EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

PROJECT TITLE: STUDY TO INVESTIGATE THE BARRIERS TO LEARNING FROM SERIOUS CASE REVIEWS AND IDENTIFY WAYS OF OVERCOMING THESE BARRIERS

PROJECT REFERENCE NUMBER: 2012094

DEADLINE FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST: Noon, Friday 1st February 2013

Expressions of interest are sought for a study to investigate the barriers to learning from serious case reviews and identify ways of overcoming these barriers.

This expression of interest was posted on Wednesday 16th January 2013

BACKGROUND

The Coalition Government is committed to publication of the reports of Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) in order to share learning from serious incidents and to achieve greater transparency and accountability. SCRs are an important source of lessons for organisations and professionals so that they can improve their practice and reduce the likelihood of children suffering serious harm or death as a result of abuse or neglect. SCRs provide valuable insights into the ways in which the services set up to protect children can sometimes fail. It is important that such insights are shared more widely as possible so that these failures can be minimised in the future.

Government has invested in commissioning national analyses of the themes and trends emerging from SCRs through a biennial research programme. The final report was published in June 2012 and can be found here: 
https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-RR226

Whilst this research has provided a valuable body of knowledge about the characteristics of cases and the prevalence of particular themes, evidence suggests that it has not been a catalyst for systematic improvements in the practice of professionals working in child protection. There are recurring issues in SCRs, such as failure of information sharing and poor supervision. There is a high likelihood that these problems will continue to recur – and will feature in future SCRs – unless an effective way can be found to promote learning from serious cases at a national and a local level.

RESEARCH AIMS

In order to develop policy on national learning from SCRs, we need to know more about why learning is currently not being embedded. The Department would like to invite expressions of interest from organisations for a piece of research focusing on:
• Identifying the barriers and key challenges to learning from SCRs and other serious child protection incidents

• Examining and testing ways of remedying those barriers and investigating efficient ways to share information, lessons learned and best practice.

METHODLOGY

This will be a relatively small scale study in two stages. The bid should encompass both stages.

Stage one will be a study into the barriers and challenges to learning from serious child protection incidents, considering the perspectives of frontline practitioners, managers and leaders of organisations which safeguard the welfare of children such as Local Safeguarding Children Boards, local authorities, health, education and police. We envisage it will involve focus group discussions with representatives from a mix of organisations and at different levels to identify and develop key themes. We would however, be open to other suggestions about how best to conduct stage one. Stage one will result in an interim report to the Department seeking agreement to proceed to stage two.

Stage two will use the findings from stage one to begin developing and testing possible solutions to the barriers to learning which have been identified. We are looking for contractors to make proposals for the methodology for stage two as it will be dependent on the outcome of the first stage, however, we suggest that you may want to test the solutions with the focus groups from stage one.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Expressions of interest will be assessed against the following criteria:

• Capacity to develop an appropriate methodology and conduct the fieldwork, analysis and reporting necessary. (20%)
• Experience of the methodologies to be used. (20%)
• Knowledge and experience of Safeguarding and Child Protection, in particular Serious Case Reviews. (40%)
• Research project management skills and experience. (20%)

Provisional Timescales

• Closing date for expressions of interest: noon 1st February 2013
• Invitation to Tender issued: w/c 18th February 2013
• Closing date for tenders: w/c 11th March 2013
• The contract will be awarded end of March/beginning of April 2013

Requirements

We are looking for an organisation/researcher with:
1. Knowledge of SCRs, Safeguarding and Child Protection.
2. Experience of conducting research with local authorities at all levels, in particular children's services and partner agencies including health, education and police.
3. Expertise in qualitative research and analysis.
4. Awareness of the current evidence base on SCRs, Safeguarding and Child
Protection.
5. The ability to deliver high quality outputs.

We would welcome expressions of interest from contractors, outlining their suitability for the research, in no more than 750 words by noon Friday 1st February 2013.

QUERIES

If you have any queries, please contact the RBU enquiry box on Enquiries.RBU@education.gsi.gov.uk.

HOW TO SUBMIT AN EOI

You must submit an expression of interest (EOI) in order to be considered to be invited to tender. To do so, please complete the Expression of Interest Research template found on the Department's Research website. A submission of an EOI does not guarantee an invitation to tender and the Department does not routinely advise organisations that they have not been successful in being invited to tender. Feedback is however available on request.

In order to express an interest you must be registered with us and you will need your ID number. If you need to register then please do so using the online Supplier Registration Form. If you have already registered and have forgotten your ID number, please send an email to Enquiries.RBU@education.gsi.gov.uk.

All contracts are let on the basis of the Department's Terms and Conditions and you are encouraged to check these before submitting your expression of interest.

Please email a Word copy of the template to Enquiries.RBU@education.gsi.gov.uk by Noon, Friday 1st February 2013. EOIs received after this deadline will not be considered. You must include your supplier ID number in your EOI. Please put “2012094 – STUDY TO INVESTIGATE THE BARRIERS TO LEARNING FROM SERIOUS CASE REVIEWS AND IDENTIFY WAYS OF OVERCOMING THESE BARRIERS” in the subject line of your email.