Invitation to tender: Cost of digitising the NHS and social care

Frequently asked questions

Updated: October 2023

Application process

Is there a template to complete our response?
Applications should be submitted via our online portal. You can find the tender response form on the portal.

Will interviews be in person?
Interviews will be held virtually. The Health Foundation is still operating with hybrid working and we expect that most/all of our work with our suppliers will be virtual.

We suggest a maximum of four team members should join if the applicant is invited to interview. The interview will be approximately one hour long. We may invite shortlisted candidates to give a short presentation on their proposed approach and methods, to bring their applications to life. This will be followed by a series of questions from the panel relating to the project details and requirements set out in the Invitation to Tender. Details on the format of the interview will be provided to shortlisted applications.

Where is the budget template to complete?
Applications should be submitted via our online portal. The budget template can be downloaded from the 'costings' section on the portal. Please also refer to the guidance for applicants document.

Can we include overheads in the budget template?
We only want to see day rates (including VAT if applicable) for team members in the budget template.

Are you open to partnership or consortium bids?
We are open to organisations working with partners to bring in additional expertise, but there needs to be a lead applicant who will receive the funding (as we will not be funding multiple organisations). The lead applicant will also be our main point of contact and be accountable and responsible for the work of any partners if successful.

Is there a template for the project management plan? Or any specific requirements about what to include there?
There is no template for the project management plan; we are open to receiving your plan in whichever format best conveys this information, whether it's an Excel plan, PowerPoint deck, PDF or an image of a Miro board.

Can you clarify the Health Foundation expectations of a team? The application form on Salesforce indicates a maximum of three team members – is this core team members and is there an option to include wider input? We have potential to draw on a range of expertise and partnerships. Can you advise how best to include/describe that in the bid?

The application form on Salesforce is standard for the Health Foundation and limits the number of team members that can be entered. However, if you would like to provide additional information about other team members (who may be from partner organisations as part of a consortium bid), please include this as part of the project management plan attachment.

NEW Are we able to add images/diagrams into the application portal as part of our response to specific questions?

Unfortunately, this is not possible. Please include any images or diagrams as part of your project management plan. We are open to receiving your plan in whichever format best conveys this information (e.g. Excel, PowerPoint deck, PDF or an image of a Miro board).

Do you have any information on criteria for selecting successful teams?

The selection criteria have been published in our invitation to tender as part of the call for applications.

NEW How is the scoring weighted for the selection criteria?

Page 10 of the Invitation to Tender lists the selection criteria that our reviewers will use to assess each application. Each criterion is given equal weight and are given an individual score by each reviewer as part of the assessment process. Reviewers will also provide an overall assessment of each application which will also be used to inform shortlisting.

NEW What type of organisation do you expect to appoint?

We are open to bids from all types of organisation and organisations working with partners to bring in additional expertise.

NEW Are there word counts for each of the questions?

There should be a word limit indicator showing underneath each question on the Salesforce application form. We can also provide a Word version of the application form for information as this also shows you the word counts for each question. Please let us know if you require this.

NEW Is this classed as a 'research' tender? What methods do you consider will be used?)

This is a research commission, and we are open to a range of different research methodologies.

The methodologies used will likely be constrained by the data available and what is achievable within the timeframe. As part of the scoping and design phase of this tender, we would encourage the supplier to explore different approaches to allow for triangulation of cost estimates obtained using different methods.

Please also note that indicative table of (non-exhaustive) data sources was referenced on page 6 in an early version of the ITT on website and however wasn't included. Please therefore refer to the latest version of the ITT on the website which contains the appended table.

Project set-up and management

NEW Will the successful supplier be given access to the NHS Digital Maturity Assessment?
We are in discussions with NHS England and hope to have some further information by the time we appoint the supplier in December 2023.

NEW What role will NHS England have in the project?
The Health Foundation is liaising closely with relevant teams at NHS England to ensure they are aware of the project and its purpose. We will also make introductions between the supplier and existing NHS England stakeholder connections, where appropriate.

NEW Beyond NHS England, has the Health Foundation held any initial scoping conversations about this work more widely, such as with Integrated Care Boards and NHS Trusts?
Whilst the Health Foundation has regular engagement with Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and NHS Trusts, this has not been specific to this project. We would therefore encourage the supplier to connect with a wide range of stakeholders during the scoping phase of this work, including NHS Trusts and ICBs for example, as well as further engagement with other relevant organisations such as NHS England and the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

NEW In the invitation to tender you mention scoping for a 'Phase 2' follow on project to this work. Would this include calculating the benefits digitisation?
We anticipate that the scoping for Phase 2 would be informed by the data and methodological limitations in Phase 1 and explore what further research would be useful and how this could be undertaken. Based on this, a potential follow-on project may include the benefits of digitisation as well as the barriers and costs.