

**ANNEX A: NORTHERN IRELAND NATIONAL CITIZEN SERVICE  
AUTUMN PROGRAMME 2012**

**TENDER SPECIFICATION**

**Bidders will need to demonstrate that they can deliver the full NI NCS programme as set out in this document.**

**1. National Citizen Service (NCS)**

National Citizen Service (NCS) is one of the Coalition Government's flagship initiatives for building a bigger, stronger society. It gives young people the chance to learn new skills and get involved in their communities.

NCS promotes:

- a more cohesive society by mixing participants of different backgrounds;
- a more responsible society by supporting young people's transition into adulthood; and
- a more engaged society by enabling young people to work together to create social action projects in their local communities.

NCS brings young people together from different backgrounds (e.g. religious, ethnic and socioeconomic) to work together, and teaches them what it means to be responsible and serve their communities. It is a high quality personal development programme that gives young people a chance to prove to themselves and their peers what they can do. Participation in NCS is voluntary.

Taking part in NCS gives young people the chance to:

- learn new skills, develop confidence and leadership and learn about teamwork;
- meet new people from all walks of life; and
- make a real difference to their community, or an issue they care about.

Under the current summer model, participants spend time away from home in small teams, guided by a dedicated, trained adult team leader. They then spend an additional 30 hours working in their communities in their own time. Working as part of a team, they have the chance to take part in outdoor activities such as mountaineering, canoeing and abseiling, and to undertake personal and social development. They also design and deliver their own project in their local community, working with other young people to improve the area they live in.

In 2011 over 8,000 young people took part in NCS and this year, there are 30 000 places available in England.

## **2. Northern Ireland NCS**

A pilot scheme in Northern Ireland is now being commissioned for the autumn of 2012 for 250 participants across the areas outlined in annex 1a. We are looking for one successful bidder who may have formed a consortium.

There is a strong cross-community aspect to the proposed NI pilot programme with young people being afforded the opportunity to meet one another and mix on a cross community basis and to plan and deliver beneficial community projects in one another's areas. For this reason, teams should be established on a cross-community basis.

## **3. Target Areas**

A number of areas across Northern Ireland have been chosen to pilot a NI NCS scheme. They include a mix of urban and rural areas, town and country areas and smaller villages. The successful bidder undertakes to deliver a NI NCS scheme in each of the areas outlined in Annex B.

## **4. Timing and sequencing**

The NI NCS autumn pilots 2012 should take place from the October half term (most schools break up for half term on Friday 26 October). The programme will last for around 7 weeks, ending with a team test on 14 – 16 December. Participants should go through their NI NCS programme in teams of 12-16, which stay together throughout the programme. The phases of activity should be consecutive. NI NCS pilots should consist of the distinct phases of activity that should take place in the order set out below.

A minimum of four nights should be spent on a residential basis away from participants' homes. The residential phase is crucial to ensure challenge and social mixing, and to give the participants the opportunity to develop life skills and confidence.

## **5. Order of phases**

The five distinct phases of activity should take place in the order set out below.

### **Phase 1: Introductory phase**

During the introductory phase, expectations will be set and relationships built between participants and staff. There is no defined time requirement for this phase – it is for bidders to set out approaches, using their expertise and experience that are appropriate to ensure NI NCS participants, staff and volunteers are appropriately prepared.

**Phase 2: Full-time residential programme away from participants' local community, with a focus on teamwork and outdoor physical challenges (4 nights over October Half Term).**

Phase 2 will provide an opportunity for personal and social development through a series of physical challenges to push participants out of their comfort zones. Activities should take place in an outdoor environment away from participants' local community, such as a dedicated activity centre or a hostel close to open spaces. Challenging outdoor activities and daily team tasks should be designed to help each team of young people to bond and to build personal responsibility, self confidence and self awareness. Each day, participants should have the opportunity to discuss and reflect in a managed way on the day's experiences and what team members have learned about themselves, teamwork and leadership. Guided reflection is a very important component of NCS to ensure that learning is captured and utilised by young people.

