Citizens’ Assembly

Request for tenders

Date

Contacts

First and last name, organisation, email address

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Introduction

This is a request for tenders for an operator to deliver a Citizens’ Assembly. The required services are outlined below - overall they consist of running a selection by lottery and delivering a Citizens’ Assembly.

A Citizens’ Assembly is a process in which a broadly representative group of people weighs evidence, deliberates to find common ground, and develops detailed recommendations on policy issues for a public authority, institution, or organisation.

A defining feature of Citizens’ Assemblies is that Members are selected by lottery to be broadly representative of a community, which means everyone has an equal chance to represent and be represented in turn.

Interested operators are invited to provide a bid for the value they can provide for the indicated budget, taking into account the broad requirements outlined in this document.

Instructions for tenders

Add instructions based on the legally required procurement procedure (where and how to apply, until when, how the winner will be selected, what are the legal criteria for an operator to be eligible to apply).

Context

Add information about who is organising a Citizens’ Assembly, when, what is the mandate, remit, and question of the Assembly.

About key partners

Add information about all partner organisations and institutions involved and their roles in organising the Citizens’ Assembly.

The role of the operator

The operator should provide a comprehensive range of services that allows them to execute all facets of the Citizens’ Assembly, outlined below. They should operate at arm’s length and work at all times to ensure the impartiality, credibility, and professionalism of the process.

The operator will work with the commissioning authority to deliver a high quality Citizens’ Assembly that meets the [OECD Good Practice Principles for Representative Deliberative Processes](https://www.oecd.org/gov/open-government/good-practice-principles-for-deliberative-processes-for-public-decision-making.pdf).

Operator overall responsibilities

*To participate in finalising the design of the Citizens’ Assembly*

The number of sessions, the design of the curriculum, and the deliberative process should all be tailored to fit the specifics of the project. The operator will provide input on each of these elements as well as determining how to sequence the Assembly's meetings, ensuring that presentations and deliberative activities occur in an effective sequence.

*To ensure impartiality*

Every design choice should work to maximise the legitimacy and demonstrate the impartiality of the process. The operator will safeguard the integrity of the process and ensure that the Assembly’s final recommendations are credible and defensible. It’s essential that the operator avoid any conflicts of interest and be perceived as a neutral and independent party.

*To develop terms of reference*

The operator will work with the commissioning authority and the advisor to draft the project’s terms of reference, which will define the objective and mandate of the Citizens’ Assembly along with the roles and responsibilities of Members and the commissioning organisation. The terms of reference should also include the Assembly’s meeting schedule, information on how reporting and communications will proceed, a description of the Assembly’s composition, and the process used to select Members.

*Running Member selection by lottery*

The operator will work to recruit Members of the Citizens’ Assembly that broadly match the demographic profile of the community. They will help set the geographic boundaries and selection criteria needed to create a representative Assembly, draft the invitation letter, send the invitations, process replies from candidates, set up a phone line to answer any questions, and select the Members of the Assembly.

*To develop curriculum and information kit*

A compelling and relevant curriculum is one of the most important aspects of a Citizens’ Assembly. The operator should understand adult education pedagogies and be able to develop a detailed curriculum that includes specific learning goals based on three forms of knowledge that are relevant to the process:

1. *Subject knowledge*: Understanding the issues and context
2. *Process knowledge*: Understanding the steps that lead to
consensus
3. *Values knowledge*: Understanding the shared values of Assembly Members and the values underlying different policy options

*To facilitate the Citizens’ Assembly*

The operator will be responsible for moderating the Assembly and leading the facilitation team. These twin responsibilities are at the heart of the Assembly. The moderator leads the process and provides clarity, creates momentum, and ensures that all Members feel confident in the process and its outcome. Facilitators are specifically trained to work with small groups to accelerate knowledge acquisition, animate discussions, and ensure that every Member has a more or less equal chance to be heard.

*To provide participant support services*

It is essential that Members of the Assembly are able to reach a Member of the process team at any time for the duration of the process. The operator should establish a small team that is available by phone and email to answer questions and address concerns, conduct small research tasks, and assist Members with travel, special needs, or other requests.

*Draft reports and public communications*

Most people will never meet the Members of the Citizens’ Assembly, or see their deliberations first-hand. This is why the quality of the communications surrounding the process, and the Assembly’s final report, are very important. The operator should be responsible for assisting the Members in drafting their recommendations, and managing an extensive editing process. They will also draft a summary of the Assembly process and ensure that the final report is professional and compelling.

In addition, the operator will need to develop a project website or webpage, provide meeting summaries, post materials, and coordinate photography and videography.

Characteristics of the Citizens’ Assembly

Below is an example of what characteristics are useful to include.

**Size:** 30-35 people selected by lottery, broadly representative of the population.

**Length:** 4-5 days of learning and deliberation, with skilled facilitators.

*Commitment by commissioner:*

* The invitation to the Assembly will be signed by the person with the most authority to issue the invitation to signal it is a serious process;
* It will indicate that there is a commitment to respond to every recommendation that comes from the Citizens’ Assembly, with explanations provided for any recommendations it is not possible to accept.

*Details about the Assembly process:*

* The Citizens’ Assembly Members will receive an information kit ahead of their first meeting, which includes relevant information about the issue Citizens’ Assembly will tackle, as well as contributions by stakeholders and experts;
* The Citizens’ Assembly will first define the values that will guide their deliberations;
* They will hear from relevant stakeholders and experts during their first sessions;
* They will have time to develop proposals for the commissioning authority that are written in their own words.

Estimated budget

Add the maximum total contract value here. For further details please refer to the Assembly budget template of the Assembling an Assembly Guide.

The tender budget should include:

* The lottery process to select Members of the Citizens’ Assembly (time to prepare and finalise the invitations, including printing, postage).
* Costs to organise and deliver the Citizens’ Assembly (project management, planning and delivering detailed agenda per day of deliberation, selection of experts, invitations, and briefings).
* Facilitation costs.
* Producing Citizens’ Report.
* Communications materials (website of the Citizens’ Assembly, photography and filming during the process) and public relations to ensure media coverage and dissemination and high quality coverage.
* Assembly Member honorarium remuneration and travel/childcare costs.
* Assembly speaker honorarium remuneration and travel costs.

Timeline

Include an estimated timeline of the Citizens’ Assembly. Please refer to the Assembly timeline template of the Assembling an Assembly Guide for further details.

Sources:

Template prepared by DemocracyNext on the basis MASS LBP (2019), How to commission a Citizens’ Assembly or Reference Panel, <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/6005ceb747a6a51d636af58d/t/6010cfb3b2c8623eb1c6d885/1611714483520/referencepanelguide.pdf>.

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