



Analysis of RTE Long Wave Radio in Britain

Invitation to Tender

TENDER SUMMARY

Irish in Britain wishes to commission a report on the reach and value of RTE Longwave radio to the Irish community in Britain and the potential impact of closure on cohorts within the community. This research is being funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in Ireland.

DATE

July 2015

CONTACT

Jennie McShannon

Michael Bourke

Introduction:

Since 2014 Ireland's national public service broadcaster, RTÉ, transmitted its most popular radio station, RTÉ Radio 1, on Longwave 252kHz. This service has significant spill into the island of Britain. In September 2014 RTÉ announced the closure of this service.

However, following representations from members of the Irish community in the Britain, this decision was deferred by a number of months. For many members of the Irish community in the Britain the current long-wave transmission is an important link with their roots in Ireland. As they are less inclined to listen on newer platforms, it is the older cohort of the community that will be most affected by the closure. To note: the Irish community have a disproportionately older age profile than any other ethnic group in Britain.

Following further consultation a decision was taken by RTÉ in December 2014 to defer the shutdown until 2017. In the interim the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ireland along with the Minister for Diaspora Affairs indicated that Irish Government funding would be provided to conduct research into the current level of listenership amongst the Irish community in the Britain.

Since the initial announcement by RTÉ, it became clear that there is a lack of data on who listens to RTÉ radio in Britain and how they access it. I have agreed that my Department will work with RTE and fund research to deliver a better picture of need to inform a solution acceptable to all.

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Charlie Flanagan TD, 19 December 2014

At the request of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Irish in Britain will oversee this time limited research and as such are seeking tenders from appropriate research agencies to conduct research as detailed below and present its findings in a written report.

Framework:

Irish in Britain will be the main point of contact for the successful vendor.

In addition to this a Consultative Group of key stakeholders has been formed which will provide guidance on this project.

Methodology:

The primary focus of this research will be qualitative. It is proposed that the objectives of the research would be to gain insight into;

- Frequency and timing of listening to the service
- Attitudes to the service and its content
- Benefits and/or perceived weaknesses of the service
- Potential alternative platforms for listening to the service
- Preferred methods of communication in respect of the service

A short questionnaire will be drafted which will be the primary method of gathering responses.

It is proposed that a three-track approach be undertaken in terms of responses:

1. Individual submissions

The draft questionnaire will be made available in hard copy and via email for completion by individual responders. Hard copies will be available for download from a site to be identified/ hosted by the researcher. In addition the researcher will be expected to make

hard copies available to be posted out to those who make contact by telephone seeking them.

In order to advertise the existence of this questionnaire a number of avenues will be utilised. It is proposed that a short advert be included on the RTÉ Longwave itself to direct people to the website and provide the phone number to receive a hard copy of the form. The researcher(s) should recommend both a wording and frequency for the announcement which will be agreed by the Consultative Group, such agreement not to be unreasonably withheld by RTÉ. Social media will also be used to advertise the existence of this questionnaire.

2. Group submissions

Conscious of the age profile of many of the listeners of RTÉ Longwave, in addition to the individual responses it is proposed that the facility would also be available to relevant groups to submit responses.

As with the individual responses these group inputs can be submitted via hard copy and via email.

While it's helpful that groups would indicate the extent and location of their membership, responses will not be weighted.

3. Focus Groups/Ethnographic research

It is proposed that bidders would include such methodologies as they feel appropriate that might, in a structured exercise, explore the nuances of a) how people relate to the service, b) the detail of their technological and social environment and c) their preferred methods of communication regarding issues relating to RTÉ specifically and Irish community affairs generally.

Commentary

Following the receipt of these submissions the researcher will draw together these responses in an overall report. This report will seek to draw indicative conclusions which address the objectives of the research.

The report will be submitted to the Consultative Group which may choose to add agreed recommendations or observations before the report is disseminated and/or published. Such input to be distinct and separately identified within the report.

Proposed timeframe

Following the appointment of a successful vendor, work will begin immediately to elaborate the questionnaire. Once the text of this questionnaire is agreed, in consultation with Irish in Britain and the Consultative Group, a strategy will be developed to disseminate it. A time frame of 5-6 weeks is envisaged to allow for responses to be submitted.

Once the responses have been received it is expected that the successful vendor would draw up its report over a period of 2-3 weeks.

It is hoped that the final report evaluating the responses received would be available by the mid December 2015 at the latest.

Budget

Tenders should include a detailed budget for this project identifying the fee and other costs of the research. Some travel to community groups across the country will be expected.

Tendering process

Tenders should include the following information:

- Name, Address, E-mail and Telephone numbers of the person(s) tendering
- Qualifications and experience of the person(s) who will carry out the research
- Details of similar work undertaken, including in relation to the Irish community in Britain and/or communications.
- Outline of proposed methodology, including milestones and timeframe
- Cost/Budget broken down by stages/tasks
- Two referees for similar projects.

Management

Irish in Britain will manage this research project however the parameters of the research and findings from the report will be agreed by the established Consultative Group comprising representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs, RTÉ and leading Irish community organisations in Britain as well as Irish in Britain.

Statement of Ownership

The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DTAF) and Irish in Britain will own all data, materials and reports produced in relation to this tender in whole. Irish in Britain will make all reports available publically in agreement with DFAT.

Acknowledgment of Authorship

Subject to the provision of products of an acceptable standard to Irish in Britain by the person(s) contracted to produce the tables and commentaries, their authorship will be acknowledged in any materials produced.

Deadline for Proposals

All tenders should be received by e-mail by noon Friday 24 July 2015.

All tenders will be acknowledged within two days of receipt.

If required, interviews will take place on 30/31 July 2015

Applicants will be informed of the outcome by 3 August 2015.

Please send submissions to Jennie McShannon: jmcshannon@irishinbritain.org and copy to Michael Bourke: mbourke@irishinbritain.org

If you would like to discuss the terms of this tender in advance of a submission please contact Jennie McShannon. jmcshannon@irishinbritain.org or 020 7697 4081



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