**Phases 3, 4 and 5: These phases should be based in home communities, with a focus on developing new skills, serving groups in the community and the design and delivery of two social action projects on a cross-community basis (65 hours over weekends and evenings and not to exceed 6 weeks).**

Phases 3, 4 and 5 will be combined over evenings and weekends. The aim of these phases is to encourage young people to take more of an interest in their local area on a cross-community basis, and to develop their own skills. These phases should include:

Getting to know the local community;

This should involve meeting people that work in the local business community, voluntary sector or who run local services and providing help to the local community.

Developing personal and social skills;

This should involve young people taking part in team activities and developing skills like CV writing and interview skills.

Designing and delivering a social action project.

Young people should work in a group of mixed communities to design and deliver two social action projects to their two communities, using their knowledge from previous phases. These should be designed in consultation with the local communities in order to deliver tangible benefits.

## **Team Test**

The programme will end with a Team Test weekend in England from the evening of 14 December to 16 December. This weekend is designed to test participants on the skills that they have developed throughout the programme and will be delivered in England by a separate provider. The successful bidder will not be responsible for delivery of the Team Test. However, the successful bidder will be responsible for the cost and organisation of ensuring young people get to and from the departure point in Belfast at a designated time on 14 and 16 December. 10-15 representatives from the successful bidder will be asked to travel to and from the Team Test with the young people. Accommodation and food will be provided for those representatives, although they will not be required to be involved in activities.

UNCLASSIFIED

3

SPECIFICATION

There should then be a celebration and graduation event back in home communities for participants and their guests. It is anticipated that as a final challenge young people will play a full and active part in this celebration.

Throughout these phases, the young people will be encouraged to think about how they come across as they deal with people of different ages in the community, and they will be helped to present themselves more effectively. Each team will meet at the end of every session to discuss what they have learned from their experiences, reflect, and evaluate their performance as a team.

## **6. After the autumn programme**

It is very important that young people's participation in community action and volunteering does not end with their NI NCS autumn programme. Young people's contribution and ongoing commitment to their local communities is at the heart of NCS. Social action projects should leave a positive legacy in their communities. The NI NCS experience should lead to longer-term engagement in social action in local communities.

The successful bidder has a crucial role to play in connecting young people with ongoing opportunities to participate. Central Government is also putting mechanisms in place to help connect NCS graduates to further opportunities, and to broker special offers and opportunities for those who have completed NCS. NCS graduates will have an important part to play in the delivery of NCS in future years.

We are particularly interested to receive proposals from organisations able to deliver the five key phases above and subsequently connect NI NCS delivery with existing opportunities for ongoing support, mentoring and community involvement for young people. There will also be separate funding available to run specific graduate activities in order to keep young people involved in social action.

The NI NCS successful bidder should be willing to share data, contribute to shared graduate platforms and actively engage with national initiatives to support and develop the NCS graduate network.

## **7. Participants**

The pilot is open to all young people around the age of 15-16 (who would typically have just started year 11). Participants should have reached their 16th birthday by 31st August 2013, so most participants will be 15 when they begin NI NCS activities. In exceptional circumstances, the programme will be open to young people aged 17-18 years. For young people with learning difficulties and disabilities we would expect those up to the age of 25 could participate.

NI NCS is intended as a universal scheme and bidders **should not** propose pilots which would **exclusively** involve a group of young people from one particular background/with one particular support need.

In establishing the social mix we expect that as a guide providers comply with the following standards:

90% of teams comply with the following minimum standards:

- ☐ No more than 50% of a team from any one school;
- ☐ No more than 20% of a team from independent schools;
- ☐ No less than 35% of either gender in a cohort

We are interested to receive proposals which include a specific focus on trialling ways of supporting young people with a special needs to participate in mixed NI NCS groups. We strongly encourage all proposals to show how mixed groups could be put together on a cross-community basis.

## **8. Staffing**

Staff delivering NI NCS should have the knowledge, skills and competence to provide a high quality experience for participants and have the confidence and experience to help young people build social, emotional and behavioural skills over the programme. We expect that there should be a minimum ratio of 5:1 young people to staff.

