
Macra na Feirme
Invitation to Tender
Strategy Planning Exercise
November 2016

Macra na Feirme are inviting tenders from suitably qualified consultants for the completion of a strategy for the organisation for the next 4-6 years, i.e. (2017-2021/23).

1. Summary

Macra na Feirme is the representative organisation for Ireland's Young Farmers and Rural young people aged between 17 and 35 years old. The organisation is a registered charity that represents and supports the growth and personal development of its members through six thematic areas of activity – Agriculture, Public Speaking, Sports, Travel, Performing Arts and Community.

We represent the views of almost 9,000 members in almost 200 clubs all over Ireland. Macra na Feirme clubs are organised into 31 county/regional executives covering the twenty-six counties of Ireland with Cork divided into five regions and Tipperary into two regions.

We provide a comprehensive range of advice, information and training programmes for young farmers and young people primarily based in rural communities through our Macra na Feirme Skillnets Programme. Additionally, we undertake advocacy with policy makers, legislators and funders on behalf of our membership to secure an appropriate political, legal and operational environment for young farmers in Ireland and Europe. We are well respected and very active advocates on behalf of young farmers with European policy makers in our own right and through our membership CEJA, the European Council of Young Farmers.

Macra na Feirme was founded in 1944 and during its lifetime the organisation has had a significant impact on Irish agriculture. Macra na Feirme was to the fore in co-founding many other national farming organisations such as the Irish Farmers Association (IFA); IFAC Accountants; Irish Creamery Milk Suppliers Association (ICMSA); The Irish Farmers Journal; Foroige; and National Coop of Farm Relief Services (FRS Network), and more recently The Land Mobility Service.

Macra na Feirme recently completed an operational and organisational review of the organisation. This review focussed on the current activities of the organisation and will form a building block for a strategic plan. Arising from that Operational and Organisational Review Macra na Feirme now wants to embark upon a consultative process with members and stakeholders to develop our first consultative multi-year strategic plan.

We now wish to commence a new strategic planning exercise for next four to six years (2017-2021/23), with ratification by members ideally taking place at our AGM on May 6th 2017.

2. Considerations

In developing the current strategy, Macra na Feirme set out a number of priority focuses, namely the delivery of key areas of activity (6 thematic areas); facilitate the personal development of members, advocacy; grow participation; and support services.

The National Executive and National Council of Macra Na Feirme have decided to review our previous strategy in relation to its continued relevance, and to use that as a basis to undertake the creation of a new strategy for the forthcoming period.

The Organisation plans to start this Strategic Review at the National Council & National Executive residential meeting on Saturday, December 3rd with subsequent meeting on Thursday January 12th 2017. Macra na Feirme wants to be in a position to sign off on the end result at a Council meeting prior to our AGM on May 6th 2017.

3. External Environment

Some of the external factors that will influence Macra na Feirme in adopting a new strategy include:

- The needs of young farmers.
- The impact on young farmers and rural young people of a decade of austerity.
- The impact on Macra na Feirme as a result of the significant decrease in exchequer funding to the youth work sector in general.
- The engagement and alignment with diverse agribusiness stakeholders and the impact of the broader economy on their corporate social responsibility activities.
- The almost contradictory increase in the need for youth organisations to meet increased demands for services for young people in communities as state funding is rolled back, and the consequent pressure that this places on them in terms of scale and scope of their activities. Macra na Feirme is committed to the National Quality Standards Framework (NQSF) for youth work in Ireland.
- The transition into an era of charity regulation plus a significant number of other compliance-related initiatives from funders and other regulators.
- The limitations in Macra na Feirme's own capacity over recent years.
- The sustainability of our funding base and how it can be augmented / developed over the course of the next strategy.
- The proliferation and expansion of alternative organisations catering for interests that would not previously have existed in Ireland, or in rural areas, such as water sports, mountain biking, etc.

In addition to analysis of these and other factors, the planning will also be informed by a review of the implementation of our current strategic plan and getting feedback from members/non-members as well as other stakeholders.

