

Notes for applicants

GenerationQ Programme 2017

November 2017

A Health Foundation call for applications from senior leaders in the health service. This fully-funded leadership development fellowship programme aims to develop skilled and effective clinical and non-clinical leaders for quality improvement in health and health care across all four countries of the UK.

NOTE: All applications to this round of GenerationQ have to be submitted through our online application portal <https://aims.health.org.uk>. We advise all potential applicants to familiarise themselves as early as possible with the application process. The process is outlined in the accompanying AIMS user manual.

The deadline for applications is 12 noon, Wednesday 10 January 2018.

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1.0 Introduction to GenerationQ

GenerationQ is a fully-funded leadership development fellowship programme, designed to generate a network of Fellows who are skilled and effective leaders of improvement in health care and who are able and willing to have an impact beyond their immediate sphere of influence.

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 provider, commissioner, policy, regulatory, third sector, local authority and charitable organisations. As well as gaining a postgraduate academic qualification, Fellows will be able to develop their organisation's capability for quality improvement.

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

GenerationQ is delivered in partnership with Ashridge Executive Education.

2.0 Fellowship programme detail

2.1 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 and health care across all four countries of the UK by paying equal attention to the latest thinking and research in both the 'harder' side of change, in terms of improvement methodologies, and the 'softer' side of change, in terms of leadership. It is grounded in both the art and the science of engaging others in improving quality. It is founded upon critical analysis of current research and theory, which has practical relevance to those currently leading improvement at an organisational and system level, making a difference to patients and service users.

The programme offers support and challenge from faculty and participants to help Fellows achieve a lasting and positive impact in their organisation, during and beyond the programme, and to learn from the process. This is encapsulated in the notion of an Ambition into Practice, which is one vehicle for Fellows to apply their learning from the programme back into their own organisation.

Learning is delivered through residential leadership forums at Ashridge; action learning and one-to-one coaching; and personal reading, writing assignments and experimenting with doing things differently in practice.

2.2 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 may 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 Executive Education, subject to successful completion of assignments. Fellows may also choose to register for an Ashridge Executive Education 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
- understand how to meaningfully engage with others at all levels in the wider system and use their learning to navigate their context and create a culture that is conducive to improvement.

In addition, at the end of the programme, Fellows will be 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.

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

2.3 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 leader.

2.4 Programme curriculum

The programme curriculum is based on the four GenerationQ leadership domains (see Figure 1 below). 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).

Figure 1: Generation Q leadership domains

<p>Contextual leadership 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).</p>	<p>Technical leadership 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.</p>
<p>Relational leadership 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.</p>	<p>Personal leadership Being highly self-aware and authentic; knowing one’s own strengths, motivations, patterns, needs and limitations.</p>

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 including one international forum, the support of individual executive coaching, action learning in facilitated peer groups, the opportunity to engage with systems beyond health and health care, 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 policymakers from across the UK.
- **Academic rigour and recognition.** The programme is validated by Ashridge Executive Education at masters degree level.

2.5 Eligibility criteria

There are three elements that we take into consideration for GenerationQ; these are the applicants' **impact, readiness, and contribution.**

1) Impact

- **Senior leaders in a relevant health related role**
The fellowship is aimed at senior clinical and non-clinical leaders who are in a position to lead across boundaries at least within their organisation and who are likely to now, or in the future, have impact across the wider health and care system. We know that organisations flourish when the workforce is diverse and GenerationQ aims to reflect the diversity of those working in and with the UK health service. Applications are welcomed from people working in health and health care related organisations such as professional bodies, Royal Colleges, government/policy departments and health/patient focused charities, in addition to all sectors of the NHS.

We understand that job titles do not provide the whole picture of seniority and impact, but as a guide, applicants may already be a director, or aspiring to be one, or a clinician or practitioner in a leadership or managerial position. Examples of roles include (but are not restricted to):

- Medical Director or Associate/Deputy Medical Director
- Director or Associate Director of Nursing
- Chief Operating Officer
- Director of Operations
- Director of Improvement/Quality
- GP in a senior position in the local Clinical Commissioning Group (such as Clinical Chair)
- National or Regional Director (for those in a charity, or professional or government body)
- Director of Public Health or Social Care

The learning on this fellowship programme will take place within the context of the Fellows' organisations. 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.

- **Potential to develop a high profile and with wide reach**
This programme is for leaders who will use their learning and development on 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 and large organisations, and expect people to take an 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.
- **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 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.
- **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.

2) Readiness

- **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.
- **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.

3) Contribution

- **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.

- **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 including one international forum and participation in a range of virtual and face to face action learning sets, coaching 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.
- **Active sponsorship by a senior executive (for example, director, chief executive or chair)**
In order to assist the Fellows to achieve impact we recognise the importance of full and active support from a senior representative from their organisation or system. The organisational context and readiness for change will be instrumental in the success of leading wide-reaching improvements. Therefore, your application needs to be endorsed by your chief executive, or relevant leader on the senior leadership team.

