



## **INVITATION TO TENDER**

### **“Abolishing Solitary Confinement in Ireland”**

#### **ABOUT IPRT AND OUR WORK**

The Irish Penal Reform Trust (IPRT) is Ireland's leading non-governmental organisation campaigning for the rights of people in the penal system and the progressive reform of Irish penal policy. Established in 1994, IPRT has a well-established role as an independent voice in public debate on the Irish penal system. IPRT is committed to reducing imprisonment, respecting the rights of everyone in the penal system, and progressive reform of the penal system based on evidence-led policies.

#### **CONTEXT**

The practice of solitary confinement is internationally regarded as the physical isolation of individuals who are confined to their cells for 22 to 24 hours a day. Meaningful contact or interaction with other people is reduced to a minimum, with some prisoners only allowed out of their cells for just one hour of solitary exercise each day. In 2011, the UN Special Rapporteur on Torture proposed a worldwide ban on prolonged solitary confinement (more than 15 days) as well as prohibiting solitary confinement from being used as a penalty, for persons with mental disabilities, and for juveniles. This is based on evidence that some of the harmful psychological effects of isolation can become irreversible after 15 days.

Despite this, solitary confinement is regularly used in Irish prisons both as a means of “protection” and as a punishment. The practice of isolating children is known as “single separation” while the use of 19+ hours lock up is generally referred to as a “restricted regime”. Worryingly, the numbers subject to a restricted regime in Irish prisons have shown an increase in 2016, from 339 in January to 424 in October (over 10% of the daily prison population in Ireland). Further, the published statistics do not tell us how long each of those prisoners actually spend in solitary confinement nor how often they are returned to solitary confinement, as the periods may be simply renewed.

In relation to children and detention, the Council of Europe has set out rules permitting separation only in very exceptional cases for security or safety reasons. Despite that, in 2015 HIQA reported that in the child detention school at Oberstown, Co. Dublin “single separation was used extensively and frequently for long periods of time” including 1,420 incidences of single separation between October and the end of May 2015.

## PROJECT OUTLINE

IPRT has secured funding from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission to pursue an evidence-based research and awareness campaign towards the abolition of the use of solitary confinement in Ireland.

The research, on which the advocacy and public awareness campaign will be based, will comprise:

- **Quantitative and qualitative multi-disciplinary research on the use of solitary confinement in Ireland** including:
  - examining places where it occurs (including children detention schools);
  - exploring a breakdown of the reasons why (punishment, protection, special observation, etc.);
  - frequency of use;
  - lengths of time (consecutive days and aggregate over a year);
  - outcomes for individuals (e.g. impact on individual's mental health, social, reintegration, etc.); and
  - whether members of minorities or certain vulnerable categories of people in prison are more likely to experience lock-up.

The research will include interviews with people who have experienced prolonged isolation.

- **Examination of recent national international developments in medicine, psychology and law** which will provide a fully up-to-date evidence base on the physical and psychological impact of solitary confinement and restricted regimes, and relevant human rights standards and jurisprudence.
- **Analysis of international approaches to reduce/abolish the use of solitary confinement**, including comparisons with neighbouring jurisdictions, and identification of international best practice models/solutions and innovations.
- **Development of policy proposals and recommendations** to counter security and “operational” arguments for the use of solitary confinement and restricted regimes, and to ensure the highest levels of transparency, oversight and accountability where any individual has restricted access to general regimes.

## TENDER OUTLINE

IPRT now wishes to commission an expert researcher to provide quantitative and qualitative multi-disciplinary research on solitary confinement in Ireland.

### Requirements

- Primary or postgraduate degree in a relevant discipline;
- Demonstrated knowledge of the Irish criminal justice system and/or critical human rights issues in Ireland;
- Experience in a range of research methods both quantitative and qualitative (incl. conducting interviews and undertaking desk-based research);
- Ability to liaise with relevant key stakeholders involved in the Irish criminal justice system;
- Experience in producing high quality research to publication standard;
- Exceptional attention to detail and ability to adhere to strict budgetary and deadline requirements;
- Maintenance of detailed, accurate and fully evidenced time-keeping records.

