



**Belong To** LGBTQ+  
Youth Ireland

## Strategic Planning Process

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Request for Proposals for the Development of a  
Strategic Plan 2025 – 2027

Belong To LGBTQ+ Youth Ireland (Belong To) is seeking proposals for a consultant to lead us in the development of the organisation's new Strategic Plan 2025 – 2027. Proposals are welcome from individuals, partnerships, consortia, firms, agencies and companies. The deadline for submissions is **4pm on Monday 22 April 2024**.

### **The successful applicant(s) will:**

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1. Review Belong To's Strategic Plan 2022-2024, *All Different, All Together*, and evaluate the organisation's performance in relation to the strategic goals for this period.
2. Conduct research into similar organisations globally and prepare a comparative analysis with Belong To's activities, goals and strategy to date.
3. Facilitate the development of a new strategic plan for 2025-2027.
4. Ensure that an agreed broad range of stakeholders are consulted in the development of the new strategic plan.
5. Ensure that the voices of young people are centred in the development of the new strategic plan.
6. Write up the new strategic plan 2025-2027 to final stage, and a 3-year implementation plan with clear KPIs, in consultation with Belong To's Strategic Planning Working Group.

## **BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION**

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### **Belong To: the national LGBTQ+ Youth Organisation**

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Since 2003, Belong To has grown from a youth project into a unique national services and advocacy organisation with and for LGBTQ+ children and young people. Youth services, which inform our research, education work, and a development approach, enable us to provide solution-based advocacy at an institutional and public level.

We are rooted in and driven by our direct work with LGBTQ+ young people aged 10-24 and we exist to:

- Create and generate safe spaces and places for LGBTQ+ young people.
- Empower others through education to support LGBTQ+ young people.
- Lead policy and practice by providing expertise, developing best practice models, and reflecting lived experiences.
- Ensure LGBTQ+ young people have the opportunity to have their voices heard.
- Be an advocate for LGBTQ+ young people and champion change.

### **Belong To's Charitable Purpose**

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The charitable purpose for which the organisation was established was to:

- a. advance the wellbeing of the community at large by the provision of support and services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT+) young people and families in need; and
- b. advance the wellbeing of the community at large by the promotion and advancement of the wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT+) young people and their families whose lives have been affected by homophobia, transphobia, biphobia, social exclusion, discrimination, or other disadvantages, by fostering a culture of inclusiveness, equality, and human rights.

## Our Vision, Mission and Values

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Belong To's vision is a society where LGBTQ+ young people are equal, safe, and thriving.

Our mission is to empower LGBTQ+ young people through youth work, changing attitudes, and research.

Our values:

- **Welcoming** – we are mindful of people's wellbeing and strive for our spaces and interactions to be joyful and fun while ensuring they are safe and respectful.
- **Trustworthy** – we are transparent in our work, how we operate and in our governance.
- **Rooted in experience** – we work as equals with LGBTQ+ young people. What we say and do is informed by their lives, experience, and the challenges they face
- **Courageous** – we challenge and speak out about the causes and effects of prejudice, discrimination, homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia on LGBTQ+ young people and what must change.
- **Inclusive and diverse** – we seek to create a sense of belonging and to reflect and include the diversity of LGBTQ+ young people, and are mindful of intersectionality. We work in community and solidarity for human rights and social justice.
- **Strategic** – we make deliberate choices about where we focus our work and energy to make maximum impact on where we lead and where we partner with others.

## Model of Youth Work Practice

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Belong To's model of youth work practice is adapted from the critical social educational model of youth work.

- Critical – LGBT+ young people thinking for themselves.
- Social – Pro society and working together as a group.
- Education – Youthwork values guide the education process.

## OUR STRATEGIC GOALS 2022-2024

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### 1. Delivering LGBTQ+ Youth Work

*LGBTQ+ young people are safe and supported by a quality youth work service delivered in Dublin in equal partnership with young people.*

*A strong, expanding network of quality, targeted LGBTQ+ youth group and safe and supportive youth groups across Ireland.*

### 2. Building Safe Spaces & Services

*Training and educating professionals engaging with LGBTQ+ young people in schools, youth services, sports, and other services for young people.*

*Engaging with and supporting families.*

### 3. Campaigning for Change

*Champion the voice of LGBTQ+ young people through advocacy and engagement to create an Ireland where LGBTQ+ young people are equal, safe and thriving.*

*Empowering LGBTQ+ young people to be agents for positive social change.*

### 4. Being a Learning and Development Organisation

*A sustainable, professional, learning organisation with a skilled team, and robust systems working to achieve our vision.*

## CORE PROGRAMMES AND SERVICES

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### Our Dublin Youth Service

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We provide specialised LGBTQ+ youth services in Dublin with a focus on wellbeing and mental and sexual health. We provide an email and phone support service, in-person youth groups, thematic youth projects and preventative programmes, an LGBTQ+ youth drug and alcohol support service, and a family support service. We also provide in-house counselling for LGBTQ+ young people in collaboration with Pieta House.

