



## **GenerationQ**

### **Information for applicants**

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## Introduction to GenerationQ

GenerationQ is a fully-funded leadership development fellowship programme, designed to generate a network of Health Foundation Fellows who are skilled and effective leaders of quality improvement in health care.

This unique and challenging fellowship brings together senior leaders in clinical and non-clinical roles from across the UK, representing the wide variety of sectors working in and with the health service, including charity organisations and policy makers. As well as gaining a postgraduate academic qualification, Fellows will be able to develop their organisation's capability for quality improvement.

Through the fellowship the Health Foundation is aiming to create a network of individuals who are able and willing to have an impact on improving quality beyond their immediate sphere of influence. Now recruiting for its sixth cohort, GenerationQ is developing Health Foundation Fellows through a combination of leadership and improvement methodology.

Through a lasting relationship with the Health Foundation, Fellows of GenerationQ will be invited to take part in opportunities to connect with the Foundation and promote its learning across the UK.

GenerationQ is delivered in partnership with Ashridge Business School.

## Fellowship programme detail

### ***What is unique about GenerationQ***

GenerationQ is unique in that it aims to develop skilled and effective clinical and non-clinical leaders for quality improvement in health across all four countries of the UK. It pays equal attention to the latest thinking and research in improvement methodologies and the leadership qualities needed to drive change. It is founded upon critical analysis of current research and theory which has practical relevance to leaders actually 'out there' leading improvement, making a difference to patients and the front line.

The fellowship offers support and challenge from faculty and participants to help Fellows achieve a lasting and positive impact in their organisation throughout the programme, and to learn from the process.

### ***What the fellowship offers Fellows***

Through participation in GenerationQ, Fellows will:

- become more effective and better equipped to lead quality improvement for the benefit of patients, staff and carers in today's challenging environment
- learn how to do things differently rather than just working harder. Fellows will already be experienced at leading improvement, but by the end of the programme they will know how to apply frameworks, be able to apply theory and research about improvement methodology, leadership and change to their own context and be able to articulate the reasons for their choices with confidence
- achieve a postgraduate certificate in Leadership (Quality Improvement) from Ashridge Business School, subject to successful completion of assignments. Fellows may also choose to register for an Ashridge Business School postgraduate diploma or masters in Leadership (Quality Improvement). The decision about what level to study to does not need to be made until 10 months after the start of the fellowship. All Fellows will participate in all cohort learning activities regardless of their chosen level of study.
- be more self aware of their impact as leaders, their personal preferences and blind spots.

In addition, at the end of the programme, Fellows will have been able to make a difference through their 'ambition into practice' (further information on page 8), with the support and challenge of faculty and the other Fellows.

**"I am more confident in my leadership of improvement and I have a clearer feel for what can be achieved. My understanding of the complexity of organisational change has been a revelation and it is this, combined with my development as a reflective practitioner, which has completely changed my outlook on how to engage with, and sustain, change. Within the organisation, I am now recognised as a leader with real expert knowledge, as a direct result of my participation on the programme."**

**Chris Barben  
Consultant Colorectal Surgeon and Deputy Divisional Medical Director,  
Aintree Hospital NHS Foundation Trust  
GenerationQ Fellow (2013)**

For information about what Fellows would gain/learn from the different levels of postgraduate study, please see the *GenerationQ Curriculum* (a separate document available on the Health Foundation website).

#### ***What the fellowship offers organisations***

By the end of the programme, organisations will have:

- benefited from a significant shift in quality as the Fellow applies their new knowledge and insights to build on the organisational priorities and improve key services through their 'ambition into practice'
- benefited from the skills and insights of a senior leader who is adept at generating the cultural change necessary to underpin quality improvement
- experienced an increase in excitement and interest within the organisation for improving quality as the Fellow shares their learning and experiments with others
- made use of the opportunity for the organisational sponsor to absorb the Fellow's learning 'by proxy' to enhance their own understanding of improving quality
- helped develop a highly sought after future leader.

***"Having a GenerationQ Fellow in our organisation has had a profound impact on our local system, but also nationally. They have placed patient experience absolutely at the centre of all we (and others) do, and there are endless examples of improvements that we have derived from this."***

**Jim Mackey,  
Chief Executive Officer, Northumbria Healthcare, NHS Foundation Trust and  
GenerationQ sponsor**

### Programme curriculum

The programme curriculum is based on the four GenerationQ leadership domains (see Figure 1). A detailed description of curriculum aims and content for each domain is available in the *GenerationQ Curriculum* (a separate document available on the Health Foundation website).