### Invitation to Tender

IPRT invites submissions of tenders to deliver the specific project detailed below:

<b>METHODOLOGY</b>	Our project proposal envisaged the basic model set out below. We are, however, open to considering adapted models of delivery (with the agreement of the project funders) within the current budget and time constraints of the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Design of research plan to encompass quantitative and qualitative research methodologies;</li><li>• Literature review of developments in medicine, psychology and law since 2013, which will provide a fully up-to-date evidence base on the physical and psychological impact of solitary confinement and restricted regimes, alongside applicable human rights standards and relevant jurisprudence;</li><li>• Interviews and fieldwork with stakeholders and people who have experience of prolonged isolation;</li><li>• Analysis of international approaches to reduce/abolish the use of solitary confinement, including research of models of best practice and innovation;</li><li>• Development of policy proposals and recommendations to counter security and “operational” arguments for the use of solitary confinement and restricted regimes</li></ul>
<b>BUDGET</b>	This is a fixed price contract for services costing no more than €10,000 (inclusive of V.A.T., travel, subsistence, word and data processing, other expenses related to research work, overhead

	expenses and attendance at the launch event). IPRT will pay directly for design, print, dissemination, media work and launch event linked to the project. Payment may be phased and linked to progress.
<b>AIMS/ OBJECTIVES</b>	The primary goal of this project is to raise awareness and deliver systemic change aimed at ending the use of solitary confinement and isolation in prisons and in children detention schools in Ireland.
<b>DELIVERABLES</b>	<p>The key outputs of this project will be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An issues paper for launch and submission to key policy makers, with a view to: (i) informing IPRT's advocacy and public awareness campaign and (ii) securing specific policy commitments towards a reduction and ultimate abolition of solitary confinement in Ireland.</li> <li>2. An interim briefing document on the current use of solitary confinement, single separation and restricted regimes in Ireland will be required end April 2017; this will feed into IPRT's second periodic review under the UNCAT, which takes place in July 2017.</li> <li>3. Provision of updated figures (if applicable) beginning August 2017 on the use of restricted regimes in Ireland to inform IPRT Flagship Report.</li> <li>4. Short monthly update (max. 150 words) on progress, as required by funders.</li> <li>5. We would also like the researcher to participate in the launch event of the report (autumn 2017), if possible, as part of the tender.</li> </ol>

**Time Frame:**

An interim output on the current use of solitary confinement, single separation and restricted regimes in Ireland will be required by end April 2017.

Updated figures, if available, on use of restricted regimes in Ireland to be provided end July 2017.

The final issues paper should ideally be complete by September 2017 (although this is open to negotiation).

While this is a stand-alone project, information from this project will feed into IPRT's annual Human Rights in Prison Report 2017.

## Tax/ VAT

Valid tax clearance certificates will be sought from the successful tender.

## Tender Process:

Tendering individuals or organisations must submit a tender document of no more than 4 pages. Each tender should include:

- A profile or CV of the individual making the proposal;
- Details of previous relevant work in this area;
- 2 samples of written work (these may be URLs to work published online);
- The methodology you propose to adopt to achieve the key deliverables;
- Costing and timeline with respect to the proposed work expressed within the overall budget for research of €10,000 (incl. VAT if applicable).

## Assessment of Tender:

Each tender received will be assessed on the basis of:

CRITERIA	SCORE
Demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the brief;	30
Track record in relevant work;	20
Approach/methodology	20
Value for money	20
Availability to carry out the project within the stated timeframe	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

## Note:

- Additional information may be sought at the assessment phase.
- Before final decision, a number of the most competitive tenders may be invited for further discussions on their proposals for the purpose of elaboration, clarification and/or aiding mutual understanding.
- IPRT shall not be liable for any costs and/or expenses incurred in respect of the preparation or the submission of any tender documents or associated material.

**Lowest price tender is not a guarantee of success.**

Tenders should be submitted by e-mail to [director@iprt.ie](mailto:director@iprt.ie) by  
noon on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2016