



Request for Proposals

Disability Research

**'Who and where are disabled people in Auckland city
and what are their needs and strengths?'**

Background

Official census figures tell us that about one in five New Zealanders are disabled. However, there is a significant gap in localised information about disabled people. This project aims to find out more about disabled people in Auckland city to help direct local initiatives in new and useful ways.

Over half of people over the age of 65 years are disabled, and our population is ageing. With people becoming increasingly inactive, diabetes, obesity and other health issues are also contributing to the range of disability issues. These factors are important context for our research project in Auckland - not only does it raise the bar for organisations dealing with disabled people but it also puts disability issues firmly on the policy agenda.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted in December 2006. Over 80 countries (including New Zealand) have signed this first human rights treaty of the 21st century. The purpose of this ground breaking framework is to ensure ‘the right of people with a disability to full participation in society’.

How to use this document

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Section A – Overview of Research and Process

The principal research question is:

Who and where are disabled people in Auckland city and what are their needs and strengths?

Research Purpose

In order to more effectively plan initiatives and purchase services that include the disabled population, four agencies have joined together to purchase research to enable them to better understand the needs and aspirations of disabled people in Auckland. These research partners are: Auckland City Council, the Auckland District Health Board, Waitakere City Council and the AUT Local Government Centre.

It is intended that this research will involve the collection of vital information through the analysis of secondary data and engagement with disabled people who reside **in the territorial local authority boundaries that comprise Auckland City**. Results of this research will be responded to by project partners and relevant stakeholders over the medium and longer term.

Research Objectives

1. To find out the cultural, economic, environmental and social realities of disabled Aucklanders
2. To create a shared understanding about disability and the experiences of disabled people
3. To enhance the citizenship experiences of disabled people in Auckland City by growing the community's capacity through civic engagement and involvement
4. To better understand and meet the health and educational needs of disabled Aucklanders now and into the future
5. To appropriately distribute the research findings to interested individuals, agencies, and communities.

Defining Disability

This project will reflect a modern understanding of disability consistent with the *New Zealand Disability Strategy* (Minister for Disability Issues, 2001).

Historically, disability has been focussed upon a characteristic of a person – as a personal deficiency or weakness to be cured, treated or “overcome”. This is what people often mean when they talk about “disabilities”.

Modern understandings about disability view it more as a social process, where personal characteristics interact with the larger environments we inhabit – including built, social, information, service and civic environments. Contemporarily, the focus for improvement is on those environments – on designing and managing them so that they meet everyone’s needs, and by removing barriers that prevent people being able to contribute and participate.

The research partners encourage you to read the *New Zealand Disability Strategy* to further inform your proposal.

Answering the Principal Research Question

The project will be managed and coordinated by AUT’s Local Government Centre on behalf of the research partners. The project is calling for organisations, groups or individuals to inform the principal research question. To do this, there are a series of research steps that have been identified that need to be undertaken:

1. A demographic data review and literature search that will result in a clearer understanding of the outstanding data required to provide a comprehensive picture of the disabled community
2. Scoping and developing specific questions and approaches that can answer the principal research question
3. Undertaking qualitative research through semi-structured engagement and other methods with key individuals and groups from different Auckland City disabled communities to ensure a comprehensive range of views are obtained
4. Consolidating and analysing the findings generated from this community engagement into a concise and accessible written report
5. A facilitated multi-agency process to analyse the views and experiences gleaned through the qualitative and quantitative data gathering processes
6. The delivery of a comprehensive report detailing insights into the realities of the world of disabled Aucklanders, focusing on common and different issues for individuals and amongst groups.

“ Disability is the process which happens when one group of people create barriers by designing a world only for their way of living, taking no account of the impairments other people have.

Our society is built in a way that assumes that we can all move quickly from one side of the road to the other; that we can all see signs, read directions, hear announcements, reach buttons, have the strength to open heavy doors and have stable moods and perceptions.”

(New Zealand Disability Strategy, 2001).

This RFP's Purpose

The purpose of this RFP process is to obtain a number of proposals from which the research partners may select one or more proposals for negotiation towards a contract.

Please note that there is no restriction on the type of agency, organisation or individual that may register an interest in this project. Without prejudice to the process, support may be given to the successful providers or provider where requested.