## **Support for LGBTQ+ Youth Work Nationwide**

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We support a network of over 40 youth services across the Republic of Ireland that engage in LGBTQ+ youth work. We are also in the second phase of a pilot programme – the [Rainbow Award](#) – that seeks to ensure all youth services are safe and supportive spaces for LGBTQ+ young people.

## **Safe and Supportive Schools**

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The [Belong To LGBTQ+ Quality Mark](#) accreditation programme provides a comprehensive approach for post-primary schools and Youthreach centres to develop into safe and supportive spaces for LGBTQ+ students. This is a holistic 18-month programme which engages the entire school community. In September 2024, Belong To will also commence a pilot programme for primary schools.

## **Safe and Supportive Services**

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Belong To engages with other services that engage with LGBTQ+ young people, such as homeless services, to support them in becoming safe, supportive and welcoming spaces for LGBTQ+ young people.

## **Policy, Research and Advocacy**

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Through our research and advocacy, Belong To has been instrumental in ensuring that the voices and lived experiences of LGBTQ+ young people and their families have been heard and considered in several significant public policy developments, including the National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy, the Review of the Gender Recognition Act 2015, and the Department of Education's 2022 Action Plan on Bullying, *Cineáltas*.

## **Stand Up Awareness Week**

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As part of our communications and advocacy work to change attitudes and behaviour, Belong To runs Ireland's largest anti-bullying campaign, *Stand Up Awareness Week*, in post-primary schools across the country. The campaign has been instrumental on the international stage, winning recognition from UNESCO as international best practice. This campaign works to eliminate homophobia, biphobia and transphobia from society in a positive and empowering way.

## **Effecting Change Online**

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We engage with young people online through multiple social media platforms, and we run online campaigns throughout the year including [Better Out Than In](#) and [It's Our Social Media](#). We also provide [information and advice](#) on our website for young people to access information whenever they need it.

## **LGBTQ+ Inclusive Workplaces**

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Belong To partners with businesses and companies to build inclusive workplaces for LGBTQ+ youth in Ireland through meaningful and impactful events, workshops and campaigns.

## **TASKS AND DELIVERABLES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2027**

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### **Review Strategic Plan 2022-2024**

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- Identify and report on our impact, achievements and shortcomings under each of the four strategic goals, both quantitative and qualitative.
- Consult with a broad range of stakeholders, including staff, board members, volunteers, service users, funders, supporters and partner organisations, to gather and report on feedback on the delivery of Belong To's 2022-2024 strategic plan.
- Submit summary learnings and recommendations based on this review.

### **Research LGBTQ+ youth organisations in other jurisdictions**

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- Conduct research into the activities and strategic priorities of LGBTQ+ youth organisations in other jurisdictions.
- Prepare a report which summarises the findings of this research, highlights where there are commonalities and differences between other organisations and Belong To, and outlines key learnings and recommendations.

### **Develop the content for a new strategic plan**

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- Informed by the review of the 2022-2024 strategic plan, develop a set of priority themes with broad objectives and actions, set out in order of priority, for the next strategic plan.
- Consult and collaborate on an ongoing basis with the internal strategic planning working group.
- Consult with a broad range of stakeholders, including staff, board members, volunteers, service users, young people who are not service users, teachers, post-primary students, youth services, funders, supporters, partner organisations, media and policymakers on what they think Belong To's priorities and strategic goals should be for the next 3 years. Collate and summarise the information gathered through these consultations in a format that is digestible and present this to the internal strategic planning working group.



- Conduct an analysis of the environment in which Belong To is operating, considering factors such as AI, developments in digital youth work, the political and social environment, recent relevant research and data, and available internal data.
- Draft a clear implementation framework document, including a reporting and evaluation framework with KPIs for the strategy.
- Write up the final strategy document by 30 September 2024. The final strategy document should centre the voices of young people and should take into account any feedback and suggested changes from the internal strategic planning working group.

## KEY QUESTIONS WE WANT TO ANSWER

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- What impact did we have throughout the period of our strategic plan 2022-2024? Where did we have most impact, and where could we make more of an impact in 2025-2027?
- How do our key stakeholders view us as an organisation, the work that we do, and the impact that we have?
- What are similar organisations internationally doing that we could be doing? What can we learn from their experiences?
- How can we build on the progress we have made and consolidate our achievements, taking into account new opportunities in areas such as AI and digital youth work?
- What are the barriers and threats in the external environment, both actual and potential, that we need to pre-empt and plan for in the period 2025-2027?
- How will we measure and evaluate our performance in our next strategic plan, and report on our impact?
- What more can we do across all areas of our work and strategy to ensure that we continue to meet best practice in terms of [ethics and governance](#).

## SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL

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### Timeframe:

The closing date for receiving proposals is **4pm on Monday 22 April**. It is expected that Belong To will have chosen a successful proposal within 3 weeks of this date, and have agreed a start and a completion date for this work. A shortlist of candidates may be invited to present and/or meet with the selection panel (provisionally the afternoon of 24 April) prior to a final decision being made on awarding of the contract.

### Proposals must include:

- A process flow and timetable listing key milestones, which makes clear the process and timeline for meeting the final 30 September deadline.
- Methodology to be used.
- Description of expertise and experience (including team members, if relevant).
- Detailed budget.
- Breakdown of time allocations.
- Identification of any (potential) conflicts of interest and/or loyalty.
- Samples of previous strategic plans developed by the proposed consultant(s).
- Contact details for two referees who have engaged the proposed consultant(s) previously for similar/related work.

### Budget

The budget available for the total project will be no more than €15,000 (inclusive of VAT and expenses). Please clearly outline all fees.

A current tax clearance certificate will be required. The contract to be awarded will be a fixed price contract and, as such, all costs must be quoted (and clearly indicated) as a fixed price in Euro. The successful consultant is expected to work within the agreed budget and report regularly on budgetary issues. Consideration will be given to competitive tenders.

The proposal **should not** include budget lines for the design, print or dissemination of the strategic plan; separate budget lines will be made available and coordinated by Belong To to cover print, design and distribution.

## Insurance

The successful consultant(s) will be required to submit evidence of relevant professional indemnity and insurance details.

## Child Protection and Safeguarding

As the contract will involve the consultant engaging in consultative work directly with children and young people, the proposed team will be subject to Belong To's safeguarding policies and procedures, including our [Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection and Welfare Policy](#).

## Submitting a Proposal

- Consultants responding to this Request for Proposals are required to nominate a lead person from their organisation as a point of contact, where applicable.
- Consultants are required to provide details of all key staff and experience in the provision of these services, where applicable.
- Proposals submitted past the deadline will not be considered.
- All supporting material and documentation should be included in the proposal.
- All documents submitted should be in an accessible format and care should be taken to ensure that information is accessible to the widest range of users.
- All costs associated with submitted proposals will be the responsibility of the consultant.
- Proposals may only be submitted by email, as per the contact details below.

## Proposal Acceptance

- Belong To is not bound to accept the lowest cost proposal. MEAT assessment principles will apply.
- The successful consultant(s) must commit to completing the assignment on time and on budget, and failure to meet the timeline agreed may affect payment.
- All those who submit a proposal that is ultimately unsuccessful will be informed.
- Unless otherwise expressly agreed, there shall be no binding contract between Belong To and any party unless and until a written contract is signed by both parties.

## Belong To expressly reserves the following rights:

- To extend the deadline for submission of proposals and/or to vary the timings and process for their request for proposals.

- To vary any requirements of the services included in the request for proposals.
- Following evaluation, to accept or reject any of the submitted proposals.
- To seek and obtain clarification in relation to any submitted proposal, including additional information.
- To request that a submitted proposal be amended.
- To accept any proposal in part or in total.

### **Evaluation of Proposals**

Submitted proposal will in the first instance be checked for compliance with the Request for Proposals conditions. Submission will be assessed against the following criteria:

1. Proven capability and experience in research and consultation (including youth consultation), and relevant field of work (20%)
2. Proven capability and experience in evaluation and impact assessment (10%)
3. Demonstrated experience and understanding of best practice in ethics and governance in the non-profit sector (10%)
4. Methodology (30%)
5. Cost (30%)

Any proposal must receive a minimum of 40% of the available marks under each individual category 1-5 above to remain in contention.

### **Copyright and Confidentiality**

The consultant will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement and any materials produced in the performance of the contract will be the copyright of Belong To. Copyright for any illustrations or other material used should be cleared by the consultant. The report, in whole or in part, may be made available for public use by Belong To.

### **Data Protection and Privacy**

When you submit a proposal in response to this Request for Proposals, Belong To will create a digital record in your name. Information submitted in your proposal will be used in processing the proposal. Where the services of a third party are used in processing your proposal, it may be required to provide them with your information. Any such sharing of data will be in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations and relevant legislation, and all necessary precautions will be taken to ensure the security of your data. To make a request to access your personal data, please submit a request by email to [privacy@belongto.org](mailto:privacy@belongto.org) ensuring that

you describe the records you seek in the greatest possible detail to enable us to identify the relevant record(s). For more information, please see our [Privacy Policy](#).

**Submit to**

Please submit proposals by 4pm on Monday 22 April 2024 to Tiffany Fitzgerald-Brosnan, Office and Operations Manager, by emailing [tiffany@belongto.org](mailto:tiffany@belongto.org).

Any queries can be submitted to [info@belongto.org](mailto:info@belongto.org), although please note that canvassing will disqualify.