<b>Contextual leadership</b> Enhancing local conditions (formal and informal strategy, culture and environment) to be more conducive for quality improvement in the context of the macroeconomic agenda (including national policy and politics, opportunities and constraints)	<b>Technical leadership</b> Making informed choices about how to go forward based on awareness, understanding and some experience of the full range of improvement philosophies, approaches, methods and tools
<b>Relational leadership</b> Leading change and engaging skilfully with others, at all hierarchical levels and including patients and carers, in the complex and challenging environments of the wider system	<b>Personal leadership</b> Being highly self-aware and authentic; knowing one's own strengths, motivations, patterns, needs and limitations

Figure 1: GenerationQ leadership domains

If you are a senior leader committed to improving the quality of health care, the fellowship programme offers you the opportunity to learn with a group of experienced peers in a highly supportive and challenging environment. Specifically, the programme offers:

- **An intensive, high impact learning experience.** This includes residential leadership forums, the support of individual executive coaching, action learning in facilitated peer groups, the opportunity to engage with systems beyond health and extensive feedback.
- **The opportunity to put your ambition into practice.** Through putting their learning into practice, Fellows enhance their development experience and are also able to provide benefits to their organisation.
- **The opportunity to work closely with and learn from a multidisciplinary group of peers.** The group (up to 18 in total) will represent the diversity of the health care sector and aims to include patient representative organisations and health care policy makers from across the UK.
- **Academic rigour and recognition.** The programme is validated by Ashridge Business School at masters degree level.

*"I had been undertaking a lot of projects before I applied and realised that, as so often in medicine, I was "having a go" without realising some of the theoretical framework behind what I was attempting. What I have gained from the programme is not only the experience of a group of like-minded colleagues who continue to support me in my learning and development, but also a broader understanding of where my work "fits" within the field of quality improvement. It has helped me reflect on my future direction within the NHS and given me the confidence to be clear about the reasons for my decisions. It does involve a significant commitment, but I can only recommend that you consider applying for this programme."*

**Dr Helen Crimlisk**  
Consultant Psychiatrist, Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust  
GenerationQ Fellow 2015

### ***Eligibility criteria***

In order to be considered as a fellow, applicants should meet the following eligibility criteria:

- **Applicants should be senior leaders in a position of influence**

The fellowship is aimed at clinical and non-clinical senior leaders who are in a position to influence change and quality improvement at the highest level in their organisation. We are looking for applicants with significant leadership responsibility within their organisation and we would expect you to be reporting directly to a member of your senior executive team. Examples of roles include (but are not restricted to):

  - Clinical Director (for those in an acute medical role).
  - Deputy/Assistant Director (for those in a senior nursing, public health or management roles).
  - GP with a senior position in the local CCG and/or with an education/training remit.
  - National or Regional Director (for those in a charity, or professional or government body).
  
- **Applicants should have potential to develop a high profile and wide reach**

We are looking for people that will use GenerationQ to have a far-reaching impact on the quality of health and health care. We will therefore be looking for evidence that you are already building your profile and demonstrating a capacity to influence beyond your immediate sphere. We welcome participants from small as well as large organisations, and expect people to take active interest in their wider system. We need to be convinced that your potential for impact will, at least in time, reach beyond a single setting.
  
- **Enthusiasm for, and commitment to, improvement**

The aim of this fellowship is not simply to provide personal and professional development; it has been developed to equip leaders with the capabilities and techniques that will enable them to drive forward improvement across their organisation or system and to influence others to lead improvement. We are looking for demonstrable enthusiasm for learning how to lead and influence improvement.
  
- **Evidence of the ability to lead improvement**

A significant element of this fellowship programme will be sharing experiences and learning with the wider group. It is not designed to teach individuals how to lead improvement, but rather to draw on shared experiences and to introduce and discover together new ways of thinking and acting that help to have a greater impact on the improvement of health care quality. We anticipate therefore that applicants will have some prior experience in leading improvement and will expect to see evidence of previous work in their application form, as well as opportunities for further work in the future.
  
