

Terms of Reference

Specialist / Generalist Community Legal Centres Project

Researcher

Organisation:

Federation of Community Legal Centres (Vic) Inc

Accountable to:

Project Manager

Nature and Duration:

4 months: April 2017 – August 2017

Number of days work to be negotiated.

This role would be ideal for a PhD Candidate in Law or another field related to social justice. It has a special focus on research with an immediate practical application.

Budget Range:

\$5 000 - \$15 000

Background:

The Federation of Community Legal Centres (the Federation) is the peak body for 48 community legal centres across Victoria. The Federation leads and supports excellence in the community legal sector, promotes the purpose and value of community legal centres, and advances social justice and a fair legal system.

Community legal centres (CLCs) are independent community organisations that provide free legal services to the public. CLC clients are those who face economic, social or cultural disadvantage and whose life circumstances are often severely affected by their legal problem.

Some CLCs provide general legal assistance to disadvantaged members of their community, either within metropolitan Melbourne or in regional, rural or remote areas. Other CLCs provide specialist services. These specialist services are defined by subject matter (such as employment law, consumer law, social security law), or by cohort (such as youth, women, migrants / refugees, people with disabilities).

The Federation has commenced a twenty month project, funded by Victoria Legal Aid's Innovation and Transformation Fund, to identify barriers to specialist legal services, then design and test innovative ways to overcome them. The Project will examine current practices such as, but not limited to, referrals, secondary consultations, co-case management and knowledge/skill sharing.

The Project team will implement the project over the course of 20 months in three distinct phases:

- 1: Research, consultation and model design
- 2: Model testing
- 3: Model evaluation and sector recommendations

Purpose, Objectives and Methodology of the Researcher Position

The purpose of the Researcher position is to support the Program Manager and provide research expertise in the second half (April 2017 – August 2017) of Phase One of the Project. This will be achieved through the following specific objectives and methodologies:

1. Create and implement a project research plan (5%)

The Researcher will:

- Create a comprehensive research work plan complete with schedule of deliverables.
- Report to the Project Manager on progress and any variation from the plan.

2. Conduct desk-top literature review (25%)

The Researcher will:

- Identify and summarise all relevant studies, articles, reports, books relating to access to specialist legal CLC services in Victoria, Australia, and around the world; with special focus on:
 - i. Historical cause for formation of specialist and generalist CLCs
 - ii. Referral Processes
 - iii. Legal Needs Assessments
 - iv. Casework guidelines
 - v. Capacity
 - vi. Culture and Collaboration
- Identify and summarise all relevant studies, articles, reports, books relating to access to specialist services in analogous sectors (such as community health).
- Analyse that information in the context of the Project objective.
- Create an accessible, publishable document highlighting the findings (not more than 30 pages)

3. Assist in data recording and analysis from field research (35%)

The Researcher will:

- Work with the Project Manager to design best practice approach to evidence gathering and recording during the course of field research.
- Systematise the data gathered.
- Work with the Project Manager to analyse that data.

4. Draft Research Report. (30%)

The Researcher will:

- Create a public report including summary and analysis of desk-top research and field research (not more than 50 pages)
5. Immediate Supervision of research assistants (5%)
The Researcher will:
- Provide day-to-day guidance of any assistant researchers

Timeframe, work conditions and relationship to Project Manager

The Researcher will answer directly to the Project Manager (who works three days per week at the Federation). The Researcher will work in close collaboration with the Project Manager on strategic and operative levels. The Researcher and Project Manager will co-author all deliverables, with the Project Manager having the final say on content, structure and format.

The Researcher will have the option of working off site, but must be available (in person or on skype) for meetings with Project Manager on a weekly basis.

The Researcher must be available at agreed periods. The exact number of days and the periods of work will be reflected in the Research plan and approved by the Project manager.

Key deliverables

The following documents will be produced by the Researcher:

1. Detailed research plan with schedule of deliverables.
2. Literature review (not more than 30 pages).
3. Guidelines for field research data gathering.
4. Publicly available Research Report analysing, comparing and contrasting aspects of the literature review with data from field research (not more than 50 pages).

Required Qualifications & Experience

Essential

1. Post-graduate qualifications in law or social justice related field.
2. Demonstrated experience in desk-top and field research
3. Demonstrated experience in a research project with practical application
4. Demonstrated experience producing literature reviews and research reports
5. Excellent research, writing and analytical skills
6. Ability to work in a small team
7. Not currently an employee of Victoria Legal Aid or a Victorian Community Legal Centre

Desirable

8. Experience working in or with the community legal sector and an understanding of the key issues currently facing the sector
9. Experience supervising research assistants / interns.
10. Based in Melbourne or able to communicate regularly by Skype.

Process of selection of the consultant/team of consultants

Interested applicants should submit their CV, cover letter and supporting documents to Project Manager Michael Tamblyn before **9am on Wednesday 22nd March 2017**. Please send applications via email only: michael.tamblyn@fclc.org.au

In response to the TOR the proposal should include:

- A proposed timeframe outlining the total number of days for each of the deliverables. Ideally it would include a variety of options responding to 3 different budgets – eg - \$5 000, \$10 000 and \$15 000
- Individual responses to the recruitment qualifications and experience criteria
- Examples of previous relevant work that demonstrates the Researcher's experience (at least one literature review and one research report)
- Contact details for two referees.

Following receipt of all applications, short-listed applicants will be contacted for an interview. Interviews are anticipated to take place on 29, 30 or 31 March 2017 and applicants need to be available by Skype or in person. Unfortunately no feedback can be provided to unsuccessful applicants.

For any questions related to the TOR and application process please contact Ashwinny Krishna via email at ashwinny.krishna@fclc.org.au or telephone on +61 3 9652 1505.