The successful bidder should demonstrate a commitment to diversity in their recruitment plans, and there is a clear expectation that the workforce should also include a strong volunteer core, including volunteers from businesses and older young people.

Staff should be appropriately trained to deliver NCS, and all staff should have had experience of working with young people. It is important that some staff are experienced in supporting guided reflection (see note 1. below) for young people.

Due to the emphasis on working with socially mixed groups, it is especially important that that lead staff are experienced in planning activities for mixed ability and mixed interest groups and trained in explaining diversity and inclusion themes and resolving group conflicts.

It is essential that all staff, including volunteers working with young people, are appropriately security checked to ensure young people are sufficiently protected.

## **9. Safety of Young People**

As set out above we expect organisations to have staff with appropriate security clearance. Organisations and groups of organisations bidding should also ensure that all pilot activities take place in safe accommodation and they have appropriate insurance in place to cover all aspects of the pilot programme. Young people must be fully aware from their first contact with the NI NCS provider of expectations regarding conduct and behaviour. We expect young people to agree codes of behaviour with the pilot provider at the start of their NI NCS programme.

## **10. Involvement of Young People**

Young people should be encouraged and empowered to develop their skills and should be given a voice in shaping activities and services available to them. It is expected that the successful bidder will put in place mechanisms for ensuring the active involvement of young people in the design of the NI NCS proposal and ongoing programme design.

## **11. Funding**

NI NCS is in its first pilot year and we are looking to bidders to demonstrate innovation and to set out creative and cost effective approaches to delivering the core principles of NI NCS for the autumn 2012 pilot.

### Funding and support mix

NI NCS needs to mobilise all elements of society if it is to be a success, and communities that benefit from NI NCS should be encouraged to offer tangible support for its delivery. This includes local people of all ages and backgrounds, schools, local authorities, community and voluntary sector organisations, local and national businesses, public services, uniformed groups, faith-based groups and charities. Bidders should develop and outline innovative ways of building a broad coalition of support from across the community to help with the delivery of the NI NCS pilot. This could include the provision of:

- volunteers and mentors;
- free or discounted goods and services;
- venues and facilities;
- expertise and networks;
- endorsements; and
- additional funding.

### Young people's contributions

Young people participating in the 2012 NI NCS pilot schemes should be asked to provide a contribution to the programme costs of between £30 and £50. However, participation should not be dependent upon a young person's ability to pay a contribution. Bidders will be expected to set out how they will collect contributions or facilitate individual fundraising by participants, so that there is a value attached to the programme, at the same time as ensuring that the programme is open to all and socially mixed - for example through the use of bursaries or banded cost structures.

### Costing on a per participant basis

The Cabinet Office will provide a grant to support the delivery of the NI NCS pilot. Funding will be given to the selected pilot provider on a grant per participant basis.

We are looking for proposals that can provide value for money throughout the duration of the funding agreement. Bidders achieving value for money will be those providing suitable high quality delivery for a realistic unit cost that draws on a wide range of sources of support in addition to the central Government grant.

### Costing for additional support

It is likely that some young people may require additional support to participate in the programme, for example those with learning difficulties or disabilities - which may attract extra costs. This should not be a barrier to young people participating in the programme, and bidders should consider how they will cost this into their proposal in order to achieve and support a diverse social mix of participants. During the pilot phase, we are interested to receive proposals which include a specific focus on trialling ways of supporting young people with a particular support need to participate in mixed NI NCS pilot groups. In these cases, we would consider financial models with a slightly higher grant-funded contribution to account for additional support measures.

### Costing for staffing

We would encourage bidders to develop competitive cost models which assume a realistic profile of staffing requirements throughout the programme. Bidders should also consider creative ways to maintain a core level of staffing whilst drawing in additional personnel with particular expertise at key times, so that participants are supported by the same team leader throughout their experience but can also interact with other staff with relevant skills during each phase of the scheme.

### **Additional Funding to link the NI NCS Provider and Participants to Wider NCS Programme**

Participants taking part in the Team Test weekend will have their travel paid for to and from Belfast by a separate provider responsible for the Team Test. The successful bidder will be responsible for the cost of travel for participants to and from their home towns to Belfast. Please see page 3 for further information.