- **Employed in a relevant and health related role for the duration of the fellowship**

GenerationQ aims to reflect the diversity of those working in and with the UK health service. Applications are welcomed from those in either clinical or non-clinical roles and from people working in health related organisations such as professional bodies, royal colleges, government/policy departments and health/patient focussed charities, in addition to all sectors of the NHS. The learning on this fellowship programme will take place within the context of the Fellows' organisations. Therefore, it is essential that applicants have an established role that will enable them to have influence at the highest level of the organisation, or are likely to have an established role in new organisational entities. Those on secondment or in a fixed-term post will be eligible to apply, but such applicants will need to demonstrate how they will ensure systems or relationships are in place to enable continued improvement.

- **Willingness to learn from peers**

Fellows will be expected to work with peers as part of the whole community and via ‘action learning sets’: facilitated peer support and challenge. This will involve sharing their own issues at work and will require them to be curious about others’ situations and perspectives, and open to giving and receiving robust feedback.

- **Capacity for reflective learning**

We believe that leaders need to step back from their day-to-day lives and reflect thoughtfully on their experiences. In other words, personal learning and developing personal leadership capability is achieved by both doing and reflecting on doing. Fellows will need to demonstrate the capacity for probing, analysing, synthesising and self-awareness. It is necessary to think not just about what has happened, but why it has happened and how the situation under reflection is similar or different from other issues. When leaders reflect on their roles and actions in situations they need to be able to reflect openly on both their strengths and weaknesses.

- **Active sponsorship by a senior executive (for example, director, chief executive or chair)**

In order to assist the Fellows in achieving the disproportionate impact we are looking for, they must have full and active support from a senior representative from their organisation. The organisational context and readiness for change will be instrumental in the success of leading wide-reaching improvements. Therefore, your application form needs to be signed off by your chief executive, or someone else on the senior leadership team, to demonstrate their support and willingness for you to participate in the fellowship.

*“Our GenerationQ Fellow is thinking about different ways that they can meet challenges and implement change. They are looking at the environment and cultural readiness of areas and using different techniques to implement and sustain change. It is always good to meet Fellows and challenge your own thinking by having discussion and debate about what they are doing.”*

**Jenny Leggott**

**Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Nursing, Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust and GenerationQ sponsor**

- **Able to commit to the time and other demands of the fellowship programme**

The time commitment for the programme includes attendance at six residential leadership forums and participation in action learning sets and further optional learning activities. In addition, we anticipate an average of 10–25 hours of personal study per month over an 18 month period, for those completing the postgraduate certificate or diploma. For those choosing to study for the masters qualification, the time period is extended to two years. For more information about the key dates for the six residential leadership forums, please see page 12.

- **Able to study at masters level**

The fellowship does not require a minimum standard of academic achievement. For example, we do not expect all Fellows to be graduates. However, the programme is demanding in its academic rigour and therefore we are looking for both awareness and experience of what this means in practice, particularly reading and learning from academic texts, and writing assignments to satisfy the demanding assessment criteria. In addition,

where English is not the fellow's first language we will be seeking evidence of significant professional experience of using spoken and written English.

In addition to the above criteria, there will be an overall selection requirement that, to maximise peer learning and opportunities for support and challenge, the final group is representative of the diversity of the health sector. We will be looking for a multidisciplinary group comprising clinical and managerial representatives from within health care, as well as representatives from policy and patient organisations. The final decisions on selection will additionally take the diversity requirement for maximum group learning into account.

### ***The role of the organisational sponsors***

The organisational sponsors will be an important and active part of this fellowship programme. Each fellow must identify an appropriate senior member of their organisation at the time of applying, and engage with them throughout the whole process, from application to completion of the programme. Who the sponsor is will depend on the Fellow's role and the structure of the organisation, but we expect that they will be a member of the executive team or board as relevant. The organisational sponsor will have the opportunity to participate in one of the later leadership forums at Ashridge as well as to participate in conversations with other sponsors and key stakeholders hosted by the Health Foundation.

### ***Financial support***

The cost of participating on the GenerationQ fellowship, including fees for the postgraduate certificate, is met by the Health Foundation. The option to progress to postgraduate diploma or masters level will incur further fees which will need to be met by Fellows. All Fellows will receive a financial grant to assist them in covering essential costs such as travel, and for funding further development activities. The grant can be used to cover the additional fees, but Fellows should be aware that some self-funding may be required if they opt to progress to masters level.

