

Terms of Reference for Consultancy Project
Development of NRPSI's Strategic Plan 2026 to 2028

About NRPSI:

see www.nrpsi.org.uk

NRPSI is the UK's independent voluntary regulator of professional interpreters specialising in public service. We maintain a public register of professional, qualified and accountable interpreters. The National Register is free of charge to access and searchable online.

The need for defendants in court to be able to understand the proceedings, using an interpreter if necessary, was identified in the landmark R v Iqbal Begum Court of Appeal ruling which stated:

'It is beyond the understanding of this court that it did not occur to someone that the reason for her [the defendant's] silence..... was simply because she was not being spoken to in a language which she understood.'

As a result, the 1993 Runciman Royal Commission on Criminal Justice recommended that a national register of qualified interpreters should be established with the aim of 'using only interpreters with proven competence and skills, who are governed by a nationally recognised code of conduct'. NRPSI was established in 1994.

Every interpreter on the Register has met the standards that we set for education, training and practice in public service. All Registrants are subject to the NRPSI Code of Professional Conduct and we investigate allegations of professional misconduct.

Even today, parts of the public services are unaware of the need to use qualified interpreters. From the Serious Case Review following the death of Daniel Pelka, aged 5, in September 2013:

'Without proactive or consistent action by any professional to engage with him via an interpreter, then his lack of language and low confidence would likely have made it almost impossible for him to reveal the abuse he was suffering at home.'

Using the National Register to find an interpreter ensures that you not only employ a qualified professional practitioner but that the interpreter can be held accountable should their conduct or competence fall below the high standards expected of a Registered Public Service Interpreter (RPSI).

There are around 1,650 interpreters in 100 languages on the National Register covering the whole of the UK. It is a dynamic database, with Registrants' details constantly being updated and new Registrants added.

Purpose of the Project:

see <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/NRPSI-Strategy-2023-to-2025-document-is-published-today-click-here-to-read-the-latest-update.html>

We are seeking a consultant to work with us to review the current strategic plan (see link above) in order to inform the development of the next strategic plan. This will help NRPSI to understand the key strengths and weaknesses in the delivery of the current strategy and to help the NRPSI to be in a stronger position to meet future challenges and to seize new and emerging strategic opportunities.

The board recognises that the assessment of the relevance and effectiveness of the current strategy is a key enabler for the development of the next strategic plan particularly mindful of the changing landscape.

Currently there are many challenges offering opportunities for NRPSI to draw closer to achieving its aims.

See the written evidence delivered to the House of Lords Public Services Committee Inquiry in to Interpreting and Translation Services:

(<https://committees.parliament.uk/work/8493/interpreting-and-translation-services-in-the-courts/publications/written-evidence/>)

See the Report following this inquiry: <https://www.nrpsi.org.uk/news-posts/The-new-report-from-the-House-of-Lords-mirrors-Lord-Justice-Auld-s-Review-of-the-Criminal-Courts-in-2001-click-here-to-read-the-full-report.html>

Also worthwhile exploring the Ministry of Justice independent review and draft new framework for October 2026 onwards at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-technical-review-of-qualifications-and-experience-requirements-for-the-provision-of-spoken-language-interpreting>

Objectives of the consultancy:

- Review the existing strategic plan particularly in relation to achievement, deliverables and impact.
- Facilitate a workshop session with the board members to identify key insights from the delivery of the current strategic plan.
- Facilitate a workshop session with board members to utilise the key insights identified above to shape the key strategic priorities for the next three years.

Scope of Work

- Desk top review of relevant strategic documents.
- Facilitate workshop sessions to underpin the development of the draft strategic plan 2026 to 2028.
- Interviews with board members and staff as appropriate.

Key Deliverables

- Drafting a strategic review report outlining the assessment of the current strategy and the relevant feedback from the workshop sessions in order to propose key future strategic priorities.

Essential Criteria

- Previous experience in carrying out strategic reviews as part of developing strategic plans particularly for small to medium sized organisations.
- Excellent facilitation skills, including using appropriate online technologies.
- Experience in using relevant strategic development tools, including horizon scanning, SWOT and PESTLE analyses.
- Experience of developing appropriate SMART strategic priorities.

Please respond to Mike Orlov, Chief Executive and Registrar, (mike@nrpsi.org.uk) with your proposed plan and fee no later than Tuesday 15th April 2025.

28th March 2025
ENDS