



basic education  
Department:  
Basic Education  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



## Call for Proposals to conduct the Subject Adviser Profiling Study in South Africa

### 1. Introduction

This is a call for proposals to undertake a study to profile the Subject Advisory Service in South Africa. The study is aimed at gaining a deeper understanding of the role of Subject Advisors (SAs), their provisioning, profile and utilisation of tools of trade and support SAs provide to schools. The report and the policy brief is expected to inform policy and practice. The study is commissioned by the National Education Collaboration Trust (NECT) in partnership with the Department of Basic Education (DBE). This document provides the necessary details to inform the Proposal to conduct the study by a competent organisation. The Proposal must be submitted by 24 May 2019 and within the budget envelope of R500 000.00. The study should be completed within **twelve months** from the date of issuing this call for proposals.

### 2. Background and Rationale

Although the District Office (DO) system has been in existence for more than twenty years under the post 1994 education administration, there is very little research on the role that SAs currently play in relation to supporting teachers and departmental heads to effectively deliver the curriculum. SAs play a key role within the district configuration, and in particular the professional role of facilitating curriculum **implementation** and **delivery** in schools. The *Policy on the Organisation, Roles and Responsibilities of Education Districts* (Department of Basic Education, 2013) states that the district office has a responsibility with regard to the development and arrangement of “curriculum programmes” in accordance with the identified needs of teachers. This implies that SAs have a responsibility to support and assist teachers in curriculum planning, organising, implementation and monitoring. However, despite the policy frameworks put in place by the Department of Basic Education (DBE), it appears there is very limited understanding of the enablers and inhibitors of successful subject advisory support to teachers.

Although we have anecdotal evidence on the work of SAs, there has been no systematic and rigorous study on the work and value of SAs since 1994, highlighting the national importance of this study. Therefore, this study is undertaken to address the dearth of knowledge related to this critical support layer in the education system.

### 3. Aims and objectives of the study

The purpose of the study is to understand the inhibitors and enablers of the roles and responsibilities of subject advisors.

The specific objectives of the study are to;

- Determine the post establishment of SAs nationally,
- Better understand the roles, functions and competencies required of SAs,
- Establish the daily work routines of SAs in terms of their job descriptions

- Determine policy expectations and availability and utilisation of tools of trade
- Identify professional development needs, and
- Establish current subject advisor professionalisation initiatives.

The study is intended to provide an empirical perspective of the role of SAs compared to the expectations defined in the policy. The research study will also help identify professional development needs and the programmes in place for the professionalisation of SAs.

#### **4. Call for Expressions of Interest to conduct the study**

The DBE, NECT and the Funder jointly invite suitably qualified people and organisations to respond to the call for proposals to conduct a Subject Advisor Profile Study. This call is targeted at researchers, universities, practitioners and organisations who are interested in participating in this endeavour of national importance trying to better understand the work undertaken by SAs.

#### **5. Scope of the study**

Services providers are expected to employ innovative approaches in undertaking the study. Given the large nature of the study, approaches that employ a combination of systemic review of literature, as well as primary research using mixed methods is preferred:

##### **A. Sampling framework**

1. A purposely selected sample of subject advisors from six districts (2 per province) located in three provinces;
2. Sample of FP/English First Additional Language (EFAL) subject advisors;
3. A sample of EFAL and Maths subject advisors in INTERSEN phase and
4. A sample of district and provincial district officials who lead the EFAL and Maths subject advisors.

B. National and international literature. This should include developed and developing countries.

C. Analysis of policy documents: Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) agreements, district policies, etc.

D. Profile of SAs nationally (no of subject advisors, post provisioning norms, qualifications, experience, age groups, etc.) and analysis of data.

#### **6. Project governance and policy alignment**

The research team will plan with and report to the Project Steering Committee (PSC) comprising two managers from the DBE and specialists from the NECT and the Funder respectively.

#### **7. Proposal submission**

The applicant must submit a proposal to the NECT that sets out how they will undertake this study. Applicants can collaborate with other individuals and organisations to ensure that the required capacity and expertise is available within their team.

The proposal must include:

- A brief outline of your understanding of the task.
- An outline of the process, methodology and data collection and analysis strategy that you propose.

- A plan with high-level activities, period and budget.
- Experience and expertise of the organisation and team that will undertake the study.
- List of team members. This includes brief CVs of the team leader and researchers/evaluators.

The proposal will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Understanding and interpretation of the task
- The approach to the task, including methodology, data collection and analysis
- Experience and expertise in the field
- Organisational capacity
- BBBEE status
- Inclusion of African evaluators/researchers in the team
- Cost or budget

## 8. Outputs and Deliverables

The following are the deliverables (see the above for quantities):

1. Inception workshop
2. Progress Reports (aligned to the agreement)
3. Final Report
4. Presentation to Stakeholder

## 9. Contact Person

Proposals must be submitted to Ms Yolisa Mdiya by the close of business on 24 May 2019. Please note that only short-listed Service Providers will be notified. A briefing session will be held with shortlisted service providers to discuss timelines, methodology and specific deliverables.

We thank all applicants in advance for taking the time to submit Proposals. Please feel free to share this with anyone you think who may be interested in applying.

**Closing date: 24 May 2019**

General enquiries should be emailed to [yolisam@nect.org.za](mailto:yolisam@nect.org.za)



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