



Invitation to Tender

Working with Conviction: A Scoping Study on Employer Attitudes to Hiring People with Criminal Convictions

About IPRT

The Irish Penal Reform Trust (IPRT) is Ireland’s leading independent charity campaigning for a penal system that is just and humane; protects and promotes human rights, equality, and social justice; and uses prison as a last resort. Our work is underscored by the recognition that prison is inherently damaging in itself and impacts disproportionately on marginalised and disadvantaged groups. Our goal is to shift the focus of Ireland’s penal system away from its current emphasis on punishment towards approaches based on prevention, early intervention, diversion, and the integration of criminal justice policy with wider social policy.

Context

While data on the number of people with convictions is unavailable in the Republic of Ireland, based on data available in England and Wales, we estimate that approximately 800,000 people in the Republic of Ireland have a criminal conviction(s) (with the significant majority relating to less serious offending) ([UNLOCK, 2017](#)).

While information on the number of people impacted by previous convictions when accessing employment in Ireland is sparse, IPRT often receives requests from people with convictions histories seeking information about accessing employment and services. This suggests that there is a lack of official information available for people with conviction histories, and further indicates that a significant number of people in Ireland are affected.

In 2019, IPRT carried out a small-scale survey on the impact of convictions with 148 respondents, 81 per cent of whom indicated that having a conviction had a negative impact on “getting a job”. It is hoped that this scoping study will build on that work

by including a specific focus on the attitudes of employers. While 2019 research in this area by SOLAS gave us some insights into employer perspectives of hiring people with convictions histories, it was limited in scope ([SOLAS, 2019](#)).

Project Outline

IPRT has been awarded funding from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) under the Human Rights and Equality Grants Scheme 2022-2023 under Theme A '*Advancing Greater Economic Equality*', to conduct a small-scale analysis of the attitudes of employers and the experiences of people with convictions in accessing decent work.

The aim of the project is to determine the types of barriers that exist for individuals with a criminal conviction in accessing decent and sufficient work and assess the impact that this has on their ability to achieve economic equality. The project will provide up-to-date data on the attitudes of employers toward hiring people with experience of the criminal justice system and/or prison. The inclusion of employers or employer representative bodies in this research will provide a unique perspective and it is hoped that it will encourage those who are unlikely to employ people with experience of the criminal justice system to consider doing so.

The findings of this scoping study will in turn inform IPRT's advocacy work and the development of training materials to support employers in adopting sensitive and inclusive hiring practices. It will also provide evidence to support the inclusion of a criminal conviction ground in the review of equality legislation.

Tender Outline

IPRT wishes to commission an external consultant to undertake a study on the barriers to employment for individuals with previous convictions and whether they face discrimination in accessing decent and sufficient work which can in turn impact their right to an adequate standard of living and economic equality.

The report arising from the scoping study is expected to include the following:

- A **literature review** of the relevant areas of international and national human rights standards and legislation which apply to individuals with a criminal conviction in seeking or entering employment;
- Determination of the **attitude of employers** to hiring individuals with a previous criminal conviction and identify any potential discrimination on this basis;
- Identification of **any common misconceptions / concerns employers** have about hiring someone with a criminal conviction;

- Identification of the **experiences of rights-holders** in terms of accessing decent and sufficient work and the impact (if any) that their prior conviction had in this regard; and
- Proposals for **evidence-based recommendations** on how the issues identified could be addressed.

It is anticipated that engagement with employers and rights-holders will take place through a mixture of surveys and semi-structured interviews.

Project Deliverables

The successful tenderer will be expected to produce a research report (circa 10-15,000 words), with clear recommendations for addressing the issues identified, by July 2023. The launch of the report will take place in August 2023. The successful tenderer is expected to attend the launch and present the findings of the research, if applicable.

Requirements

- Postgraduate degree in a relevant discipline, or equivalent experience in a relevant research setting;
- Demonstrated knowledge of the criminal justice system and human rights in Ireland, which can also be from a lived experience perspective;
- Proven experience of designing and carrying out research projects;
- Experience in quantitative research methods, including undertaking desk-based research and data analysis;
- Experience in producing high-quality, publishable documents to agreed deadlines, within strict wordcounts;
- First-rate drafting abilities, exceptional writing skills, attention to detail, and ability to adhere to budgetary requirements.

Tender Process

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

- A profile or CV of the individual(s) making the proposal;
- Details of previous relevant work in this area;
- Two samples of written work (these may be URLs to work published online);
- The methodology you propose to adopt in order to achieve the key deliverables;

- Costing and timeline with respect to the proposed work expressed within the overall budget for research of €4,500 (inclusive of VAT, if applicable);
- A comprehensive risk assessment with mitigating actions; and
- Estimated number of days for completing the work.

IPRT welcomes tenders from people from diverse backgrounds as well as people with criminal records. We don't ask about convictions during the assessment process.

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 including risk assessment	20
Value for money	20
Availability to carry out the project within the stated timeframe	10
Total	100

Note:

- Valid tax clearance certificates will be sought from the successful tender.
- Additional information may be sought at the assessment phase.
- Before the final decision, a number of the most competitive tenders may be invited for further discussions on their proposals for 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 email to tenders@iprt.ie by 11.59pm on 20th December 2022 at the latest.

Queries should be directed to Policy and Research Coordinator Pamela Drumgoole at pdrumgoole@iprt.ie. **Please note that tenders will not be accepted at this email.**



Coimisiún na hÉireann
um Chearta an Duine
agus Comhionannas
Irish Human Rights and
Equality Commission

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