

FAQs following the information call

A themed synthesis of funded research 2012-2022

The information call took place 30 March 2023

Prepared by:

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The deadline for applications via the online portal is **noon on Monday 24 April 2023**. Please note that this is an amended deadline to accommodate the Easter period. We will not accept late submissions beyond this date.

We advise all potential applicants to familiarise themselves as early as possible with the application process and platform.

Please ensure that you have read this FAQ document, the ITT document before completing and submitting the application form.

Questions relating to stage one – discovery and scoping

1. Will this research require an external literature review to provide insights as to how findings align with/add to, existing literature in the wider external context?

We do not expect a full external literature review, but we are seeking a supplier, or supplier partnership that has the relevant expertise in at least one of the strategic priority areas to be able to provide expert insights against the wider external context.

For those with expertise gaps, we would expect the supplier to engage with subject matter experts to provide further knowledge or insights to support the other priority areas.

2. Should the synthesis cover all outputs or just the key report/publication or a subset based on workshops?

We are looking for a wide view of outputs related to each research commission.

As per the ITT, outputs must be within the given timeframe, must be available in the public domain, including final reports, all peer-reviewed and/or grey literature. The number of outputs will vary, some commissions may only have generated a final report, and some may have generated multiple publications and/or resources.

We acknowledge that a supplier will not pick up every output and we would expect suppliers to use their expertise to evaluate which outputs are of value to this work and that will add to our knowledge as a funder.

The workshops in the discovery phase are key to pinning down those specific areas of interest which will help to direct focus of the review. There is potential for the scope to change subtly for each area in terms of focus and external relevance, but we would work closely with the supplier to discuss and agree this before the delivery stage.

3. What is the expected number of outputs and proportion of missing data for consideration of a manual evidence search?

We are unable to provide a final number of expected outputs at this time. Work is ongoing to coordinate our historical databases to provide a comprehensive list of commissions and associated outputs which we aim to have prepared by the time a supplier is appointed.

An initial review suggests somewhere in the region of 500 research commissions in this period but this may change as we organise our historical records. Once appointed, we would review the list with the supplier and should the number of outputs, or gaps in

output data significantly exceed the anticipated level of work that a supplier has tendered for, we are open to reviewing costings.

4. Is there potential for some research to map to more than one strategic priority?

Yes, there is likely to be a small proportion of commissions that are relevant to more than one strategic priority.

5. What portfolio information will you share, beyond mapping to the strategic priorities?

Each strategic priority has set out their areas of interest and sub-themes. These are broadly described in the [strategy document](#) that is linked in the ITT. These set out their respective plans and workstreams which will give you a flavour of the sub-themes that strategic priorities will be interested in.

6. Is there a preferred format or requirements for the workshops?

We are flexible to the format of workshops and can coordinate in-person sessions with sufficient notice as well as virtual events.

It is likely that the workshops will include approximately 15 participants. Participants will be a mix of staff from the strategic priority groups including the Director, Assistant Director(s), content leads and colleagues from the research team. Workshops will not include external stakeholders.

It is important to note that the workshops are crucial in the discovery phase. Strategic priority teams are still in the early phase of working, having been established formally in January 2023. Each has a clear strategy, but the workshops will require expert facilitation to help the groups to pin down the focus of the synthesis that will ultimately help to inform their future work meaningfully.

We would look to the supplier to help to determine the best approach for these workshops, to get the most information and insights from them.

7. Would you be open to the study team contacting award holders to obtain more information about eg outputs?

The supplier should only use publicly available records. There should be no need to contact award holders.

8. Is there a requirement for a health economist on the bidding team?

We anticipate that a supplier would need someone with a quantitative background, there is no requirement to have a health economist specifically.

9. Is the Health Foundation open to receiving bids for 1 or 2 themes separately?

We are only seeking suppliers that can deliver a synthesis covering all three strategic priority areas. We will make details available of any parties that have expressed an interest in partnering for this work. Please email research.mailbox@health.org.uk if you wish to express an interest in partnering.

Questions relating to stage two – delivery

10. Are there any expectations around measuring impact?

No, there is no impact element to this work. The aim of this work is to understand what our body of research tells us across the three strategic priority themes, to help us to inform our internal knowledge and funding processes.