The Scope of this RFP

This RFP is therefore to select individuals or organisations that have an interest in providing **all** of the following key **five** components:

- a) Nominating relevant and local research, including models of practice, that relate to the principal research question and which can contribute to the AUT-led literature review.
- b) Scoping and developing specific questions and approaches which can potentially answer the principal research question.
- c) Undertaking of qualitative research through semi-structured engagement with key individuals and groups from different Auckland city disabled communities to ensure a wide range of views are obtained in relation to the research questions.
- d) Consolidating and analysing the findings generated from this community engagement into a concise and accessible written report.
- e) Participating in a short, facilitated analysis process to connect these qualitative findings meaningfully with the previously sourced literature and data.

Specifically this RFP research will include (but not be limited to):

1. Profiling the many groups that make up the disabled community

One significant challenge is that the disabled community is not a homogenous group. Their interests, capabilities and aspirations vary, as do the barriers they face. It is also important to remain aware that not all disabled people identify themselves as disabled. Therefore, the research partners are interested in proposals that explore linkages about how issues in one area of a person's life (or family or community life) are influencing other aspects of life, and the cooperative solutions required – for example, success in employment being connected to the quality of personal support, transport, and housing available.

2. A community development approach

This is not a desk-based research exercise, but one where communities are actively engaged and the results are fed back to them in appropriate ways. Options within this approach could include 'user controlled', 'action research' or 'user involved' research methods.

3. A strengths-based and aspirational approach

The research partners are very interested to understand what disabled people want for themselves, their families and their city, as well as to seek clarity about what already works well in their lives.

The research partners encourage the successful applicant(s) to develop a creative conceptual model that draws some or all of these issues (and possibly others), approaches and methods together. We are particularly interested in developing a model that will help the research partners better understand how we can design and deliver services that enable disabled people to realise their aspirations as valued members of our community.

As part of the quality assurance of this RFP's delivery, an Ethics Committee Approval Process has begun. The successful tendering agency(s) is expected to contribute information towards this process.

Regular research meetings between the successful tendering agency(s) and the Disability Research Project Leader (Nic Mason, from AUT Local Government Centre) will be held.

The indicative budget for this RFP is \$40,000 (excl. GST)

RFP Timetable

This timetable is indicative only and may be subject to change at the sole discretion of the project partners. We will notify participants of any changes:

From date	To date	Date due	Activity
		30 October 2007	Issue of RFP
30 October 2007	15 November 2007	15 November 2007	Proposers identify in writing to AUT any questions regarding the RFP document
15 November 2007	22 November 2007	22 November 2007	AUT replies in writing to any questions raised. Copies of the proposer's questions and replies released publicly
		14 December 2007	Proposals close 5 p.m.
14 December 2007	21 December 2007	21 December 2007	Panel meets to evaluate proposals
21 December 2007	15 January 2008	15 January 2008	Notification of preferred proposer(s)
15 January 2008	25 January 2008	25 January 2008	Negotiation with preferred proposer(s)
		31 January 2008	Contract(s) awarded [if any]

Section B – Requirements and Conditions

Joint proposals

The research project encourages collaborative proposals. These proposals however must ensure that all parties are jointly and severally liable or act as lead contractor, and identify one of the joint proposers as the contact point for all communications.

Lodging of proposals

Your proposal must be received before 5.00 p.m. on the closing date of **14th December 2007**. Our policy is not to evaluate late proposals in usual circumstances. Your proposal must be submitted to:-

Nic Mason
Local Government Centre, AUT University
Level II, 350 Queen St
Private Bag 92006
AUCKLAND 1142
ph: (09) 921-9999 ext. 6034

Proposals sent by post or courier must be sent in sufficient time to allow the proposal to be received before the closing time. Proposals sent by courier should be sent to the above address. **Proposals sent by fax or email will not be accepted.** Please ensure that **six (6) copies** of the proposal are included.

Please only include information in your proposal which is pertinent to this RFP by applying the principle: "less is more".

Proposal qualifications

Any qualifications to the proposal documentation must be outlined in a covering letter or memorandum and included in your submitted proposal. Any qualifications not included in a covering letter will not be considered to be a part of the proposal.