2.6 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.

2.7 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.

2.8 Components of GenerationQ

- 1) **Leadership forums:** Six themed residential workshops will take place primarily at Ashridge (Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire), although some residential forums may take place elsewhere, and Fellows should be prepared to travel abroad. 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.
- 2) **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.
- 3) **Technical practitioner support:** All Fellows will have the opportunity to invite an Expert Technical Practitioner to support them in their organisation as they put into practice learning about improvement method.

- 4) **Action learning in groups:** Action learning sets 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.
- 5) **Ambition into Practice:** This 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.
- 6) **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.
- 7) **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.
- 8) **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.
- 9) **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.
- 10) **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 9 provides an illustration of how the components are delivered over the 18-month programme.

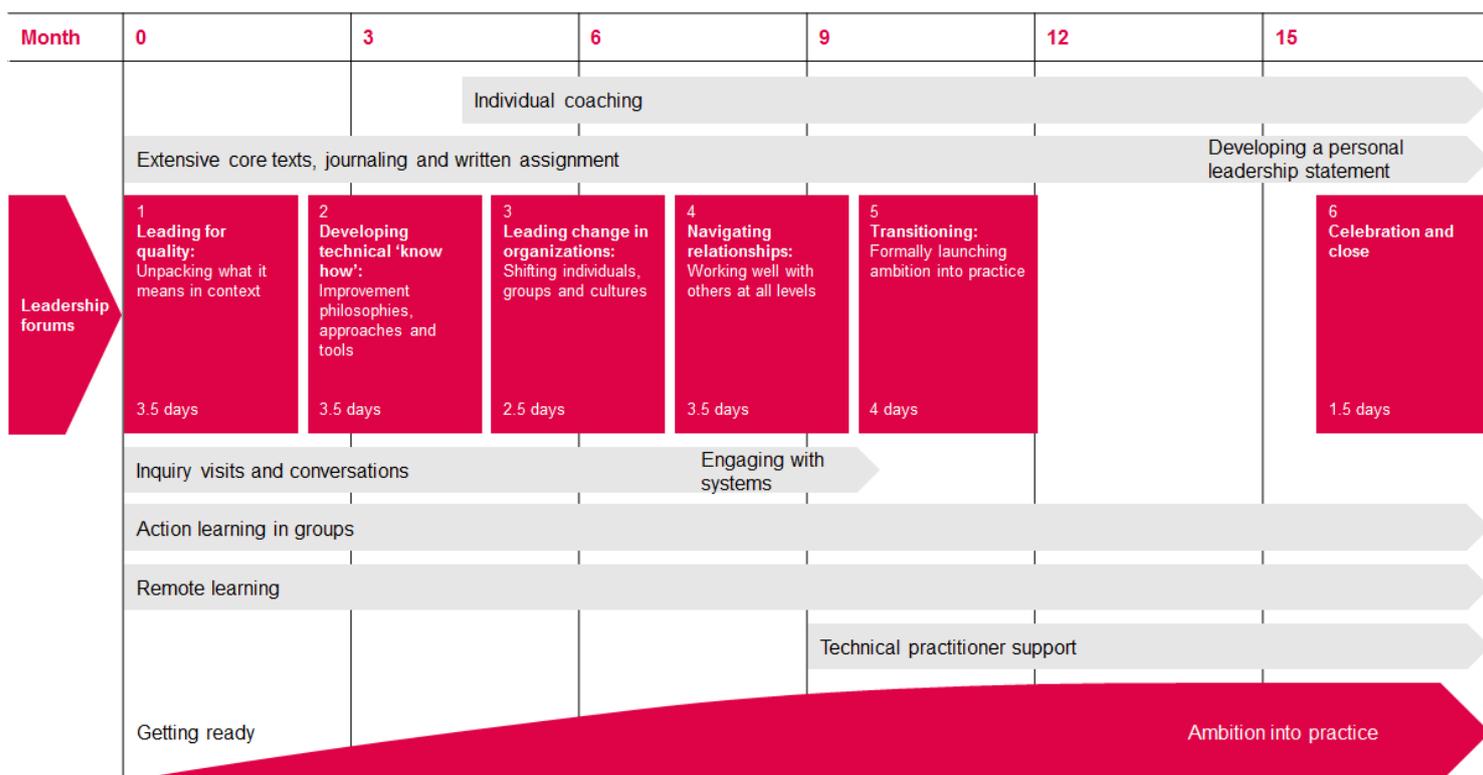


Figure 2: GenerationQ components (subject to confirmation)

2.9 Key dates for the diary

Please note these dates are mandatory for applicants and GenerationQ grant holders.

