

Frequently asked questions

Evaluation of the Shaping Places for Healthier Lives (SPHL) programme

Last updated: 24 June 2021

SPHL programme governance

What is the role of the technical advisory group?

The Health Foundation will draw on the support of a technical advisory group (TAG) comprising complex systems experts and experienced evaluators. The TAG will provide expert guidance, as well as constructive challenge and rigour, to all elements of the design and delivery of the evaluation and the use of systems approaches within the programme, helping make sure the programme meets its overarching aims and objectives. Feedback from the TAG should also be used to shape the evaluation outputs.

Who will the delivery support partner be?

The delivery support partner (DSP) will be appointed after the selection of the evaluation partner. We will want to work with the evaluation partner to ensure that the roles of both the evaluation partner and the DSP are clearly defined to avoid duplication.

Could the relationship between the evaluation partner and the DSP be challenging?

The relationship between the evaluation partner and the DSP will be critical to the success of the evaluation. We expect some challenges to emerge (eg due to separate commissioning processes) but we are actively thinking about these issues and will allow ample time for relationship building.

What is role of the learning network?

We will establish a learning network involving the five successful project teams, as well as the teams that were unsuccessful at the final application stage. This will enable teams to share learning and experience over the course of the programme. We will consult the evaluation partner on the final design of this network so that it supports the needs of the evaluation.

SPHL programme applications

Is there an opportunity for the final 14 applicants to think about evaluation themes during the final stage of the application process?

We expect the applicants to have considered their plans for the first year, but we did not explicitly ask them to think about evaluation themes.

How will the five successful projects be chosen?

One of the questions that will guide the selection process is what can we learn from these projects about taking a complex systems approach – not just a partnership approach – to tackling the wider determinants of health? The successful project teams will have demonstrated willingness to work in a different way and openness to working as a cohort. They will also recognise that while they may not be able to change local systems of determinants of health within 3 years, they can generate project-specific and transferable learnings.

When will the announcement of the successful local authorities happen?

We expect to announce the names of the five successful sites in late August, after the evaluation partner has been appointed.

Tender responses

What is the rationale for accepting bids from consortia or multi-partner project teams?

We are looking for a broad set of skills and we recognise that suppliers will have different strengths. We encourage bids from consortia or multi-partner project teams with complementary expertise and technical skills, but we also recognise the challenges of partnership working.

Should the ‘sample tender response form’ be used for the application?

No. Please submit your tender response form on our online portal, [AIMS](#). Please read the [AIMS user guide](#) before starting to complete the form.

How will the tender responses be assessed?

The quality of each tender response will be assessed by at least three members of staff using the following scoring system.

Section	Short title	Percentage of quality score
1.4	Detailed proposal	40%
2.1	Working with the Health Foundation	20%
2.2	Project management plan	20%
2.3	Risks and mitigations	10%
3	Details of team members	10%

The scores for these sections will be based on the selection criteria outlined in the invitation to tender. Relevant information included in other sections will also be taken into account.

The price score will be based on competitiveness.

The overall score will be based on the moderated quality score (75% weighting) and price (25% weighting).

Evaluation approach and methods

Is the focus of the evaluation on local action?

We are particularly keen to learn about the process of establishing local partnerships and the broad benefits (or otherwise) of adopting a systems approach. We expect the project teams to encounter a range of challenges in trying to tackle their local systems of wider determinants of health, so the evaluation should also support the project teams to respond to the evaluation findings by providing ongoing and timely feedback. The evaluation should consider the changes to the wider determinants of health effected by this systems-based action, but this aim would be secondary to the learning imperative.

Is there an opportunity for reflective practice to consider the interactions between the partners involved?

Yes. The programme groups and the council-led partnerships will be developing their relationships, processes and actions as part of the evolution of the projects, which means the evaluation needs to be responsive to continuous change in order to support real-time change. Moreover, the actions taken by the local partnerships are likely to have multiple, non-linear effects, which calls for reflexivity and methodological flexibility.

Who is leading on the data collection?

The evaluation partner will be responsible for developing appropriate evaluation and learning frameworks. As part of these frameworks, they should make it clear who will be collecting data and for what purposes. We expect that the project teams and the programme groups will be collecting some kinds of data. Part of the evaluation partner's role will be to collate and synthesise these data.

Evaluation outputs

What format should the final report take?

We will agree the format of the final report with the evaluation partner, but it is likely to be a Word document.

Will the final report be shared publicly?

We expect to share the final report, or a version of it, on our website. We will also work with the evaluation partner and our communications team to think about other outputs that would appeal to our key audiences. The Health Foundation would cover the costs of producing these outputs.

Other questions

What has influenced the Foundation's complex systems approach to public health?

Our complex systems approach has been heavily influenced by the work of Harry Rutter and his colleagues. Our website includes several publications and webinars which clarify our approach, such as:

- [The need for a complex systems model for public health](#)
- [Complex public health challenges and local action](#)
- [Evaluating complex systems approaches to improving health](#)

Should the evaluation take account of the COVID-19 pandemic?

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the application stages of the SPHL programme in terms of the timeline and capacity of applicants, and their ability to engage with partners and residents, but also in some cases the content of the proposed projects. We have heard from applicants that the pandemic has in many cases necessitated and expedited ways of working as a system, and also that projects offer an important opportunity for local areas to recover from the pandemic. The evaluation of the programme will need to take the context of the pandemic into account and it will be important to capture learning about the role of a local systems approach in recovery.