

Call for Expressions of Interest from Expert Organisations to carry out child and youth consultations

Call issued: 24 June 2024

Deadline extension issued: 02 August 2024



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1. Background

Better Internet for Kids (BIK) is a European Commission initiative which aims to create a better internet for Europe's children and youth. It is funded under the Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL) and implemented by EUN Partnership aisbl (hereinafter called European Schoolnet [EUN]).

Underpinning the actions and activities carried out as part of the BIK project is the [European strategy for a better internet for kids+ \(BIK+ strategy\)](#), which represents the digital arm of the [rights of the child strategy](#) and aims for accessible, age-appropriate and informative online content and services that are in children's best interests. The BIK+ strategy is built on three key pillars:

- Safe digital experiences to protect children from harmful and illegal content, conduct, contact and consumer risks and to improve their well-being online through a safe, age-appropriate digital environment, created in a way that respects children's best interests.
- Digital empowerment so children acquire the necessary skills and competencies to make sound choices and express themselves in the online environment safely and responsibly.
- Active participation, respecting children by giving them a say in the digital environment, with more child-led activities to foster innovative and creative safe digital experiences.

One of the activities under the BIK project is to carry out a European Union-wide evaluation of the BIK+ strategy every two years. The evaluation involves consultations with various stakeholders, including young people and children, parents and carers, teachers, and expert stakeholders. Ghent University – Research Group: Law & Technology, acting in a subcontractor capacity, is developing a research methodology for consultations with young people and children (over 12 years of age). Within this context, EUN has launched the present call for expressions of interest from expert organisations to organise consultations with

children and young people younger than 12 years of age and from various vulnerable backgrounds.

2. The service to be supplied

EUN is looking for expert organisations based in a European Union Member State, Iceland or Norway, to organise consultations with children and young people from the different backgrounds outlined below and report the results. The expert organisations selected will adapt the base methodology developed by Ghent University to make it fit for the purpose of the target groups listed below.

The target groups are children and young people who fall under one or several of the following categories:

- younger than 12 years of age;
- living in poverty;
- members of LGBTQIA+ communities;
- members of ethnic minority communities in their respective countries;
- living with a (cognitive and/or physical) disability;
- living in (foster) care or other public care facilities.

Each consultation

- should consist of a group of 5 to 10 children and encompass harmonised age groups to maximise meaningful exchanges amongst the participants (expert organisations are expected to recruit participants and compose groups accordingly);
- should take around 60 minutes;
- should take place over the months of September and October 2024;
- may take place in the local language when necessary or in English;

- should be reported on in English language and in a structured and systematic manner using the provided reporting templates;
- must be concluded with final reporting in English submitted by 31 October 2024.

Depending on the specific group's needs, the consultations can take place online or in person.

Expert organisations are asked to nominate one person who will lead the consultation activity and function as the main point of contact to EUN. Selected organisations will be required to waive any intellectual property rights (IPR) of resulting materials and reports provided to EUN. The IPR will be then waived by EUN in favour of the European Commission for the purposes mentioned in the BIK service contract.

Lead experts of selected organisations may be invited to a joint analysis meeting (1 to 2 meetings max., where necessary) to exploit reported consultation results to the fullest. Depending on the time of the final reporting submission, such meetings are likely to take place in October and November 2024.

EUN, in close collaboration with its subcontractors at Ghent University, will collate a consolidated report of all consultation activities. This report is planned for publication in early February 2025.

3. Conditions

To respond to this call, applicant expert organisations should express their interest **via email**, providing the listed documents containing the following information and details:

1. a **letter of intent** detailing the expert organisation's interest in participating in this consultation activity;

2. a **Curriculum Vitae of the lead expert(s)** in English language, including information on the key personnel's educational background and relevant work experience, experience and reference examples of previous similar work carried out (annexed to the CV or with URLs; e.g., publications, reports, projects, etc.);
3. an **overview of the intended consultation activities**, including a detailed indication of the above-listed sub-groups of children and young people, their age and foreseen total number per consultation, and the country/region of the consultation activities.

The selection of the successful applicant expert organisation will be based on the following criteria:

- the demonstrated relevant experience in relation to consultation activities working with the designated sub-group(s);
- the proven track record of successfully implemented activities similar in nature;
- background diversity;
- the proven capacity to provide the service related to the European context and scope.

The evaluation committee may decide, at its entire discretion, to give a weighting to the listed selection criteria. The evaluation committee is not bound to select if the offers received are insufficient in quality or for any other business-related reason. At its entire discretion, the evaluation committee may decide to call the highest-scoring candidates for an online interview so that they can present their offer directly to the committee and resolve any outstanding issues or practical questions. Upon completion of the evaluation process, the selection results will be communicated to all applicant expert organisations, both successful and unsuccessful. Individual expert organisation contracts will be signed with successful applicants. No legal obligations arise until the expert organisation concerned has signed a contract with EUN.

4. Exclusion criteria

1. Applying expert organisations will be automatically excluded from selection and from an award if they fall within one of the criteria listed below:
2. The expert organisation and or the key personnel are subject to a conflict of interest.
3. The expert organisation is bankrupt or being wound up, is having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, is the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or is in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations.
4. The expert organisation and or the nominated lead expert have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata.
5. The expert organisation has not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of, social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established.
6. The expert organisations has made false declarations in supplying information required by any public organisation as a condition of participation in a procurement procedure or grant award procedure or fail to supply this information.
7. The expert organisation has been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which can be justified.
8. The applicant shall also be automatically excluded if the application together with attached CV is not received by EUN by the deadline listed in the 'Section 6 – Timeline and deadlines' below.

5. Budget

Each selected organisation will be eligible to receive funding of up to 5,000 EUR for a minimum of 25 children consulted. The funding is intended to cover the necessary expenses to conduct effective consultations.

6. Timeline and deadlines

The application receipt deadline has been extended to **Friday, 16 August 2024, 18.00 CEST**. Applications shall be submitted [via e-mail](#).

Interested expert organisations may e-mail questions until **Monday, 12 August 2024**. Answers will be provided by **Wednesday, 14 August 2024**.

After evaluating the submitted applications, the decision will be communicated via e-mail to each applicant.

Interested expert organisations are invited to send their expression of interest with the information and documents requested in 'Section 2 – The service to be supplied and Section 3 – Conditions' by email to EUN at the following address:

BIKevaluation@eun.org

 www.betterinternetforkids.eu

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