



Traveller Justice Initiative: Invitation to Tender

Research Project: Restorative Justice and Traveller Engagement

Background and Rationale

The Traveller community in Ireland continues to experience high levels of marginalisation, criminalisation, and systemic exclusion within the criminal justice system. Restorative Justice (RJ) presents a potential alternative to punitive justice models, while Traveller-led mediation services have demonstrated culturally appropriate ways of resolving conflict and repairing harm.

There is a need to document, evaluate, and promote effective models of restorative justice with Travellers, including approaches that integrate Traveller-appropriate conflict mediation. This work should also support the wider replication of good practice across the probation and community justice sectors.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is to document current models of restorative justice involving Travellers, promote culturally appropriate approaches among the community, assess the level

of wider engagement with Travellers across restorative justice providers, and develop resources and an action plan to strengthen national practice in this area.

Research Objectives

1. **Raise awareness of Restorative Justice (RJ) among Travellers**, including the development of accessible, literacy-friendly materials such as leaflets and posters.
2. **Document and analyse existing restorative justice approaches within Traveller contexts**, in partnership with Restorative Justice in the Community (RJC) and the Traveller Mediation Service.
3. **Develop case studies** illustrating the qualitative and quantitative impact of culturally appropriate restorative justice and mediation approaches with Travellers.
4. **Capture and articulate the combined model** where restorative justice and conflict mediation are integrated, identifying transferable elements of good practice.
5. **Conduct a national survey** of Probation Service-funded restorative justice providers to assess:
 - current levels of engagement with Traveller service users,
 - barriers and challenges in delivering culturally competent services (if any),
 - examples of emerging good practice.
6. **Develop recommendations and an action plan** to guide upskilling and support for restorative justice providers in working effectively and appropriately with Travellers.

Scope of the Research

The study will focus on:

- Traveller-specific engagement within restorative justice and conflict mediation settings,
- Restorative Justice Services funded by the Probation Service, with additional reference to community-based and Traveller-led initiatives,
- Geographic scope: ROI (Republic of Ireland).

This research project will focus on the model of practice and is not intended as an evaluation. Therefore, the study will **not** evaluate individual service users' cases (beyond the anonymised and consent-based case studies which will be used as illustrations of practice).

Methodology (Indicative)

- **Desk review:** existing literature, policy, and previous evaluations relating to restorative justice (and Traveller mediation).
- **Key informant interviews:** with staff and participants from Restorative Justice in the Community, Traveller Mediation Service, Probation Services and relevant stakeholders.
- **Focus groups / peer-led insights:** Traveller community members, including those with lived experience of the justice system and restorative justice/restorative justice approaches.

- **Survey:** distributed to all Probation-funded restorative justice providers.
- **Case study development:** minimum of 3–5 anonymised case studies developed through interviews and documentation.
- **Co-design workshop:** to produce literacy-friendly awareness materials.
- **Analysis Framework:** based on cultural appropriateness, accessibility, impact, and systemic barriers.

Outputs / Deliverables

1. Comprehensive Research Report

A research report of approximately 25,000 words, delivered within nine months of signing the contract for services. The report will include clear, evidence-informed recommendations.

2. Documentation of Findings and Analysis

The Research Report will present all aspects of the research process, including:

- Case Studies that can also function as stand-alone resources.
- Survey Findings accompanied by thematic analysis.
- Practice Development Recommendations, including resource implications and an action plan for the Probation Service and restorative providers, with specific reference to training needs and partnership models.
- A Summary Document suitable for broader dissemination.

3. Awareness Materials:

- **Literacy-friendly leaflet(s) and poster for Traveller audiences**

4. Presentation / Workshop of findings to key stakeholders.

5. Report Launch

It is anticipated that the report would be published and launched within two months of the final draft being delivered to IPRT. The successful tenderer is expected to attend the launch and present the findings of the research.

Governance

- The lead organisation for this research is the Traveller Justice Initiative. The work is being undertaken in partnership with Restorative Justice in the Community and the Traveller Mediation Service
- An advisory group will include representatives from Probation Service, Traveller organisations, restorative justice bodies, and lived-experience advisors.

Timeframe

Estimated duration: **6–9 months**

Phased timeline to be agreed (inception, data collection, analysis, outputs, dissemination).

Ethical Considerations

- Compliance with GDPR and data protection legislation.
- Culturally safe and trauma-informed research practice.
- Informed consent and anonymisation for all case study participants.
- Fair payment and recognition for lived-experience contributors.

Call for tenders

Experienced researchers are invited to submit proposals for carrying out this piece of work.

Proposals should include:

- Background and experience of personnel
- Ethical principles and data protection procedures
- Overall approach to the tasks and detailed actions proposed
- Timelines, budget (including days assigned to each tasks, daily rate, expenses, printing and other costs)

Budget

The maximum budget for this assignment including VAT and expenses will be €14,000.

Assessment of tenders

Tenders will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- Understanding of project and its objectives
- Quality of research design
- Experience in undertaking similar assignments and experience of working with the Traveller community and the criminal justice sector.

Closing Date for Submissions: Submissions (and any queries regarding the research) should be sent to: Anne Costello, TJI Coordinator, IPRT at acostello@iprt.ie

Deadline for receipt of applications is Wednesday 3rd December