

## **SPECIFICATION / TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **Introduction**

The Community Relations Council (CRC) was formed in January 1990 as a limited company and a charity registered with HMRC. Since 2012 it has also been a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) of The Executive Office. It originated in 1986 as a proposal of a research report commissioned by the NI Standing Advisory Committee on Human Rights. The CRC was set up to promote better community relations between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland and, equally, to promote recognition of cultural diversity.

The most recent published Annual Report and Accounts can be downloaded from CRC's website: <https://www.community-relations.org.uk/>

CRC's strategic aim is to promote a peaceful and fair society based on reconciliation and mutual trust while delivering a trusted and effective public service and good governance.

### **Background to the Requirement:**

The CRC wishes to contract for an internal audit service to be delivered during the 2024/25 and 2025/26 financial years, with the possibility of an extension, to replace the current internal audit contract that ended on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. The internal audit service is to be delivered in line with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

### **Scope of the Contract**

Delivery of a two year internal audit service in accordance with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and agree an internal audit strategy for the two year contract with the Accounting Officer, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and The Executive Office.

To complete internal audit reviews of CRC's internal control environment and to report those to the Accounting Officer and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

To present and agree an annual internal audit plan for 15 days with the Accounting Officer, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and The Executive Office.

To deliver that plan to the satisfaction of the Accounting Officer, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and The Executive Office.

To ensure that the contract is sufficiently flexible to allow the annual internal audit plan to vary between 12 days to 18 days as agreed with the Accounting Officer, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and The Executive Office.

To attend each Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting and present as appropriate.

To act as a fraud reporting avenue in line with CRC's fraud policy.

### **Project requirements**

The CRC requires a service provider for its internal audit function. Internal audit will be required to review, appraise and report to the Accounting Officer and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee:

- a) The extent of compliance with the CRC policies, plans, systems, and procedures and the effects thereof and if they represent value for money;
- b) The adequacy and application of internal controls, including advice and recommendations for improvement and continued compliance;

- c) Whether the activities of CRC are being managed within laws and regulations and with a full regard to probity in the conduct of business;
- d) Evaluate the adequacy of corporate governance and risk management arrangements with CRC, including compliance with the organisation's risk register; ensuring that the annual audit plan is mapped to the risk register;
- e) Meet with the Northern Ireland Audit Office, and other stakeholders, as required;
- f) Attend each Audit and Risk Assurance Committee;
- g) Act as a fraud reporting avenue in line with CRC's fraud policy.

### **Timescales and Deliverables**

The internal auditor must prepare and submit an audit strategy and internal audit plan for 2024/25 to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee by the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025.

The internal audit plan, including the Annual Assurance Statement, must be delivered within two months of the financial year to which it relates. The internal auditor will present a progress report on delivery of the internal audit plan during each meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

The internal audit plan is expected to be 15 days but may be increased or decreased by three days per annum at the discretion of the Accounting Officer, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and The Executive Office.

### **Conflicts of Interests**

Potential suppliers must confirm in their proposal that there would be no conflict or perceived conflict of interest in relation to their servicing this contract.

## **Contract Management and Payment Arrangements**

On award of the contract, the successful service provider must meet the CRC's representatives immediately to discuss commencement of the contract. The contract will be monitored by the Director of Finance, Admin and Personnel whom the successful service provider must liaise with during the period of the contract. In the absence of a DFAP Director, the contract will be monitored by the CEO.

## **Contract Period**

The contract is for two year, with the possibility of a one year extension.

## **Invoicing and Payment**

In line with the Northern Ireland Executive's commitment to pay suppliers as quickly as possible, payment will ideally be made in respect of a validated invoice within 10 working days but certainly within 30 days.

Payments will be made following delivery of milestones aligned to the internal audit plan. These are to be agreed at the contract initiation.

## **Confidentiality**

All data, information, audit plans and reports will be recorded as confidential to CRC and the service provider.

## **Award of Contract**

The contract will be awarded to a single Contractor.

Payment will be made on receipt of an invoice detailing the services provided by the Contractor that is accepted by CRC. Invoices should be emailed to: Ian Thompson using the email address [ithompson@nicrc.org.uk](mailto:ithompson@nicrc.org.uk).

Payment will be in £ sterling.

**Budget**

The budgeted daily rate is £650 including VAT. However, CRC are seeking to achieve financial efficiency in delivery of this contract and the evaluation criteria has been weighed to reflect this.

**5. PRICE SCHEDULE**

<u>Breakdown of Costs</u>	<u>£</u>
<b>Total Cost of providing the service (including VAT)</b>	