4. The Brief

Macra na Feirme is inviting tenders from suitably qualified individuals or organisations to assist the National Council and the management team in the engagement process and in the production of a new Strategic Plan. This work will include the following elements:

1. An analysis of where we are now as an organisation as we start this process:
 - a. Against the Strategic Priority Themes in our current strategy
 - b. Against the strategic outcomes actions we set out for each of those strategic priorities in our current strategy.
 - c. Against the actions we identified in the Plan.
 - d. In the opinions of:
 - i. Our members.
 - ii. Macra na Feirme Staff.
 - iii. National Executive and National Council members.
 - iv. The sub-committees of National Council.
 - v. Funders.
 - vi. Key stakeholders including state agencies, policy-makers, media, etc.
2. An analysis of our current environment and likely future trends, as well as strengths / weaknesses / opportunities and threats facing both the youth farmer, rural young people and Macra na Feirme separately.
3. Review of our funding model and how we can be financially sustainable.
4. Review the workings and operational effectiveness of various sub-committees as they relate to strategic planning and implementation; including the workings and make up of all National sub-

committees (National Executive, Finance, Competitions, Ag Affairs, Rural Youth). This review may be undertaken through a collective consultation with current & past membership from across the committees.

5. Review of our organisational development needs and whether we need to change how we are governed and organised for the work at hand.
6. What changes (if any) do we want to make to our vision, mission and strategic priority themes?
7. What do we want to achieve under each theme ultimately agreed, in terms of results and what are we going to measure to know whether we've been successful or not?
8. What outcomes do we want to see over the course of the next strategy? What can we learn from the current plan in terms of measuring outcomes, and how can we improve on this for this next phase of our work?

It is envisaged that the person or organisation appointed to work with us to achieve the above will facilitate the various meetings/workshops, write and review any questionnaire related feedback, and conduct necessary interviews. Notes, presentations and written outputs should be produced by the appointed contractor, who should work with the resources within Macra na Feirme to produce the actual plan.

Macra na Feirme have established a sub-committee of National Council along with management to act as a steering group for this work.

5. Project Outputs

The output of the project will comprise an overall Strategy for Macra na Feirme. The strategy will be expected, inter alia, to include the following:

- A brief review of current thinking (literature) regarding the provision of supports for young farmers and rural youth.
- A review of key trends and approaches to young farmer development.
- A review of key trends and approaches to rural youth work.
- A review of existing corporate social responsibility strategies within key stakeholders, state bodies and strategies within relevant Government Departments and the extent to which their visions, policies, strategies and projects are in alignment or otherwise.
- Recommendations regarding an appropriate vision, strategy and policies for Macra na Feirme.
- Assessment of the needs of the projected young farmer and rural youth population.
- Strategic opportunities for increased funding supports for young farmers and rural young people.
- Recommendations for the implementation, monitoring and review of recommended strategies, policies and actions.

The strategy documents will be expected to include the following –

- 1) An Executive Summary
- 2) Background and context
- 3) Objectives
- 4) Summary of evaluations
- 5) Recommendations
- 6) Appendices including data and other evidence
- 7) Frameworks and Diagrams

6. Method of Work

It is intended that the successful tenderer will comprise a multidisciplinary team to prepare the strategy.

The successful tenderer will be required to familiarise themselves with the specific role of Macra na Feirme and primary stakeholders/supporters/funders of the organisation; and/or other agencies or bodies involved in the provision or support of relevant/comparable youth work e.g. National Youth Council of Ireland, National Young Farmer Networks (e.g. New Zealand Young Farmers) etc.

The successful tender will also be required to:

- 1) Have regard to any work carried out to date on the preparation of a strategy
- 2) Provide preliminary and draft reports for consideration by the Steering Group.
- 3) Report to the members of the Steering group and attend meetings with the Steering Group, National Council and National Executive, as required.
- 4) Convene and facilitate workshops with key stakeholders and undertake member consultation. It is proposed to have a maximum of 8 facilitated workshops of a regional/provincial nature with members of Macra na Feirme. Such locations, for example, may include: Cork; Limerick; Kilkenny; Athlone; Sligo; Cavan; Dublin; Wicklow.
- 5) Consult with key stakeholders, including private, public, statutory or voluntary bodies, to establish key issues, objectives and outcomes as directed by the Strategic Planning Committee (Steering committee).
- 6) Seek to develop a consensus as to the appropriate outcomes amongst the various stakeholders

