

Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment

### **Call for tenders, 30.1.2023**

#### Description of the procurement

There are three entities in the implementation of the project:

- a study of the status of lifelong guidance based on a literature review and other research work,
- a more in-depth evaluation study on lifelong guidance; and
- a quality framework for lifelong guidance.

The tenderer undertakes to carry out all three entities. A comprehensive description of the national status of lifelong guidance should be drawn up on the basis of the first two first entities (of those mentioned above).

A steering group will be set up for the project to monitor and support the progress of the work.

The timetable for the implementation of the project is ~~1.4.2023 – 31.8.2024~~ 2.6.2023 – 30.9.2024.

### **DESCRIPTION, Status of Lifelong guidance – Evaluation Study**

Extensive information on the national overall picture / status of lifelong guidance is needed to form the evidence base of lifelong guidance for planning, implementation, development and decision-making. The objective of the evaluation study is to form a systematic picture of the Finnish Lifelong Guidance (Information, Advice and Guidance Services) as a whole and to assess its effectiveness: availability, quality, results and impact. IAG services take into account services delivered in Finnish and in Swedish.

The evaluation study consists of two parts.

- In the first phase of the study, a picture of the whole of life-long guidance will be compiled. The picture is based on previous research and study literature, insofar as this is possible and literature exists. If the picture can not be created on the basis of previous literature, the team of researchers shall supplement the picture with suitable methods, such as surveys, interviews and/or workshops. Literature may also include non-scientific publications, material obtained through the project steering group, etc. If the review is based on a sector-by-sector approach, it is also hoped to focus on the transition phases of the education and career path as well as those outside the service system.
- In the second phase of the study, more in-depth evaluation studies will be carried out. Relevant subjects of research in the context of lifelong guidance will be selected on the basis of first phase. In the research plan, the tenderer must draft the categories of the evaluation study. More in-depth evaluation studies complement and deepen the picture of the status of guidance that was created in the first phase of the study. More in-depth evaluation studies should focus at least on the education sector, employment services and youth guidance services.

As a result of the evaluation study, one or more research reports will be prepared. However, if the research team produces more than one report (for example in accordance with research packages), team shall prepare a single overall review (aggregate report) in which it describes the status of lifelong guidance as a whole. The report will be prepared on the Government's publication format. Research team will also prepare a short presentation of the results in powerpoint format. The implementer organises an event (seminar and/or webinar in a manner to be confirmed later) to publish the results. In addition, researchers/researchers must be available later for demonstration events without any separate compensation (up to the end of 2025, up to 3 working days). In its research and interaction plan, the tenderer shall present the means of interaction and communication that they implement for communicating about the project at the start of the project, during the implementation, at the end of the project and for disseminating the results. The implementer will draw up a concise interim report on the progress in the end of 2023. Preliminary results must be available to the Ministry already in May 2024.

The previous extensive national assessment of the status of lifelong guidance was carried out in 2002. At the time, the focus was on guidance in the education sector. Some of the studies were limited to student guidance activities at the educational institution, excluding transitions to studies and to further studies and working life. The aim now is to expand the scope of the evaluation study so that more in-depth research covers schools, educational institutions, employment services and youth guidance services, also taking into account transitions. The "information, advice, guidance" aspects of lifelong guidance services should be emphasised in such a way that a more in-depth assessment study to be carried out focuses on guidance and counselling services in particular.

- The overall assessment study shall at least answer the following questions:
- Who uses the services?
- What are the needs of different user groups?
- How do services meet need and demand, quantitatively and qualitatively?
- Which bodies provide guidance?
- What kind of competence do service providers' guidance specialists have? What kind of expertise is the work carried out and how is competence developed?
- How are the services planned and organised?
- How are the services coordinated and managed?
- How are the services funded?
- How satisfied are users with the services?
- What are the laws, regulations, strategies and guidelines on IAG services for lifelong guidance? How are they fulfilled in every day life of services?
- How will the availability and accessibility of services be realised?
- What is the quality of services? How has quality been defined in previous research and studies and how is it defined in this study?
- How have previous studies and evaluations of steering services been able to examine the results and impact of guidance services? What kind of information has been used? Have there been any limitations to the assessment and, if so, what kind?
- What challenges are identified in the functioning of the national lifelong guidance system (availability, quality, results and effectiveness)? How can we respond to these challenges?

