisation must be able to demonstrate a background of community and voluntary activity in Sligo County Council Administrative Area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the primary function of the organisation in the community and voluntary sector across the County?</li> <li>Does the organisation have a similar client base to the PPN and does the organisation operate on a County-wide basis?</li> </ul>	20%
2	The organisation must demonstrate a knowledge of, and a willingness to support, the ongoing development of the Public Participation Network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has the organisation been involved in or provided support to the PPN or any of its members to date?</li> <li>The organisations demonstration of their understanding of what the PPN is.</li> </ul>	20%
3	The organisation must be able to demonstrate the capacities required to act as the host organisation, including financial, human resources management, recruitment, and technical capacities.	<p>The organisation has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial management capacity, including managing public funding.</li> <li>A number of staff and performance system in place (demonstrates HR capacity).</li> </ul>	20%
4	The organisation must be able to demonstrate the provision of suitable workspace accommodation for the PPN Staff to enable them to carry out their role.	<p>The organisation has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An accessible premises.</li> <li>A meeting room available for use.</li> <li>The capacity to house up to three PPN Workers at the same time in the office.</li> </ul>	20%
5	Value for money	<p>Does the overall cost provide certainty and value to the PPN?</p> <p>i.e. Does the annual hosting fee include rent, insurance, HR functions, pay roll, bank charges, internet, invoice processing, desk space, meeting room use, auditing fees, regular review meetings, etc.</p>	20%

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#### **4. Submitting a Proposal**

Interested parties are hereby invited to submit a proposal on the **Proposal Submission Form** supplied separately to this document.