If it is necessary for the successful provider to travel to England for NCS training, these travel expenses will be reimbursed separately.

## **12. Evaluation**

NCS pilots and the NI NCS pilot outlined within this tender specification will be assessed by an external evaluation consortium. The NI NCS evaluation will:

- inform the future development of the NI NCS programme through assessment of the design and delivery of the pilot scheme;

- assess the impact of NI NCS on young people's attitudes and behaviours with regard to: social mixing; leadership; communication; community involvement and trust; confidence; and transition to adulthood;
- gather information on the views of parents of young people and the wider general public as regards NI NCS; and
- assess the value for money of the NI NCS programme.

As part of this, the successful bidder will be expected to work with the evaluators and contribute relevant management information.

### **13. Reporting**

The Cabinet Office and Department for Social Development in Northern Ireland will want to work closely with the successful bidder and learn from their experiences. We will therefore require the successful bidder to:

- provide monitoring information and contact information about participants (the correct permission should therefore be requested from the young person on sign up);
- share progress and reflections on the early development phase of the NI NCS autumn 2012 pilot;
- share information with Cabinet Office about the funding and support mix that is received in addition to the central Government grant
- work with other NCS pilot providers to share data, experiences and best practice (e.g. on training, marketing, graduate activities); and
- commit to attending and contributing to events with Cabinet Office and other NCS pilot providers to reflect on their experiences and inform future development of the NI NCS and wider NCS programme.

### **14. Marketing and Communications**

Whilst NI NCS is intended to be a universal scheme, we anticipate that the successful bidder will need to use a range of both universal and targeted recruitment methods to ensure the programme is open to as wide a cross section of local young people as possible and to achieve a broad social mix on the programme.

The NI NCS 2012 successful bidder will be required to comply with branding and marketing guidelines provided by the Cabinet Office and NI Executive when marketing their pilots.

The pilot will also need to test how young people can be kept involved and in touch with the programme after it has finished as graduates. It is expected that participants will have a role to play in raising awareness of NI NCS and seeding positive messages and content about their experience after the pilot has finished.

### **Note 1. Guided reflection and learning**

The process of "guided reflection" should be an important part of supporting participants' personal and social development during NCS.

Personal and social development is about learning from experiences and becoming more effective in our decisions and in our relationships. This can happen naturally as people reflect on their experiences or discuss their experiences with the people around them.

However, NCS is intended to be a programme which has been purposefully designed to offer participants challenging experiences and skilled staff which will help participants reflect on their decisions and their interactions with an aim of learning and improving. This can be described as guided reflection.

Bidders are welcome to propose a range of supporting methods including learning journals, video diaries etc. Proposals for formal accreditation are not invited because these pilots are focused on developing NCS as something that young people will undertake for the experience, the opportunity to contribute to their communities and the personal rewards for each individual.

**ANNEX 1A: NI NATIONAL CITIZEN SERVICE**

**AUTUMN 2012**

**Target Number of Participants: 200 - 250**

**16 NI NCS pilot projects targeting 12-16 participants in each**

**Potential Target Areas**

**Greater Belfast**

1. East Belfast – cross-community inner city: interface communities and surrounding residential areas
  2. Rathcoole / Greencastle – cross-community: large suburban housing estates
  3. Shankill / Ardoyne / Upper Ardoyne – cross-community inner city interface
  4. Lower Falls / Greater Village – cross-community inner city interface
- 
5. Londonderry / Derry – cross-community: inner city
  6. Portrush / North Coast – cross-community: rural coastal town
  7. Lurgan / Portadown – cross-community: large provincial towns
  8. Newtownards / Ards Peninsula – cross-community: large town/rural hinterland
  9. Kesh / Ederney – cross-community: rural border villages
  10. Castlederg – cross-community: small provincial town
  11. Newry – cross-community: large provincial town
  12. Ballymena – cross-community: large provincial town
  13. Omagh – cross-community: large provincial town
  14. Cookstown – cross-community: large town/rural hinterland

15. Enniskillen – cross-community: large provincial town
16. Armagh – cross-community: large town/rural hinterland