Additional information and clarification

All communications regarding this RFP or requests for clarification or further information must be directed in writing to the delegated project contact representative only.

For this project the lead research contact is:

Nic Mason

Local Government Centre, AUT University

nmason@aut.ac.nz

ph: (09) 921-9999 ext. 6034

fax: (09) 921-9768

Requests for clarification or additional information must be in writing and be made prior to 5.00pm on **15 November 2007**. We will ensure any further information about the RFP and/or any change to the RFP is made known to all submitters in writing. All responses to questions or requests for clarification and/or amendment notices will also be issued publicly (via <http://ipp.org.nz/localgovt.htm>) The research project partners will not be bound by any statement, written or verbal, made by any person other than the lead research representative as outlined above.

Proposal validity period

Every proposal will be a continuing offer and irrevocable until the expiry of six (6) calendar months from the proposal close date or such later date as we may agree.

Price – GST

Proposal prices should be quoted exclusive of goods and services tax ('gst') and in New Zealand dollars.

Proposal format

Your proposal should be structured and cover the issues as set out in Appendix 1.

General conditions

The research project reserves the right to:

- ⦿ reject all or any proposals.
- ⦿ seek clarification of any proposal and/or negotiate with any proposer (to the exclusion of any other proposer), at any time and upon any terms and conditions.
- ⦿ deal with and/or separately award contracts for all or part of any divisible elements of any proposal.
- ⦿ amend this RFP, or any associated documents, by the issue of a written amendment notice.
- ⦿ re-advertise for proposals or suspend or cancel, (in whole or in part), this proposal process.

Errors and omissions

The project is under no obligation to check any proposal for errors. Acceptance of a proposal that contains errors will not invalidate any contract formed based on that proposal.

If the RFP Evaluation Panel discovers errors and/or omissions in your proposal prior to award of a contract, we may notify you as soon as practicable and ask you to either confirm or withdraw your proposal.

By submitting your proposal you warrant that all information provided by you in relation to your proposal is complete and accurate in all material respects. You also warrant that the provision of that information and its use for the evaluation of your proposal and for any resulting negotiation will not breach any third party intellectual property rights.

Confidentiality

The information supplied in connection with this process or any contract that may arise out of it, is confidential. You must not release or disclose any of the information to any other person, (other than your employees or advisers), without our prior consent. Any publicity also requires prior written consent from the four research partners, namely Auckland City Council, Auckland District Health Board, Waitakere City Council and AUT University.

If it is considered appropriate to do so, you may be required to sign a confidentiality deed, before releasing of any confidential or commercially sensitive information to you. Proposals received will be kept confidential. However, we are subject to the Official Information Act 1982 and information provided by proposers may be required to be disclosed under that Act.

The RFP Evaluation Panel anticipates receiving proposals that may vary considerably. The Panel also anticipates a phase following closure of this RFP during which discussions may be held with particular proposers.

You confirm, on your own behalf and on behalf of any key personnel referred to in your proposal, that the lead agency is authorised to seek further information on any issue from any third party source.

Costs and Liability limitation

You must pay your own costs of preparing and submitting your proposal, including but not limited to, communications, meetings and/or negotiations with the RFP Evaluation Panel (see Section C). The four research partners will not be liable in contract or tort or in other way for any direct or indirect damage, loss or cost incurred by any proposer or other person in respect of this RFP process.

Intellectual Property

All intellectual property developed in the undertaking of this RFP research will become the property of the four research partner organisations, namely Auckland City Council, Auckland District Health Board, Waitakere City Council, AUT University as well as with the external research agency(s) contracted through this RFP process.

Section C – Selection Process

Assessment Criteria

The RFP Evaluation Panel will primarily evaluate the proposals against the following **seven** criteria (although this is not a complete list):

1. Description of the proposed research component(s)

How clearly defined and expressed is the breadth of the proposed research (this should relate directly back to the five research components as outlined under 'The Scope of this RFP'). Once identified, the description should go on to clearly describe (for example) the methods, the proposed scope of the research and the expected outputs and outcomes sought.

2. Target research audiences

Who will be consulted and engaged in the research? How will they be selected? What type of engagement methods will be employed? How will disabled people be involved as researchers? How will diversity within the disabled community be reflected in this research?

