

## Switchback Tender Specification

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### Switchback are seeking a research partner to co-deliver a Participatory Action Research project on housing for prison leavers.

#### 1. Invitation to Quote or Bid:

The purpose of this document is to invite tenders for a research partner to co-produce a Participatory Action Research (PAR) report on housing for prison leavers.

The contracting authority and manager of the project is Switchback.

Tenders are invited from suitably qualified individuals, collectives, or organisations.

This document constitutes an invitation to tender for the work. Subsequent sections describe the background to the tender, the work to be done and our expectations.

#### 2. About Switchback:

Switchback is an award-winning charity supporting young Londoners to find their way out of the justice system and build stable, rewarding lives of which they can be proud. We provide intensive one-to-one support either side of the prison gate alongside real-work training after release. Three key areas of our programme are:

- **Real-Work Training:** Providing supportive and valuable training is essential to the Switchback Programme. We work with a range of organisations to provide real-work training programmes and we are always interested to explore new training partnerships.
- **Employment Opportunities:** We work with a wide range of organisations to provide employment opportunities for our trainees and are always open to support employers looking to hire work ready, motivated Switchback Trainees.
- **Experience & Development:** We provide various employment and self-development experiences for our trainees including visits to organisations, interview prep sessions, and industry/sector Q&A sessions.

#### 3. Tender Overview:

- Switchback is working with our EBE (Experts by Experience) to develop a series of Participatory Action Research projects on subjects that impact the lives of Switchback Trainees (men who take part in the Switchback programme) and EBE members. As part of this process, we are aiming to co-produce policy proposals for the following pillars of our wider policy ambition, a national resettlement plan (initial [proposal](#))
  - Mental Health
  - Recall
  - Housing
  - Banking, ID and basics
  - Employment

We have worked with peer researchers on two projects so far.

- A scoping project on [mental health and prison release](#)
  - A PAR report on [prison recall](#)
- Our next PAR project will focus on prison leavers and housing. As an organisation we hold strong relationships with organisations in the housing sector.
  - This tender is for a research partner for this project. As an organisation that has partnered with PAR researchers in our last two projects, we are growing in confidence with the methodology. We are now seeking a partner who can continue to support our growth and confidence in using this methodology, with the research partner delivering the more technical research elements alongside our ability to convene peer researchers and partners. We recognise that we need the support of a consultant who is interested in sharing knowledge and experience on Participatory Action Research. We understand that the boundaries of the role may not yet feel completely clear and we would welcome discussion on this through the tender process.

#### 4. Our Requirements:

- The research partner would be responsible for;
  - Introducing the peer researchers to the PAR methodology
  - Co-designing a research plan and supporting with the development of research tools (surveys, workshop plans etc)
  - Supporting the SB team to facilitate discussions that will enable the development of the research plan.
  - Supporting the peer researchers to carry out field work and research
- Switchback is looking for a partner to lead aspects of this PAR project and to help our team to grow knowledge and confidence in this methodology of work. We envisage that there are aspects of the project that we can run with consultancy support, such as holding space for peer-researchers to discuss their experiences with the housing system, with our research partner stepping into a more active role in co-designing research plans. We recognise that you may want further information on how this partnership could work and we would be happy to discuss this.

#### 5. Skills and Experience:

Essential

- Experience delivering PAR project or other similar participatory methodologies in partnership with other organisations.
- Knowledge of the PAR process, or other similar participatory methodologies.
- Experience co-designing research plans and instruments
- Experience connecting and engaging with people from different backgrounds

Desirable

- Knowledge of housing policy and legislation

#### 6. Management and Organisation:

The work of the commissioned organisation will be undertaken in partnership with Switchback.

The commissioned organisation will be required to regularly engage with, consult with and report back to representatives from Switchback.

### 7. How to Apply:

We are open for proposals to be submitted in any format, however we would expect the proposal to cover the following areas:

- Outline of the approach you will take to deliver our requirements.
- Details of the individual(s) who will lead, manage, and deliver including details of their experience, training and knowledge of the areas.
- Detailed breakdown of costs.
- A realistic timetable for delivery.
- Background material to demonstrate previous relevant experience.
- Any thoughts or ideas on how you could help us to deliver the three key areas of our programme

Please submit your proposal via email to [policy@switchback.org.uk](mailto:policy@switchback.org.uk).

### 8. Contract Value:

The estimated value for this contract is £7000 inclusive of VAT and all expenses. Our intention is to continue to deliver further participatory projects relating to issues impacting prison leavers in future years and we hope this agreement will be the start of a longer partnership.

### 9. Estimated Timescales:

Task	Deadline
Proposal Deadline	March 20 <sup>th</sup>
Interview dates if required	W/C 30 March
Final decision by Switchback	06 April
Delivery initiation & any associated refinement of approach plus contract signing	April 06-20th
Delivery Period (IF REQUIRED)	May-December 2026 (details below)

We have an indicative plan for the project with notes on the potential input of the PAR consultant below;

Phase/Activity	Month	PAR Consultant Role
Stage 3: Designing a Research Plan	May- mid June	Facilitate introduction to PAR session for peer researchers  Consultation meetings to help plan and reflect on two open

		<p>discussions with group members</p> <p>Co-designing a research plan with peer researcher (plan and facilitate sessions, design research instruments)</p>
Stage 4: Evidence Gathering	Mid-June-Mid-September	<p>Fortnightly consultation with SB team</p> <p>Potential attendance at fieldwork</p>
Stage 5: Agreeing Recommendations and Drafting	Mid-September-November.	<p>Consultation and check in with SB Staff team</p> <p>Attend session to agree recommendations with peer researchers</p>
PUBLICATION December 2026		
Stage 6: Advocacy	June 2026-December 2027	<p>This agreement will run until the end of 2026. Advocacy and action will continue and we may be able to discuss extending the agreement if this right for all parties.</p>

Thank you for your time and interest in this work. If you have any queries please contact Daniel Mills on [daniel@switchback.org.uk](mailto:daniel@switchback.org.uk) or 07949902843