7. Important Dates

Milestone	Date
Expressions of interest sought	November 14 th to November 28 th 2016
Appoint preferred supplier	By November 30 th 2016
Kick off meeting with combined National Council and National Executive meeting	Saturday, December 3 rd , 2016
Additional Combined Council & Executive meeting	Thursday, January 12 th , 2017
Period of work	December 2016 – April 2017
Final Strategic Plan considered by National Council and Executive of Macra na Feirme	April/May 2017
Macra na Feirme AGM	May 6 th , 2017, Leitrim

It is envisaged that the new Strategic Plan be formally approved by the National Council at a dedicated Council meeting in April and that it proceeds for ratification by members at our AGM in May 2017. It is also understood that in order to meet this timeframe, additional dedicated National Council, National Executive or Strategic Planning Committee meeting(s) may need to be scheduled as appropriate.

8. What should be included in the 'Invitation to Tender'?

Interested parties should include:

- Descriptions of their experience in previous similar projects or contracts.
- An initial overview of the process, timelines and methodologies to be used.
- The cost both ex vat and including vat for the delivery of the outputs in the sought-after timeline. *(Interested parties should note that Macra na Feirme is a registered charity and can therefore not claim vat refunds. Therefore the only cost figure of relevance to Macra na Feirme will be the cost including vat, should it be applicable.)*
- List of previous clients for whom similar work has been delivered.
- Brief CV of the person(s) who will be actually doing the work.
- If applicable, consideration will be given to organisations that can develop the plan on a corporate social responsibility basis.

9. Evaluation Criteria

Macra na Feirme is seeking to identify the most suitable 3rd party to assist the organisation's National Council and management team through completion of the work outlined in this Invitation to Tender. The decision will be made

based on the closest possible match between the submitted Tenders and our sought-after outputs. The lowest price offer will not necessarily secure the contract.

Tenders will be evaluated on the basis of:

- The completeness of the proposal and tender documentation
- Stated ability of tenderer to meet all requirements specified in this document

Tenders shall be assessed to determine the most economically advantageous tender in accordance with the award criteria. Each complete submission shall be scored on the basis of the information supplied in accordance with the following criteria and weighting. Each Tenderer must achieve a minimum score of 50% in criteria 1, 2 and 3.

Criteria	Weighting
1. Project Team Qualifications	15%
2. Appropriate Project Experience	20%
3. Approach/Methodology/programme delivery	35%
4. Fee Proposal	30%

Macra na Feirme will invite six tenders, and may call any or all Tenderers for interview as part of the assessment process. Details of the tender process will also be posted onto the Macra na Feirme website www.macra.ie

10. How to apply

Expressions of Interest should be submitted to Denis Duggan, Chief Executive in electronic format (PDF or MS Word only) before 12.00noon on Monday, 28th November 2016. Email is: dduggan@macra.ie

Any questions should be directed to the Chief Executive. Replies will be posted under an FAQ section on the Macra na Feirme website strategic planning page www.macra.ie/strategy

11. Fee Proposal

Tender submissions should provide a lump sum fee for the completion of this project. Such fees should include the cost of expenses and disbursements, i.e. printing, travel costs, hotel expenses, room hire, consultation, subsistence costs incurred in connection with the work undertaken.

The tender should clearly outline the costs involved at each milestone of the study. Such milestones and contract payment are to be agreed. Macra na Feirme is a registered charity and therefore not VAT registered. The only figure of concern is the total costs inclusive of VAT.

Consideration will given to reputable organisations that can undertake this Strategic Planning work on a pro-bono/subsidised basis as part of a CSR initiative.

12. Useful Resources:

[2010-2014 Strategy Summary](#)

[Operation and Organisation Review, Jack Keyes, April 2016](#)

Organisational Summary <http://www.macra.ie/organisational-structure>

APPENDIX 1 – Diagram of Organisational Structure