- How should the development and funding of lifelong guidance be managed in the future on the basis of the evaluation research?
- What criteria, monitoring targets and indicators could be used to assess the availability, quality, results and effectiveness of lifelong guidance?

### **Research and interaction plan**

The tenderer shall include in the tender a research and interaction plan for the evaluation of the status of lifelong guidance. Plan shall be left in the Tender Service portal as a downloadable pdf file with a maximum length of 12 pages, including a bibliography.

The plan shall take into account all the requirements and objectives set out in the call for tenders, including the procurement criteria described in Annex 2, on the basis of which the plan will be assessed.

The plan shall address at least the following issues:

1. What kind of plan best meets the objectives of the evaluation study. How is the project / research divided into work packages and the scope (preliminary) of each work package and the (preliminary) cost estimate. One of the work packages is the preparation of a quality framework for guidance. It should be taken into account and named, but it should be described in another annex (implementation plan for the quality framework).
2. Which methods will be used to implement the evaluation study.
3. What is the timetable for the implementation of the project.
4. How does tenderer understand, take into account and emphasise the different dimensions of lifelong guidance services: information, advice and guidance.
5. How to take into account the three levels of service structures for lifelong guidance: 1) public decision-making on guidance, 2) guidance service arrangements, i.e. organizational level planning and implementation of services, and 3) services visible to the customer (see Annex 6, Vuorinen R.).
6. How does tenderer take into account the strategic objectives of lifelong guidance.
7. How international aspects and cooperation will be reflected in the implementation of the evaluation study.
8. How the lifelong guidance criteria identified in the pre-work of the quality framework will be utilised in the evaluation study (see Annex 6, Vuorinen R).
9. How research results are reported and communicated. How to communicate about the project at the start, during the implementation and in the end of the project.
10. If the tenderer is a group or the tenderer uses subcontracting, the plan shall describe how the project implementation shall be divided between the different parties.

More in-depth evaluation studies must focus at least on the education sector, employment services and youth guidance services. The plan should outline the more in-depth evaluation studies to be carried out in the project / research (draft).

The plan must at least answer the following questions:

1. How to research and evaluate
  - a. schools and educational institutions?
  - b. employment services?
  - c youth guidance services?
2. How will the research take into account the operating models and principles of educational institutions': "everyone giving guidance / the whole school giving guidance"?
3. How will guidance in different sectors be limited? What services, job descriptions or tasks?

### **DESCRIPTION, quality framework for lifelong guidance**

The quality framework refers to a structure of themes for which it would be appropriate to compile data for the purpose of assessing the quality of lifelong guidance. At the moment, Finland lacks such a jointly agreed framework. The challenge for the development of a quality system for evidence base management of lifelong guidance seems to be that a great deal of information is collected on themes that are directly or indirectly linked to the guidance. The information is dispersed between different administrative sectors and service providers. In accordance with the Lifelong Guidance Strategy, the aim is to establish common objectives and assessment tools for lifelong guidance across sectoral boundaries in Finland. Information is collected on the availability, quality and effectiveness and results of guidance services in different sectors.

In view of the systematic and continuous evidence based management, it is necessary to identify and, in part, develop new guidance assessment tools suitable for continuous monitoring. The objective should be to provide a comprehensive and reliable structure for monitoring data on the overall resources of lifelong guidance, their use and allocation, and how well the results meet the expectations of different parties. The information collected in this way provides a basis for systematic assessment and development of high quality services. It will also be easier to comment on the direction in which it is appropriate to develop service formats and at the same time to ensure sufficiently uniform availability and quality of guidance services in different regions and municipalities.

