



INVITATION TO TENDER

Women's Economic Lives: Bridging Borders, Sharing Realities

Aim

The aim of this research project is to respond to a gap in shared understanding of data on the economic realities facing women North and South. Through a partnership between the National Women's Council Education & Training and the Belfast Women's Assembly, we want to generate new comparative research on women's economic lives, with a focus on intersectional groups such as migrant women, lone parents, disabled women, ethnic minorities, and those facing economic disadvantage.

A central aim of the research is to inform and strengthen existing North-South conversations and dialogue spaces, and to ensure engagement is grounded in the diverse, lived experience of women across the island. Constitutional conversations are gaining momentum across the island of Ireland. Yet structural and systemic barriers continue to exclude many women from meaningful participation.

Combining desk-based analysis with participatory workshops in both Northern Ireland and the Republic, the project will surface lived experience, identify structural challenges, and explore the civic and policy context in areas such as work, education, housing, and healthcare.

Project Overview

The National Women's Council Education and Training (NWCET), in partnership with the Belfast Women's Assembly (BWA), is undertaking a cross-border research project examining women's economic lives across the island of Ireland. This Shared Island-funded initiative combines desk-based research with participatory workshops to generate comparative data and policy recommendations that centre the voices of women from marginalised and underrepresented communities.

Methodology

This research will follow a mixed-method approach, including:

- A desk-based review of current research and data on women's economic position across the island.
- Four Cross-border workshops, two in the North and two in the South
- Report with recommendations
- The final report will be launched in two civic forums, one in Belfast and one in Dublin
- A policy recommendation briefing paper will be produced for policy makers and decision makers in both jurisdictions.

Profile of Researcher

Experienced qualitative researcher with a strong commitment to feminist methodologies, participatory research, and cross-border collaboration.

The Researcher will be Responsible for:

- Conduct a comprehensive literature review on women's economic status in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, including employment patterns, wage gaps, care responsibilities, social protection, and structural barriers
- Analyse comparative data across both jurisdictions to identify shared challenges and distinct realities
- Integrate findings from participatory workshops into the research analysis
- Produce a high-quality, evidence-based research report suitable for both academic and civic audiences
- Present the findings at a report launch event when the research has concluded
- Co-design and coordinate four participatory workshops (two in Dublin, two in Belfast) focusing on women from marginalised and intersectional backgrounds
- Liaise with community organisations and networks to ensure inclusive and accessible participation
- Support workshop facilitation using trauma-informed, feminist methodologies
- Transcribe and analyse workshop discussions, ensuring participant voices are centred in the final report
- Work closely with the Project Advisory Group through regular meetings and updates
- Attend and contribute to planning meetings with project leads from NWCET and BWA (approximately 4 half-day sessions)
- Support the preparation and delivery of two public seminars (one in Dublin, one in Belfast) to launch and disseminate findings
- Collaborate on the production of social media assets and communications materials to promote the research

Output

- An accessible report which is written in clear and succinct language for a lay audience, complete with an executive summary. The editing and proofing work is the responsibility of the researcher, and the final report must be print ready.
- A policy recommendation briefing paper for policy makers and decision makers in both jurisdictions.

Management

The project will be managed by NWCET and BWA who will establish a Project Advisory Group to support this research and provide input at different stages. The researcher will participate in monthly review meetings with NWCET & BWA and present updates to the project advisory group.

Budget and Time Frame

The budget for this research is €24,000 inclusive of VAT and all other expenses. This research will be concluded and published by the end of August.

TENDERING PROCESS

Tender requirements

To apply, a Tender Proposal should be emailed to Anne Gibney anneg@nwci.ie and marked “Tender for Women’s Economic Lives” **by Friday 27th February 2026 at 5pm**. All information provided in response to this request will be treated in strict confidence.

