



**An Roinn Leanáí  
agus Gnóthaí Óige**  
Department of Children  
and Youth Affairs

**Open Call Invitation for Submissions**

**June 2018**

## **Call for Submissions**

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) invites submissions from individuals or organisations with an interest in youth, personal or social services in relation to measuring outcomes and compiling data on levels of service activity.

The purpose of this call for submissions is to provide an opportunity for organisations and individuals to inform the work of DCYA arising from the recommendations of the Value for Money and Policy Review of Youth Programmes (VFMPR, 2014). Equally the call provides the opportunity for DCYA to learn from experiences in relation to measuring beneficial outcomes for service users; and generating meaningful data ('counting') on service activities and service recipients.

This is an exciting opportunity to contribute to the development of key elements of a new targeted funding scheme in the youth sector that aims to deliver positive outcomes for young people in Ireland today.

## **Background**

- The Value for Money and Policy Review of Youth Programmes (VFMPR) recommended the design and implementation of a new scheme that is an amalgamation of four specific youth schemes. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) is undertaking this substantial project of reform and work is being led by the VFMPR lead team.
- The Department of Children and Youth Affairs is tasked specifically with developing submissions for (i) measuring outcomes for young people as recommended in the Value for Money and Policy Review of Youth Programmes (VFMPR) and (ii) counting service activities to generate useful and meaningful data about youth service activity.
- DCYA intends to inform the approach to the measurement of the new scheme by consideration of submissions received in response to this open call. This invitation sets out the scope of the call.

- Individuals or organisations with an interest in youth personal or social services can make a submission by sending the completed form with relevant attachments to [YRSP@dcya.gov.ie](mailto:YRSP@dcya.gov.ie) by Friday 6<sup>th</sup> July at 1700

### **Scope of call**

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) invites submissions from individuals or organisations with an interest in youth personal or social services in relation to:

1. Ways of measuring outcomes among service users, including tools, instruments, processes, practices and approaches.
2. Systems (paper-based or electronic) for compiling meaningful data on service activity, for example, numbers, types, intensity, and frequency of the work, to facilitate practice development and assure accountability in the use of public funds.

### **Measuring effectiveness**

Instruments and processes that can show improvements in a young person's circumstances which can be plausibly linked to engagement with a service are an important measure of effectiveness. Effectiveness is an important accountability obligation in the use of public funds, demonstrating that a service has made a positive difference. DCYA is particularly interested in learning about tools, instruments, processes, practices or approaches that do at least two of the following;

1. Track or can be modified to track outcomes in young people over time across the seven 'potent mechanisms' or soft outcomes listed in Figure 7.5 on page 106 of the Value for Money and Policy Review of Youth Programmes which is available for download at:  
<https://www.dcy.gov.ie/documents/publications/20141223ValueforMoneyYouthProjects.pdf>
2. Generate evidence to promote ongoing learning and development across multiple stakeholders including young people, service providers, funding intermediaries and Government Departments
3. Facilitate understanding of how funded projects contribute to outcomes
4. Can be used in a standardised way across a number of projects so that comparisons can be made

5. Facilitate the collection of outcomes data on an information technology system
6. Can be used with, or adapted to be used with, young people who have varying levels of literacy across multiple first languages
7. Have been used and/or developed in partnership with young people

### **Measuring efficiency (Counting Policies)**

Counting policies help to establish and make comparisons about service efficiency. Efficiency is an important issue in the context of public expenditure. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs invites submissions relating to counting policies that set out a method for counting the number of young people that funded projects engage with, and the nature of that contact, in terms of service efficiency. Any methodology should acknowledge that the new scheme aims to reflect the fact that quantity of participants alone is an insufficient measure of efficiency without recognising the legitimate variations in workload associated with the differing levels of complexity presented by the young people engaged by the projects.

### **Process**

To make a submission please complete the submission form and enclose any relevant materials by email to [YRSP@dcya.gov.ie](mailto:YRSP@dcya.gov.ie) by Friday 6th July at 1700. Late submissions will not be considered. DCYA may seek to engage with people or organisations on the basis of their submission.