**Data and Digital Solutions Fund Application Form**

**Project 1b (I): Creating or improving specific data sets: Children looked after through kinship care**

## **Application Stage 1 – Contact Details**

**You must complete the application stage 1 table below as part of your bid.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Project:** |  |
| **Name of LA:** |  |
| **Are you applying as an individual LA or as part of a group?** |  |
| **If you are applying on behalf of a group, please list the other LAs in your group.**  NB – as lead LA, you will be responsible for the grant funding and reporting requirements that form part of this grant offer. |  |
| **Name of Bidding Officer:** |  |
| **Role of Bidding Officer:** |  |
| **Lead Bidding Officer contact email:** |  |

## **Application Stage 2 – Declaration**

**You must complete the application table 2 below as part of your bid.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **DECLARATION\* (Please complete in block capitals)**  Signatures must be either be submitted electronically or scanned in. | |
| I confirm that the information given in this application is true and complete; that, if successful, the LA will administer any grant in accordance with the section 14 grant letter supplied by the Department for Education. | |
| **Full name:** |  |
| **Position (Job Title):** |  |
| **Project** |  |
| **Date:** |  |
| **Contact details including email address:** |  |
| **Signature:** | <please provide signature> |
| **Countersigned (by the DCS):** | <please provide signature> |

**Application Stage 3**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project 1b (I): Creating or improving specific data sets:** Children looked after through kinship care. | | | | |
| Lack of nationally accessed data on the full spectrum of kinship care arrangements made with the involvement of children’s services has long been identified as a key research gap (Hunt, 2020). More recently, the independent review of children’s social care suggested improving consistency of kinship care data and concluded that the current data landscape hindered policymaking and provided only a partial understanding of those cohorts (The independent review of children’s social care, 2022).  Whilst the department expects there is a degree of local variation in terms of data collected in relation for kinship arrangements, the department is aware of the following issues that have been identified in relation to kinship care data for children who are or have been in contact with services:   * data on children in kinship care looked after by carers who have been granted Special Guardianship or Child Arrangement Orders. Whilst the department collects data on children leaving care through granting of these orders, no data is collected by the department on children subject to these orders who have previously not been in care. Additionally, the statutory collection does not allow us to disaggregate how many of Child Arrangement Orders for children leaving care are granted to kinship carers * data on children in kinship care receiving support from children’s services, including children in private family arrangements. Research suggests that some children in kinship care may be being supported on an informal or statutory basis, including as children in need (Hunt, 2020). The existing data collections do not provide information on how many children receiving support from children’s services are in kinship care arrangements   Given significant focus on this area in recent national reviews and publications, the department is looking to increase its understanding of kinship care, including to be able to appraise recommendations from the independent review of children’s social care. | | | | |
| **Project 1b (I): Specification** | | | | |
| The department is seeking a LA partner to undertake a discovery phase research project with a group of LAs, subject matter experts and sector leaders to explore the kinship care data landscape and scope options for improving this data and its use.  Specifically, the department is looking for the successful bidder to deliver a report which includes:   1. Outputs of user research with government stakeholders, LA leaders, managers, analysts, software providers and other users of kinship care data and outlining user needs; constraints to better use of this data; gaps in existing solutions; and an overview of how kinship data is being used in decision-making, including in setting policies and designing services. 2. Mapping of the kinship data landscape. This should include an overview of the data and types of data held by a range of LAs (considering differential features which might be important such as region, size, deprivation levels and CMS supplier); the technical solutions in use for producing, accessing and storing that data; constraints and limitations of the data held locally; the quality and consistency of the data. 3. A set of prioritised options to improve kinship care data that clearly specify what data items are both useful and feasible to collect, which address user needs both locally and nationally. 4. A high-level theory of change, benefits case and alpha plan for the prioritised options. Solutions should be replicable and take consideration of specific needs relating to CMS providers.   The LA partner leading this project will be required to join a regular department convened **data project forum** **for all 1a, 1b and 2a projects** to ensure join up and read across, prevent duplication across 1a, 1b and 2a projects and share any common barriers / issues and means of overcoming them. | | | | |
| **Project 1b (I): Selection Criteria** (all questions must be answered ‘yes’ in order to be considered. | | | | |
|  | | | | Yes/No |
| 1 | Is your LA rated as good or outstanding overall across all sub-judgements by Ofsted? | | |  |
| 2 | Do you agree to the conditions of funding as set out on page 7 of the Prospectus? | | |  |
| 3 | Do you understand and agree that the department will own all of the Intellectual Property Rights on all tools/models/systems developed by your LA with its funding or by your contractor on your behalf? | | |  |
| 4 | Are you able to confirm the total cost/capital expenditure of your project? | | |  |
| **Project 1b: Technical questions** (responses to these questions will be assessed using the assessment framework in Annex C). | | | **Weightings** | |
| **Capability** | | | | |
| How will you achieve the outputs set out in A-D above, including how you will use your assessment of your own kinship care data maturity.  (1500 words) | | 20% | | |
| [insert response here] | | | | |
| Please provide a detailed delivery plan and support attachments, including:   * clear milestones and deliverables * sequencing and timing of activities, and how you will deliver the outputs in the specification above by 15/09/2023 * a high-level risk register, including reference to the challenges in this area of data collection. Please include probability and impact scores and mitigations and contingencies * evidence of how you will start work as soon as possible, and begin claiming funding in FY22-23 * details of the governance and management processes that will oversee delivery of the project * details of other LAs you will work with -how many and at what level of involvement   (3000 words) | | 15% | | |
| [insert response here] | | | | |
| Please provide evidence that you have relationships, or have a viable plan for developing those relationships, with stakeholders from a range of background and agencies with an interest in kinship care data (including but not limited to LA children’s services teams and partners, voluntary and charity sector, software providers).  Please set out any existing relationships you have in place with LA representative groups at a regional and national level, including the ADCS, SPI policy committee, the NPIMG and where appropriate the ADCS Resources and Sustainability Policy committee.  (1500 words) | | 15% | | |
| **Quality assurance and feasibility** | | | | |
| How will you use the regular touch base project meetings, the quarterly DDSF programme board, and the data project forum to ensure that the project approach and any outputs are robust, suitable to the sector and replicable in other LAs?  (800 words) | | 5% | | |
| [insert response here] | | | | |
| **Capacity** | | | | |
| Please provide a resource plan, including (where applicable) plans for onboarding core team members, partnering with other LAs or third parties (how many and at what level of involvement). The plan should include:   * detail on the lead individuals’ experience, and what qualifies them to oversee and manage the project successfully * an outline of the core team members’ expertise, seniority and experience in the subject matter * strategy for recruiting or engaging research participants and how you will ensure that they are representative and sufficient and will participate * strategy for engaging other personnel within the LA whose participation will be needed to fulfil the specification * how much of each individual’s time will be spent on the project (e.g. using FTE figures) * if individuals will be working at different points throughout the project e.g. they are not available or allocated to the project from the start, you must outline at what points of the project they will be involved * detail on whether resource included in this bid is included in any other DDSF project bid – and assurance that each project would have sufficient resource if grant funded   (1500 words) | | 15% | | |
| [insert response here] | | | | |
| **Cost** | | | | |
| Please complete the DDSF pricing schedule to provide your proposed costings for this project. | | 30% | | |