### ***Components of GenerationQ***

**Leadership forums:** Six themed residential workshops will take place at Ashridge (Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire). In these six workshops, the core faculty and Fellows, joined by guest practitioners and theorists, will work together to create an effective learning community, explore relevant theory grounded in the context of health care, and develop pertinent leadership skills.

**Individual executive coaching:** All Fellows will have a dedicated and experienced Ashridge executive coach, whose role will be to support and challenge them in the process of seeking feedback, articulating their own learning agenda, learning from working on leadership issues as they arise and, finally, articulating their personal leadership statement. The coach can also 'accompany' Fellows at their place of work to observe them as they 'lead for real', to offer feedback and to work on live issues.

**Technical practitioner support:** All Fellows will have the opportunity to invite a Unipart Technical Practitioner to support them in their organisation as they put into practice learning about improvement method.

**Action learning in groups:** 'Action learning sets' (ALS) are facilitated peer support and challenge groups where Fellows learn both from being coached on their own leadership issues and coaching others. These groups will meet both face-to-face and virtually in order to experience and develop increasingly important virtual engagement skills.

**Ambition into practice:** 'Ambition into Practice' is a very important element of the fellowship programme. As part of their ongoing leadership role, Fellows will take forward and learn from a significant and deliberate initiative to lead either local or wider health care system improvement. This activity might be a current and ongoing complex piece of quality improvement work within their

own sphere of control and influence, or a new focus of work that they will need to negotiate and scope with others.

### **Inquiry visits**

Working in small groups, Fellows will be offered the opportunity to experience and explore different perspectives and organisations other than their own, including, visiting ongoing improvement projects both in health and the private sector, and shadowing a colleague from the programme at their place of work.

### **Virtual engagement**

As part of participating in the fellowship, all Fellows and their sponsors will have full use of the Ashridge Virtual Learning Resource Centre (VLRC). The VLRC is a comprehensive online library and a very useful tool to support project work, assignment writing and personal development. Developed in 1999, the resource is already used by over half a million leaders from 175 private sector, public sector and large international clients as well as the Ashridge Alumni network. The VLRC delivers learning materials compiled by Ashridge faculty and associates with a range of third-party resources from external content providers.

### **Synchronous webinars**

Several half-day synchronous webinars will be developed in response to emerging needs and interest from within the group to deepen knowledge and understanding of subjects and topics raised within the leadership forums.

### **Personal journaling**

If Fellows are to explore their full potential as leaders, one of the most powerful things they can do is to become more aware of their preferences and assumptions, and gradually develop more critically reflexive choice about how they react and respond – even when faced with the type of stimuli that trigger long-standing patterns of responses. This is not always easy because it involves reflecting on, and inquiring into, experience to uncover the patterns of assumptions and behaviours that exist. Fellows will keep and use a reflective journal to help this process and provide valuable material for assignments.

### **Reading and written assignments**

Wide reading relevant to the four leadership domains and subject areas will be encouraged. Core texts and supplementary texts will be recommended for each subject area. Recognising the reality of significant time pressure for all Fellows, specific chapters will be recommended as core preparation for each leadership forum. Fellows will be expected to write a number of assignments. The assignments are designed to be reflective, to support the integration of theory into practice, and to be highly relevant to the challenges Fellows face in their local contexts. Extensive and personalised feedback is offered on all assignments.