1) Application process:

2017

Monday 27 November

Open for applications

2018

Wednesday 10 January

Deadline for applications 12 noon

Friday 2 February

Shortlist announced and briefing for organisational inquiry process

Friday 23 February

Return of organisational inquiries

Monday 5 – Tuesday 6 March

Assessment centre 1 (a 24-hour centre from 2pm on 5 March to 2pm on 6 March)

Monday 12 – Tuesday 13 March

Assessment centre 2 (a 24-hour centre from 2pm on 12 March to 2pm on 13 March)

Wednesday 21 – Thursday 22 March

Assessment centre 3 (a 24-hour centre from 2pm on 21 March to 2pm on 22 March)

by Friday 30 March

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.

2) Programme dates:

2018

Tuesday 22 – Friday 25 May	Leadership forum 1
Wednesday 20 June	Welcome & Action Learning Sets at the Health Foundation
Tuesday 24 – Friday 27 July	Leadership forum 2
Wednesday 3 – Friday 5 October	Leadership forum 3

2019

Tuesday 8 – Friday 11 January	Leadership forum 4
Wednesday 6 March	Health Foundation day
Tuesday 30 Apr – Friday 3 May	Leadership forum 5 (including Sponsors' Day on day 1)
Tuesday 5 – Wednesday 6 November	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 graduation. Some Leadership forums may be held outside of the UK, so you must be able to travel. Please note that failure to attend events may result in Fellows losing their place on the programme.

2.10 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 email GenerationQ@health.org.uk.

3.0 Application and selection process

3.1 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:

1. Completion of an application form including statement of support from your proposed sponsor.
2. Stage 1 selection on the basis of your application form.
3. Invitation to assessment centre and completion of a short inquiry in your own organisation.
4. Series of assessment centres to help us decide, and assist you in evaluating, your suitability for the programme.
5. Final selection of the cohort.

6. 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.

3.2 Completion of application form

All candidates must complete 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.

Applications for this round of GenerationQ will be using our online system, AIMS. Your application **must** be completed and submitted online and can be accessed at AIMS.health.org.uk.

Full guidance on accessing, completing and submitting your application via AIMS can be found in the user manual which you can download from the AIMS website, AIMS.health.org.uk. We recommend that you keep a copy of this manual to hand, to refer to while you complete your application. We would particularly highlight the following:

- When registering for an account in AIMS please ensure you register as an **individual** rather than as an organisation. This will enable you to access the GenerationQ application form. Please note that the email address you register and apply with will receive all communication regarding the application, so please ensure you enter an address to which you will have access throughout the application period, through to April 2018.
- The form does not need to be completed in one session. It is possible to save your progress and return to the form at a later date.
- Mandatory questions are indicated with a star at the end of the question. Unless the question guidance states otherwise, all sections or fields of this question will be mandatory. If you try to submit your form without having completed all the mandatory questions then you will be prompted to return to one or more sections.
- Many questions have a character limit, for which we have provided an approximate word limit. Please adhere to the word limit. If you are unsure about the length of your response, we suggest drafting your answer in a word document or similar first so that you can check the word count and make edits before pasting it into the application form.
- Applicants are required to provide a supporting statement from their organisational sponsor. This needs to be completed by the sponsor and should be uploaded by the applicant as an external document. The declaration template can be downloaded from the Health Foundation website: www.health.org.uk/generationq.
- Please do not send any additional information unless asked to do so.

Please complete the application as per the instructions on the online form for each question.

The deadline for applications is **12 noon, Wednesday 10 January 2018. We will not accept submissions after this date.**

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 or 020 7257 8000. You may also find it useful to speak to current or former Fellows about their experience on the programme. Please feel free to contact GenerationQ Fellows at this early stage so you can start making connections. We would be happy to provide more details on how to do this if you contact us.

3.3 Selection process

1) Review and assessment

Applications will be assessed and shortlisted by a review team consisting of representatives from the Health Foundation and Ashridge Executive Education. 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; 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 Friday 2 February 2018.

2) 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.

3) 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 in making valuable connections with 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 identify 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.

There will be three assessment centre dates held for three groups of 12 shortlisted candidates. These are 5-6 March, 12-13 March and 21-22 March 2018 (each centre will last 24 hours, 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.

4) Final selection

We will notify all candidates on the outcome of the final selection by end Friday 30 March 2018. We realise that applicants will be anxious to hear from us but ask that you wait for us to notify you.

5) Feedback

All candidates, those who are selected and those who were shortlisted but not selected, will be offered the opportunity for verbal feedback on their performance at the assessment centre. Further details will be provided once the final decisions are announced.

4.0 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.

5.0 Our partners in designing and delivering the fellowship programme

The programme was co-designed by the Health Foundation, Ashridge Executive Education 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 Executive Education.

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

5.1 Ashridge Executive Education at Hult International Business School

Ashridge Executive Education 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 Executive Education 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 Executive Education 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.