Tender proposals should include the following:

- A demonstrated understanding of the research aims and the researcher’s responsibilities for this project
- A demonstrated track record in qualitative research; experience on a similar research project will be an advantage
- An outline of skills, qualifications and experience in this area
- A work plan with provisional timeline identifying the approaches and methodologies to be used in carrying out this research
- A demonstrated proficiency in delivering results, including with respect to communicating with project stakeholders and ensuring research meets expected deadlines and milestones
- An outline of the costs:
 - Set out any issues which may impact on the cost

- All costs must be inclusive of VAT and expenses
- Demonstrate value for money
- Breakdown of costs showing the number of days required to complete the task, the number of days each person, if there is more than one person involved, will be employed on the task, and the cost per day
- The fee quoted should include travel and subsistence costs
- A list of recent clients who may be contacted for references in relation to this tender
- Confirmation of ability to meet the timeframe of the project

Timeframe

- Tender to be submitted to Anne Gibney anneg@nwci.ie and marked “Tender for Women’s Economic Lives” by **5pm 27th February 2026**.
- Confirmation of proposal acceptance by 13th March. Please note, potential researchers will be interviewed and may be requested to prepare a presentation.
- March – May 2026
 - Desk-based research
 - Meetings with NWCiET & BWA and Project Advisory Group
 - Set up workshops in Dublin and Belfast
 - First draft is due at the end of April. This will be reviewed by Project Advisory Group, NWCiET and BWA
- July – August
 - Report should be finalised by the end of August
- September
 - Presentation at report launch organised by NWCiET and BWA

Project Budget

The total budget for the Project is **€24,000 inclusive** of VAT and all expenses.

Conditions of Tender

- a) NWCiET and BWA reserves the right not to award a contract if no proposal is deemed to be suitable.
- b) NWCiET and BWA require that researchers treat all information provided pursuant to this Invitation to tender in strict confidence.

- c) Information supplied by tenderers will be treated as contractually binding. However, NWCIET reserves the right to seek clarification on any such information.
- d) All material gathered and all outputs arising out of the proposed contract will remain the sole property of NWCIET and BWA. Tenderers must agree to this condition in their proposals. All information and knowledge acquired during the research will be treated as confidential and should not be divulged to any unauthorised person or used for any purpose whatsoever without the prior approval of NWCI and BWA. NWCIET and BWA will ensure that the final report gives due credit to the consultants for research, textual and editorial work undertaken in its preparation. Any subsequent use of the material shall also give due credit.
- e) Contractors must retain records of tax reference numbers for any subcontractors, whose payments exceed €5,000 including VAT.
- f) Tenders that are delivered late will not be considered.
- g) Any conflicts of interest involving a contractor (or contractors in the event of a group or consortium bid) must be fully disclosed to NWCIET and BWA, particularly where there is a conflict of interest in relation to any recommendations or proposals put forward by the tenderer.
- h) NWCIET and BWA will not be liable for any costs incurred in the preparation of the tender.
- i) Payment for all services covered by this Invitation to tender will be on foot of appropriate invoices. Invoicing arrangements will be agreed with the successful supplier(s), subject to the terms of the Prompt Payment of Accounts Act (27 of 1997).
- j) Payment of all services covered by this invitation to tender will be based on the agreed contract price, completion of agreed stages of the work plan and upon the submission of the appropriate invoices.
- k) NWCIET and BWA will retain the right to publish as deemed appropriate.
- l) NWCIET and BWA will own the completed research and will retain copyright.

Evaluation of Tenders

Tenders will be evaluated initially with reference to the following qualification criteria:

- Complete and comprehensive tender documentation
- Stated ability of tenderer to meet the requirements of the Invitation to Tender

Only those tenders, who meet both qualifying criteria, will be eligible for inclusion in the award process.

The contract will be awarded from the qualifying tenders based on the most economically advantageous tender applying the following award criteria, not necessarily in this order:

- Understanding of the project
- Cost effectiveness
- Relevant experience of the designated personnel
- Timeframe for completion

Tenderers are advised that they may be required to make a formal presentation of their proposal.