***Figure 2 on page 10 provides an illustration of how the components are delivered over the 18 month programme.***

# Generation Q

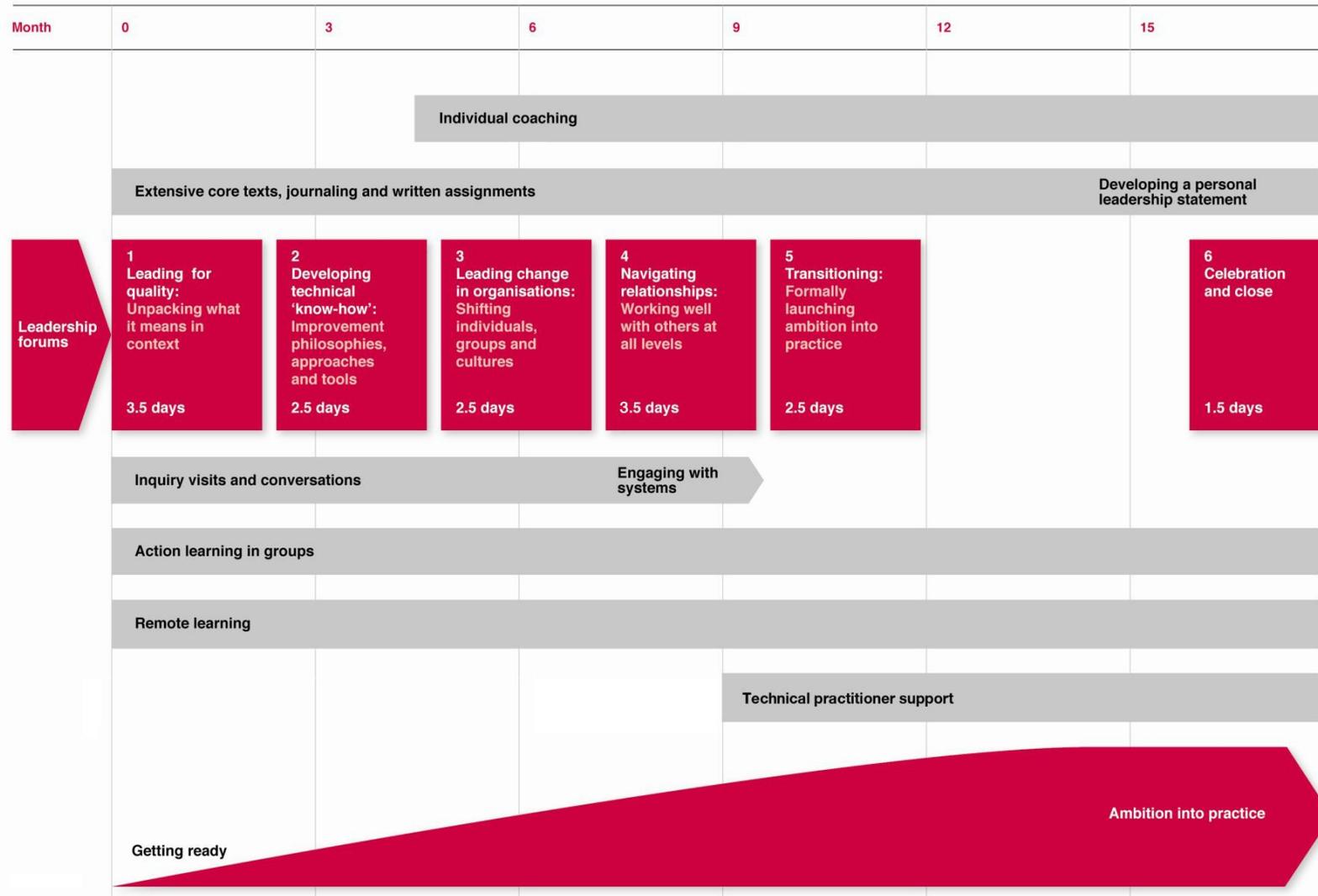


Figure 2: GenerationQ components

## **Key dates for the diary**

### **Application process:**

#### **2015**

29 September	Open for applications
17 November	Deadline for applications (12 noon)
8 December	Shortlist announced
14 December	Briefing for organisational inquiry process

#### **2016**

22 January	Return of organisational inquiry process
25-26 January	Assessment Centre 1 (a 24-hour centre from 2pm on 25 January to 2pm on 26 January)
1-2 February	Assessment Centre 2 (a 24-hour centre from 2pm on 1 February to 2pm on 2 February)
9-10 February	Assessment Centre 3 (a 24-hour centre from 2pm on 9 February to 2pm on 10 February)
15 February	Final selection announced

Shortlisted applicants will be allocated to **one** assessment centre by the review team. This will be done randomly, although we will try to ensure there is a diverse spread of applicants. **Please keep the dates for all three assessment centres free**, as it is unlikely we will be able to accommodate individual requests.

Please note that the dates for the assessment centres are fixed and applicants must be able to attend in order to be considered for participation in the programme.

