



Request for proposal

Measuring Impacts of the Cultivating Community Farming project

Background

Cultivating Community Farming is a two-year project funded by Co-op Foundation. The goals of the project are to:

- Improve our understanding of community farming, explore business model and key aspects of running a community farming project;
- Build capacity of the selected 10 projects and focus on development and growth, particularly in year 1 with seed funding and mentoring support;
- Increase connections and create opportunities for collaborative working;
- Measure social, economic and ecological impacts to help emerging community farms communicate their added values and impacts (in year 2).

The project has been delivered by a partnership between Co-operative Alternatives and Jubilee Farm since the beginning of 2022.

Ten groups with an interest in developing both farming and communities were selected and supported for almost a year. The journey of growth and development to date included outputs under three main areas: 'land', 'community' and 'enterprise'. The groups operate in different contexts (urban or rural), have different legal structures and model of ownership (private, community co-ops, charities etc.), reach out to different communities (geographical or of interest) and are at different stages of development. However, all the selected groups share an interest in increasing community involvement in growing, farming and caring for animals. They all worked towards an agreed action plan during year 1. The groups used a mix of interventions and activities to benefit the land they have access to, the communities they serve and the enterprise they intend to build.

Requirement

We seek an Assessor/Evaluator who can help us to measure the impacts of the participating groups AND extrapolate the learning of the overall project. The fundamental questions we want to answer are 'what difference have the 10 groups made to the 'land', 'communities' and 'local economy'?' and 'what are the key learning of 'community farming'?

Through this assessment, first of all, each participating group will be helped to articulate, measure and learn the changes they have achieved and the added value they have accomplished.

This will require the Assessor/Evaluator:

- a) To identify outcomes to measure. The outcomes must be based on the three main outputs areas: the 'community', the 'land' and the 'enterprising activities' for each participating group.
- b) Outcomes must also measure co-operation and collaborations, type of ownership models, awareness of farming, growing and business models, engagement with communities etc. achieved thanks to the project;
- c) To employ a clear methodology to measure the identified outcomes;
- d) The outcomes must equip the participating groups with a way to demonstrate the change they make through their work;

Secondly, through this assessment, the Assessor/Evaluator is asked to increase our understanding of 'community farming'. This can be achieved by (not exclusively):

- a) Capturing an outcome-based definition of 'community farming' based on the feedback of the participant groups;
- b) Documenting 'community farming' through case studies, learning journeys, based on the experiences of the 10 participating groups;
- c) Evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of each of the business models, community engagement approach, land and resource management applied by the 10 groups;
- d) Highlighting innovative aspects of the project and identify elements of best practice in 'community farming';
- e) Comparing and contextualising 'community farming' within the ecosystem of agroecology and regenerative initiatives, social farming, CSA etc. in the region;

The key learning on 'community farming' will be presented in a report of findings with recommendations for future project development in this area in NI.

As a minimum it is expected that the successful Assessor/Evaluator will deliver the following:

- Engage with the 10 participating groups to include online and one-to-one engagement.
- Measure and assess impacts of the 10 projects based on identified outcomes
- Produce a report to help better understand what is 'community farming' and highlight any learning points of the project with recommendations

Payment

The overall budget for this piece of work is £15,000 (this includes VAT).

Timescale

The final report to be completed by the end of Dec 2023 with the view to publish and launch the report in the first quarter of 2024.

Your quotation

Please send your proposal, inclusive of all costs, via email to tiziana@coopalternatives.coop by 4pm on **Wednesday the 30th of November 2022**.

1. You must include a brief summary of relevant skills, knowledge and experience and/or other projects undertaken for all the people involved, if more than one person is going to deliver. State clearly names and roles of all individuals. This part should not exceed 2 pages (A4) per person in length but may include web links to further information, examples, or testimonials.
2. Please include copy of Professional Indemnity and Public Liability insurance for all people involved with delivery.
3. You must include an overview of your proposal which indicates your understanding of the project and the methodology you will use. Be clear on why you have chosen this methodology over others.
4. You must include a timeline for delivery with a detailed schedule of work with number of days. You must state a day rate. A day rate should be based on 7 hours work. Please note any expense should be set out but they are responsibility of the Assessor/Evaluator.
5. Please note ability to deliver within the proposed timescale is an essential criterion.
6. Please ensure that each of the required elements, and all costs associated with your proposal are included in the quotation.
7. All quotations received after the deadline will not be considered.

Scoring Matrix

Relevant experience and qualifications 20

Understanding of the project 20

Proposed methodology & delivery plan 40

Value for money 20

Costs and Expenses

Those providing quotes will not be entitled to claim for any costs or expenses which may be incurred in the preparation of their quote, irrespective of whether it is successful or not.

Period of Validity

Quotes must be valid for acceptance for a period of ninety days from the closing date for receipt. If you have any queries in relation to this piece of work, please email Tiziana O'Hara at tiziana@coopalternatives.coop . Please note, responses to questions will be shared with all interested parties.