

Invitation to Tender

Research project: dyslexic adults in the workplace (England)

Overview

The British Dyslexia Association (BDA) are inviting tenders from suitably qualified organisations or consortia to design and deliver a research project examining the lived experiences of adults with dyslexia in England, with a particular focus on employment and workplace inclusion.

Building on the impact of the BDA's recent research into dyslexia and young people, this programme will generate robust, population-level quantitative evidence alongside rich qualitative insight. The findings will inform practical recommendations for employers, policymakers and wider society and will be launched at a high-profile parliamentary reception.

The BDA is seeking a single lead contractor to deliver this research programme to a high standard, ensuring methodological rigour, accessibility and policy relevance throughout.

Background and rationale

Dyslexia affects approximately one in ten people in the UK, equating to nearly seven million individuals. It impacts reading, writing, spelling, memory and organisation, and can have significant implications across education, employment and everyday life. While many dyslexic adults develop strengths, resilience and coping strategies, a substantial proportion experience barriers associated with late identification, inconsistent support and limited understanding within workplaces.

For employers, these barriers affect recruitment, retention, progression, wellbeing and productivity. Despite the prevalence of dyslexia in the workforce, there remains a lack of robust, England-specific evidence on:

- How dyslexic adults experience working life
- Where systemic barriers persist
- Which organisational and policy interventions would make the greatest positive impact

This research programme aims to address that evidence gap and support the development of more inclusive, dyslexia-friendly workplaces.

Scope of the research

The research will explore the experiences of adults aged 18 and over who identify as dyslexic, examining how dyslexia shapes employment outcomes and wider participation in society. The BDA estimate that up to 80% of people leave school without a diagnosis and many will never be formally diagnosed unless they can afford to pay privately for an assessment costing around £600.

The BDA expects the successful bidder to deliver a mixed-methods study, comprising:

Quantitative research

- A large, population-representative survey of adults with dyslexia in England
- Coverage to include (as a minimum):
 - Employment status, industry they work in, work experiences and income
 - Mental health and wellbeing
 - Day-to-day life and use of digital technology
 - Experiences of bullying, harassment and discrimination
 - Perceptions of dyslexia in the media and public discourse
 - Perceptions of the key barriers for dyslexic adults
- Collection of demographic data to ensure diversity and representativeness

Qualitative research

- Focus groups and/or in-depth interviews with dyslexic adults
- Exploration of individual experiences, career trajectories, workplace adjustments, strengths, challenges and unmet needs⁴

We are open to other methods and would welcome alternative and suggestions to achieve the same objectives.

Expected outputs

The core outputs will include:

- A high-quality research report focused on adults with dyslexia in England, comparable in scope and ambition to *Towards a Dyslexia-Friendly Scotland*. <https://dyslexiascotland.org.uk/report/>
- Clear analysis identifying:
 - Systemic barriers affecting dyslexic adults in employment
 - The organisational, economic and societal impact of unmet needs

- Variations in experience across sectors and demographic groups
- Practical, evidence-based recommendations for:
 - Employers
 - Government and policymakers

The successful bidder will be expected to work closely with the BDA to ensure outputs are accessible, impactful and suitable for a wide audience, including employers, policymakers and people with lived experience.

Indicative timetable

Task	Deadline
Sending out tender	9 February 2026
Deadline for questions	25 February 2026
Deadline for receipt of tender	2 March 2026
Interviews for shortlisted candidates	9 March 2026
Appointment of researcher(s)	10 March 2026
Survey and recruitment	March/April
Interviews and focus groups	April/May
Analysis and report writing	May/June
Internal report deadline	Friday 5 June
BDA Publication launched	End June

Budget

We have an indicative budget of £15,000 for this work, but we would welcome feedback on what can be achieved within this budget and/or any alternative approaches.

Contact

We are happy to answer any questions by email: policy@bdadyslexia.org.uk.
Please submit questions by 25 February 2026.

How to apply

To apply, please submit a detailed proposal of a maximum of 3 pages (excluding CVs/resumes) that includes your research approach, timeline, budget, and how you will ensure inclusivity and accessibility for dyslexic participants, as well as any ethical considerations.

Please share evidence of relevant expertise and experience, including previous research on dyslexia or related topics, and details of any members of the research team, supported by examples of past work, a risk management plan, and how you intend to engage/recruit participants.

Deadline

We are expecting to interview candidates on Monday 9th March 2026 and appoint thereafter.

Please submit tenders by **5pm Monday 2 March** to policy@bdadyslexia.org.uk