### **Key programme dates:**

#### **2016**

9 March	Welcome event at the Health Foundation
19-22 April	Leadership Forum 1
6-8 July	Leadership Forum 2
21-23 September	Leadership Forum 3
6-9 December	Leadership Forum 4

#### **2017**

1-3 March	Leadership Forum 5*
7-8 September	Leadership Forum 6

Please note these dates now and keep them free. We will not be able to change them and successful applicants will be expected to attend all activities. Further dates will be scheduled with Fellows for action learning meetings, coaching sessions, and stakeholder and organisation visits. Please note that failure to attend events may result in Fellows losing their place on the fellowship.

\*Organisational sponsors will be invited to participate in a dinner and one day of this forum.

### **Contact details**

For general queries about the programme and the application process, please contact a member of the Health Foundation team on 020 7257 8000 or [GenerationQ@health.org.uk](mailto:GenerationQ@health.org.uk).

## About the Health Foundation

The Health Foundation is an independent charity working to improve the quality of health and health care in the UK.

We carry out research and in-depth policy analysis, fund improvement programmes to put ideas into practice in the NHS, support and develop practitioners and leaders and share evidence to encourage wider change.

We want the UK to have a health care system of the highest possible quality – safe, effective, person-centred, timely, efficient and equitable.

## Our partners in designing and delivering the fellowship programme

The programme was co-designed by the Health Foundation, Ashridge Business School and Unipart Expert Practices (part of The Unipart Group). Bringing together in depth understanding and expertise of both improvement methods and organisational change, which is one of the unique features of the programme. It is delivered by Ashridge Business School.

Details about the core faculty for the programme are available in the *GenerationQ faculty* document which you can find on the Health Foundation website.

### Ashridge Business School

Ashridge Business School was founded in 1959 by a group of business leaders as a charitable trust, the Ashridge (Bonar Law Memorial) Trust, with the aim of improving the quality of provision of management development. The Ashridge (Bonar Law Memorial) Trust is a non-profit organisation, which reinvests the surplus it generates to further its purpose of improving the practice of management and organisational effectiveness throughout the world through the provision of research, executive development and consultancy services. Ashridge Business School obtained its own degree awarding powers in 2008 and is one of only five non-publicly funded UK institutions able to award its own degrees.

In September 2015, Ashridge operationally merged with Hult International Business School. While the two institutions stay as separate legal entities, they will function as a single organisation for students and clients.

Ashridge Business School has 50 years of experience of working with a wide variety of international and national, private and public sector organisations, assisting them in complex organisational change and leadership development initiatives, including a dedicated focus on health care. Our continuing consulting experience provides the basis for our ongoing research into organisations and developing leaders, with a particular focus on regarding organisations as complex systems. We bring this experience, combined with our academic grounding, to all the work we undertake. Further details can be found on the Ashridge website [www.ashridge.org.uk](http://www.ashridge.org.uk).

### Unipart Expert Practices

The transformation of Unipart from an ailing automotive parts company to an exemplar of employee engagement and of the deployment of continuous improvement methodologies is a fascinating story in itself. But what sets Unipart apart is a culture that engages people at every level of the business in delivering outstanding customer service while focusing on continually improving our day-to-day operational performance.

Unipart Expert Practices provides both consultancy and hands-on support for the implementation of Lean practice, as well as a wide variety of Supply Chain consulting and capabilities. Its wide range of clients includes companies in insurance, manufacturing, transport and utilities, as well as public sector organisations such as the NHS. For more details about Unipart visit [www.unipart.co.uk](http://www.unipart.co.uk).

## Application and selection process

### **Overview**

As GenerationQ is a fully funded fellowship programme, it is essential that the application and selection process is fair, open and transparent. As joining the fellowship programme is also a significant investment in terms of time and energy from those applicants who are selected, the application process has been designed to help you think through whether this is the right programme for you. Your sponsor is asked to provide a supporting statement, so the detail will also enable you to share with them what is involved and have some helpful conversations about your participation.

There are a number of stages within the application and selection process:

- completion of an application form
- stage 1 selection on the basis of application forms
- invitation to assessment centre and opportunity to go and conduct a short inquiry in your own organisation
- series of assessment centres to help you and us decide your suitability for the programme
- final selection of the cohort
- verbal feedback about strengths and development areas for all participants in the assessment centres, whether finally selected or not.

We expect a high level of interest and have a maximum of 18 places in the cohort. The selection process has therefore been designed to encourage the submission of high quality applications that will meet the selection criteria. Further detail about each of the stages listed above is provided below.