We are looking at how we can better measure, evaluate and report the impact of our work, and our routes to impact as a separate, internal piece of work. We would of course welcome any insights from the supplier on this through this work.

11. What is the preferred style of the final synthesis report?

The report format is not fixed. It is likely that we would seek a standard report style with some infographic-style and visual components to aid internal knowledge mobilisation. The length of the report will be entirely down to the content of the synthesis, for example the body of content is likely to be different for each strategic priority area. Format will be discussed with the appointed supplier.

12. Regarding publications from this work, is there is an expectation to publish in a peer-reviewed journal and who is the intended audience?

Yes, it is our aim to publish in a peer-reviewed journal. We are keen to be transparent about the findings and learning from this work, both relevant to our practice as a funder and to add to the wider external evidence base.

The publication(s) would be determined by the content of the synthesis. The key findings will help us to define who our target audience might be more specifically. We would welcome views or recommendations from the supplier as part of these considerations

and would seek to discuss the focus of the publication once the synthesis report is submitted. Discussions would also cover length of a publication.

13. Is the use of automated qualitative data analysis software acceptable to generate thematic synthesis for this project?

Yes.

14. Would a spreadsheet of outputs be more useful than a narrative report to better utilise the findings?

The aim of the report is to provide high level insights into the strengths and limitations of findings from our back catalogue of funded research across the three strategic priority areas and to understand how it aligns with, and has added to, existing literature in the wider external context.

The spreadsheet that will accompany the report will be crucial to help us to fill the gaps that we have in our historical records and allow us to drill down and populate the Knowledge Catalogue. Both outputs are required.

15. Is it possible to extend the closing date due to the Easter holidays?

Yes, we have extended the closing date and revised the recruitment dates to accommodate the Easter holiday period. The new dates are as follow:

Stage	Dates
Closing date for applications	Monday 24 April, noon
Outcome sent/invites to interview	Thursday 4 May
Interviews	Wednesday 10 May
Interview outcome notification	Monday 15 May

Questions received outside of the information call

16. Some of the research within the scope will be a decade old – are you looking for an assessment / acknowledgement of where this may be potentially outdated?

No, we acknowledge that some research will have dated, but there is still value in understanding the strengths and limitations of this work.

17. The brief excludes any "in-house research exclusively undertaken by the Health Foundation, i.e. not funded and delivered by external parties" – why is this?

The Health Foundation's back catalogue is so extensive that we have chosen to start with our funded research portfolio as that will add the most value to the three new strategic priorities at this time to inform decision on future funding areas and models. We may seek to synthesise our back catalogue of in-house work in the future.

18. Can you provide further insights into what you mean/would like to see by “provide a consideration of the strength of methodological approaches of the research”.

We expect the outputs of funded research will include a description of the methodological approaches used. These should be used to appraise the research and provide commentary on the robustness of the approaches used.

19. Please provide further information about the Knowledge Catalogue

Findings gathered from the synthesis will feed into our new 'Knowledge Catalogue', a digital library hosted within our internal CRM that will document findings and outcomes of THF's funded research. The catalogue will be an internal tool for staff to access information about commissioned research to facilitate knowledge mobilisation across the organisation and make best use of the information gained from our work.

The catalogue will be a living record of research and associated outputs and will provide the basis to be able to synthesise our research going forward. The themed synthesis will provide the building blocks for this tool.

The catalogue will be indexed, including key words and a new taxonomy which is being updated to cover all elements of our work across health and social care. One aim is to align our taxonomy with other funders as one way of improving our funding mechanism, making terms more consistent across funders for the ease and benefit of grant holders.

Expressions of interest in partnership opportunities

The following organisations have expressed an interest in partnering with other suppliers to deliver this work.

- Institute for Employment Studies – Sally Wilson, sally.wilson@employment-studies.co.uk
- The Evidence Centre – Debra de Silva, debra@evidencecentre.com
- The Social Innovation Partnership – Amira Tharani, amira.tharani@tsip.co.uk
- Independent Consultancy – John Hall, john_hall_work@hotmail.com



If you have any questions not covered in the ITT or FAQ document, or would like to be added to the interested partners list, please email research.mailbox@health.org.uk