3. Organisational Capability

The level of experience of the proposer(s) in undertaking the research as identified in the proposal. Whether the proposer(s) can access the audiences and demonstrate effective engagement skills with a cross section of the disabled community. Evidence of quantitative and qualitative research skills, evidence of networks to assist with engagement and demonstrable report writing skills (where applicable to research components) such as citations; www links; and/or examples of recent relevant work will be welcomed.

4. Evidence of benefits and effectiveness of the proposed services

The level or extent of expected translatable benefits to the research partners, as well as to your own agency and the disabled community. How the qualitative research findings could benefit public policy planning? What tangible strategic opportunities for individual agencies and collective strategic implementation are linked to this research that can be achieved?

5. Cultural Competency

The extent to which your researchers have the ability (in terms of the organisation(s) and staff) to clearly communicate and work effectively and appropriately with disabled people of a range of ages and ethnicities and/or their families so that disabled people better understand their needs and strengths. This will include the capacity of the researchers to provide translation or other initiatives to meet people's communication needs.

6. Treaty principles

The extent to which your researchers have the experience (in terms of the organisation(s) and staff) to work effectively and appropriately with Maori disabled people, their whanau and other support people and structures.

7. Price is justified and affordable within available funding budget

The extent to which a costing(s) and pricing breakdown of the proposed services appears reasonable in the opinion of the RFP Evaluation Panel. An itemised budget, including the costing of support needs in fulfilling this RFP, is expected.

Proposers will be notified of the full panel composition once proposals have closed. There will be no public opening of proposals.

Each RFP Evaluation Panel member will individually evaluate each proposal against each of the seven (7) previously identified criteria. The panel will then meet to compare individual proposal evaluations and agree a common overall assessment for each proposal. Members of the panel may require meeting with you at such locations and dates that are agreed on.

If the panel is unable to reach agreement, or they require further information to inform their evaluation, proposers may be asked to clarify any issues or concerns. Discussions may be held with leading proposal candidates.

All unsuccessful proposers will be notified in writing by **15th January 2008** that their proposals have not been successful. All notices will be forwarded to the address provided by proposers in their proposal.

Appendix 1 – Proposal Format and Information Required

Proposals should be structured and include the information as set out in this Appendix.

Part One – Introduction

On page one please ensure the following contact information is detailed in full for your proposal:

Organisation Name:

Type of entity: (*e.g., NGO, iwi provider, private consultancy*)

Phone (*include area code*):

Fax (*include area code*):

Courier address:

PO Box number:

Contact person:

E-mail:

Mobile phone:

Direct dial:

The introduction to the proposal should state that you have read and understood all the terms and conditions contained in this RFP and that they have been complied with and will continue to be complied with.

Part Two - Executive summary

This section should include an overview of your proposal for the provision of research, namely:

- a) an outline of the proposed research design, including methods, scope and target audience(s)
- b) a summary of the outcomes which, in your opinion, would be achieved from the research
- c) details of how proactive engagement with disabled people within the community will be formed in the undertaking of this research
- d) an overview of your capability and competency to carry out the work and of any subcontractors (if any) which you propose to engage in connection with the services
- e) Your proposal should clearly set out any assumptions you have made in respect of the requirements set out in this RFP.
- f) A total budget figure.

Part Three – Discussion of Seven Assessment Criteria

These are:

- 1. Description of the proposed research component(s)
- 2. Target research audiences
- 3. Organisational Capability
- 4. Evidence of benefits and effectiveness of the proposed services
- 5. Cultural Competency
- 6. Treaty principles
- 7. Price is justified and affordable within available funding budget

Part Four - Costing and Pricing Breakdown

This section should provide a price for the delivery of your proposed research. This price should be justified through a costing breakdown and budget using named line items matched against projected costings.

Part Five – Sign Off

Please ensure an authorised person approves the proposal as follows:

To: Nic Mason

Proposal for: _____

We/I offer to provide the services in accordance with the RFP: *Disability Research* and our proposal, for the sum of \$[] (GST excl) or such amount as shall be determined in accordance with our negotiated contract documents.

Proposer: _____

Dated: _____

Signature(s): _____ in position of _____

The Research Project Partners thank participants in this process. We look forward to working with proposers and associated providers to develop innovative research outcomes in Auckland.