### **Completion of an application form**

The application form has been designed to help you think through your suitability for the fellowship and motivation for applying. You should read these notes carefully before completing your application form and refer to them as you fill in the different sections. Each section of the application form must be completed in a minimum typeface size of Arial 11pt or equivalent. Please **do not** submit your application in PDF as we will need to remove the diversity monitoring and marketing information forms before distributing your application to the review team.

Please send your completed application form to [GenerationQ@health.org.uk](mailto:GenerationQ@health.org.uk).

When you fill in the form please keep to the format and answer all the questions. Incomplete application forms will be considered ineligible. If there is a word limit specified, please do not exceed it. Remember that people who may not have specialist knowledge of your work will read your application; please avoid jargon and acronyms.

Please do not send any additional information unless asked to do so.

The application form requires information related to all the eligibility criteria as described on pages 6 to 8. Application forms must be completed in full and submitted by 12.00 noon on Tuesday 17 November 2015. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered eligible and will therefore not be reviewed.

If you have any questions regarding the application form, or any part of the process, please contact a member of the team on [GenerationQ@health.org.uk](mailto:GenerationQ@health.org.uk) or 020 7257 8000. You may also find it useful to speak to current or former Fellows about their experience on the programme and we would encourage you to start making these connections now. Please contact us if you would like more details on how to do this.

### **Review and assessment**

Applications will be assessed and shortlisted by a review team consisting of representatives from the Health Foundation and Ashridge Business School. All applications will be assessed against the same criteria and judged competitively. Please note that we will not take into account any previous knowledge we have of an individual, and we will base decisions only on the information provided in the application form.

We will inform all applicants of the outcome of the shortlisting process by email, so please ensure you have provided an email address that you will have access to on 8 December 2015.

### **Inquiry stage**

Thirty-six shortlisted applicants will attend an assessment centre, which will inform the final decision. Prior to attending the assessment centre, all shortlisted candidates will be expected to complete a personal and reflective written inquiry into their own organisation (maximum 1,500 words). This will involve a conversation with the organisational sponsor and will cover themes such as organisational readiness for change and the existing opportunities for improvement. Full details will be provided to shortlisted candidates. Candidates will be invited to discuss their inquiry at the assessment centre with other Fellows.

### **Assessment centre**

The assessment centre is a fair and transparent process and will be a developmental experience for you. Everyone participating in the assessment centre will receive individual feedback on their strengths and candidates (both successful and unsuccessful) often reflect on the positive experience of taking part, both in terms of identifying areas to focus on for development and for making valuable connections with the other candidates.

The centre will include a number of exercises designed to assess your suitability for the fellowship programme. The focus of these exercises will be a range of different leadership attributes that are critical to improving quality, and to identifying those who will benefit most from participating in the programme. Those attending the assessment centres will be informed of the leadership attributes that are the focus of the exercises ahead of participation. We will also be interested to hear more about applicants' passion for quality improvement, as well as their ability to critically reflect on both their strengths and weaknesses.

***"I thoroughly enjoyed the assessment centre. It was challenging with exposure to new techniques and situations, but was a great experience. Camaraderie developed quickly between fellow candidates making it a really enjoyable, sociable two days, but on reflection probably the most valuable part of it was the feedback process that took place afterwards. The opportunity to receive honest, in-depth personal feedback from skilled professionals does not happen that frequently and was something I really appreciated."***

**Stephen Farrell  
Consultant Paediatric Surgeon, Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
GenerationQ Fellow (2013)**

There will be three assessment centre dates held for three groups of 12 shortlisted candidates. These will be 25-26 January, 1-2 February and 9-10 February 2016 (each centre will last for 24 hours starting from 2pm on the first day to 2pm on the following day) and will be held at Ashridge in Hertfordshire. An overnight stay will be necessary. Candidates will be allocated to one of these groups following shortlisting, so please keep all dates free until notified.

***Final selection***

The final decisions on selection will be made on 12 February 2016. We will aim to notify everyone by the end of the day on 15 February 2016. We realise that applicants will be anxious to hear a decision, but ask that you wait for us to notify you.

***Feedback***

Feedback will be provided to all applicants. Those applicants who are unsuccessful at the shortlisting stage will receive a brief written summary by email. Unsuccessful candidates who are shortlisted, but not selected will be offered the opportunity for verbal feedback on their performance at the assessment centre. Details on this will be made available when the decisions are announced.