



## **Prisoners Education Trust is inviting bids to carry out a project evaluation of a 3 year communication/advocacy project as described below.**

To bid for this contract, please send an outline of how you would propose carrying out the proposed evaluation covering the following points:

1. Your interest in this particular project and its focus.
2. Brief details of previous experience of undertaking UK based project evaluations for voluntary sector projects.
3. Your experience and/or knowledge of the criminal justice sector and/or of voluntary campaigning activity.
4. An outline of your proposed methodology for evaluating this project in a way that meets the criteria set out below.
5. The timescale and use of budget you would propose.
6. Names and contact details of two referees, and, if possible, a sample executive summary from a previous completed evaluation, or other sample of report-writing.

**Please send completed bids by email to Pat Jones, Director of the Prisoners Education Trust, by 10<sup>th</sup> March 2010. Please limit your submission to maximum 5 pages.**

Send to [pat@prisonerseducation.org.uk](mailto:pat@prisonerseducation.org.uk) For enquiries, telephone 020 8648 7760

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### **Learning Matters**

#### **Evaluation Brief**

Learning Matters (LM) is a 3 year project being undertaken by the Prisoners Education Trust. The project commenced in September 2007. Over the 3 years, the intended outcomes are:

**to ensure that prisoner learning:**

- **is recognised as an integral tool in resettlement of offenders, and**
- **has a higher profile;**

**and that the case for better resourcing of offender education is acknowledged and accepted.**

The project has a small staff - a project manager and a part-time administrative assistant - but works in synergy with the Prisoners Education Trust's other activities, enabling Trust activities to serve project purposes and vice versa. The project is one of the Trust's three core programmes, and is outlined in the Trust's 3 year strategic framework and one year workplan.

The project is funded by four funders, to whom annual project reports are sent, some in July and some in October. The reports follow the Trust's strategic plan and report against indicators and outcomes set at the beginning of each project year. A summary page reporting against outcomes for year 2 is available separately.

The project is currently half way through its final year. Within the project plan and budget, there is provision for an independent evaluation to take place, which the Trust would now like to commission.

## Evaluation Model

The Trust wishes to commission an evaluation which uses approaches based on stories or case studies, as well as any appropriate measurement of particular outputs. We would like to explore how the project has evolved and extended its reach beyond the initial plans and activities. We are interested in the use of techniques such as story-telling and adaptation of appreciative inquiry to capture outcomes and any impact, both intended and unintended. Most significantly, we would like to use the evaluation to help us scope what a second three year stage of the project might aim to do, developing its work and extending its reach.

We believe that use of an evaluation model of this kind will both demonstrate the value of the project and in itself contribute towards its work, and towards planning a second stage for the project.

We recognise that evaluating a project of this kind is complex. It falls between the genres of campaigning/advocacy, and information/communication, but with particular difficulties in relation to the context which it addresses, in that prisoners, and even prison staff, are not easily contactable. It is widely recognised in the voluntary sector as a whole that 'campaigning effectiveness' is very difficult to measure, and this project is no exception. It is also a modestly resourced project with an immense brief. However, we believe that the project, the Trust and the funders would benefit from an external and independent perspective on its achievements, and on objectives analysis of what could be done next.

We are therefore looking for a consultant who will work with us in carrying out an evaluation which meets the following criteria:

1. Analyses key strands of project activity in a story based format, showing connections and identifying intended and unintended outcomes, achieved and potential outcomes and developments.
2. Includes reflective and/or evaluative comment from a range of stakeholders about the project's achievements and about what else could be done in a further stage.
3. Identifies learning achieved through the project.
4. Ensures that appropriate and useful quantitative data are drawn together and evaluated.
5. Results in a report which offers insights into issues such as the profile of offender learning, the challenges of influencing change in relation to policy in areas such as those covered by this project, possible strategies for doing so, and the extent to which impact can be identified.
6. Results in a report that identifies possible and achievable developmental strategies and outcomes that can be included in a second phase of the project.

## Practical details

### Timing

The evaluation should begin as early as possible in April and desirably be completed by the end of June/early July 2010. (The end date is somewhat negotiable).

### Budget

A budget of up to **£7,500.00 including VAT and expenses** is available. Bidders are expected to explain how they would propose using this budget, including their daily fee rate, the number of days work, estimated expenses etc.

### Facilities

The evaluator will be expected to work from home/other office, but occasional access to desk and IT facilities can be arranged at the Trust's offices in Mitcham.

### Location

As the budget for this project is limited, and the total proposed above must include expenditure on travel, we would prefer an evaluator based within reasonable reach of London.

For further information about Learning Matters, please browse the relevant areas of our website, [www.prisonerseducation.org.uk](http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk)

Pat Jones  
15<sup>th</sup> February 2010