After the project, the implementation of the quality framework will continue, both by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment and the Ministry of Education and Culture and by other ministries and bodies involved in lifelong guidance.

The aim of the procurement is to develop a quality framework for national use for the evidence based management of lifelong guidance system. The quality framework identifies the tools for the assessment of guidance suitable for continuous monitoring. The best suitable quality criteria and indicators are selected in the quality framework. The implementer shall present a proposal on suitable indicators and data sources needed to monitor the quality of lifelong guidance. Ministry recognises that ongoing national development projects and changes will shape information systems and platforms, making it challenging to define precise sources of information. The quality framework takes into account the location of guidance services under several ministries and sectors and aims to create a framework that brings different guidance services into one big picture. The quality framework is suitable for overall assessment and development.

The result is a report describing the ideal quality framework for lifelong guidance. The final report will also provide the Ministry with other relevant information, for example on the support of the modification, further development and implementation of the quality framework. The report will be prepared on the Government's publication format. The implementer will also draw up a powerpoint presentation of results. In addition, the implementer shall draw up visual material from the quality framework in a manner to be agreed separately. The tenderer may indicate in the plan what other material they offer in connection with the reporting of the quality framework. The reporting of the quality framework must be done in Finnish, Swedish and English. Preliminary results must be available to the Ministry already in May 2024.

### **Quality framework project plan**

The tenderer shall include in the tender the project plan of the quality framework for lifelong guidance. The plan will be left in the Tender Service portal as a downloadable PDF file with a maximum length of 4 pages, including a bibliography.

The plan shall take into account all requirements and objectives set out in the call for tenders for the quality framework, including the procurement criteria described in Annex 2, on the basis of which the plan is assessed. The plan must highlight the following issues:

1. How the quality framework will be built on the basis of the preliminary work carried out earlier (see Annex 6, Vuorinen R).
2. What methods are used to identify the most suitable quality criteria, monitoring targets and indicators.
3. How the quality framework takes into account and emphasises the different dimensions of lifelong guidance services: information, advice and guidance.
4. How tenderer takes into account the three levels of service structures for lifelong guidance: 1) public decision-making, 2) guidance service arrangements, i.e. organizational level planning and implementation of services, and 3) services visible to the customer (see Annex 6, Vuorinen R.).
5. How tenderer takes into account the strategic objectives of lifelong guidance.
6. How international cooperation will be reflected in the preparation of the quality framework.
7. How the evaluation research will be utilised in the construction of the quality framework.
8. How research results are reported and communicated. How to communicate the project at the start, during the implementation and in the end of the project. How to report and present the quality framework visually.

### **Expertise of the implementer**

The tenderer must describe the competence of the personnel involved in the project. Competence is part of quality assessment and scoring. The criteria and scoring are given in Annex 2. In addition, the call for tenders sets out minimum requirements for both the implementing organisation and the competence of its staff.

One responsible person will be appointed for the project. The responsible person must participate in the practical implementation of the work.

In other respects, the tenderer describes the resourcing, skills and suitability of the personnel in accordance with the work packages tenderer has outlined. One corresponding researcher will be appointed for each work package, who will be responsible for the implementation of the work package and participate in the practical implementation of the work. Other researchers may also be appointed to work packages. If all the researchers involved in the implementation of the work packages are not named in the contract, the minimum requirement is that the tenderer presents names of 5 person, their CVs and their suitability (incl. the person responsible for the project). The tenderer must also present a proposal on the quantitative and qualitative human resources to be used to implement each work package and project as a whole. In the comparison of expertise, the suitability of the entire designated team will be assessed.

The competence of the personnel is assessed on the basis of the CV data and the free-form description "Personnel competence and suitability". In a free description, the tenderer justifies the competence and suitability of the designated personnel involved in the implementation of the project (research team), describing their suitability for this particular project. The free-form description should indicate who has been designated as responsible for which work packages and the contribution of each appointed researcher to the implementation of the work package. The maximum length of the description is 4 pages.

In the description of the expertise, the tenderer may also make use of any subcontracting and sub-contractor information.