

# Expression of Interest

*Rapid evidence reviews framework agreement*

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**Prepared by:**

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**Deadline: 17.00, 23 November 2018**

**Attached documents:**

- Expression of interest form
- Sample contract (including terms of framework agreement)

## **1.0 About the Health Foundation**

- 1.1 The Health Foundation is an independent charity committed to bringing about better health and health care for people in the UK.
- 1.2 Our aim is a healthier population, supported by high quality health care that can be equitably accessed. We learn what works to make people's lives healthier and to improve the health care system. From giving grants to those working at the front line, to carrying out research and policy analysis, we shine a light on how to make successful change happen.
- 1.3 We make links between the knowledge we gain from working with those delivering health and health care, and our research and analysis. Our aspiration is to create a virtuous circle, using what we know works on the ground to inform effective policy making and vice versa.
- 1.4 We believe good health and health care are key to a flourishing society. Through sharing what we learn, collaborating with others and building people's skills and knowledge, we aim to make a difference and contribute to a healthier population.

## **2.0 Background to the project**

- 2.1 The Health Foundation is seeking suppliers for a framework agreement for undertaking high quality evidence reviews in a timely and efficient manner. Successful suppliers will be contracted onto the framework for three years and will be informed when there is a new evidence review commission, which they will be able to submit a short tender for, if appropriate. These tenders will then be assessed and a supplier selected based on criteria including quality of service, ability to meet the brief and value for money.
- 2.2 Our aim in setting up this framework agreement is to develop a service that Health Foundation staff can use to commission rapid evidence reviews.
- 2.3 As this Expression of Interest (EOI) is for a framework agreement and not for a specific project, there is no budget attached. However, we expect to see between three and four reviews a year over the next three years; indicating a spend of approximately £270,000–£360,000.
- 2.4 Your EOI should be completed using the EOI form that accompanies this document. An electronic copy should be sent to Ruth McConkey at [rapidevidencereviews@health.org.uk](mailto:rapidevidencereviews@health.org.uk) by 17.00, Friday 23 November 2018.

## **3.0 Details of the work**

- 3.1 The Health Foundation's current business plan includes significant scoping work for new programmes across the organisation. We anticipate that this will lead to demand for evidence reviews over the next few years.
- 3.2 The expectation is that we will set up a framework agreement, with multiple suppliers with expertise in appropriate fields, to be able to meet the needs of the organisation across our various workstreams.
- 3.3 For the purposes of this EOI, we are using the following definition of a framework agreement: "A framework agreement is a general term for an agreement or arrangement between a supplier or suppliers, on one hand, and a contracting authority or contracting authorities on the other, which sets out the terms and conditions under which 'call-off contracts' can be made through the terms of the agreement."
- 3.4 The benefit of this arrangement is that although the initial process of setting up the framework agreement is resource intensive, the call-off contracts should enable

evidence reviews to be commissioned significantly quicker than current internal processes allow.

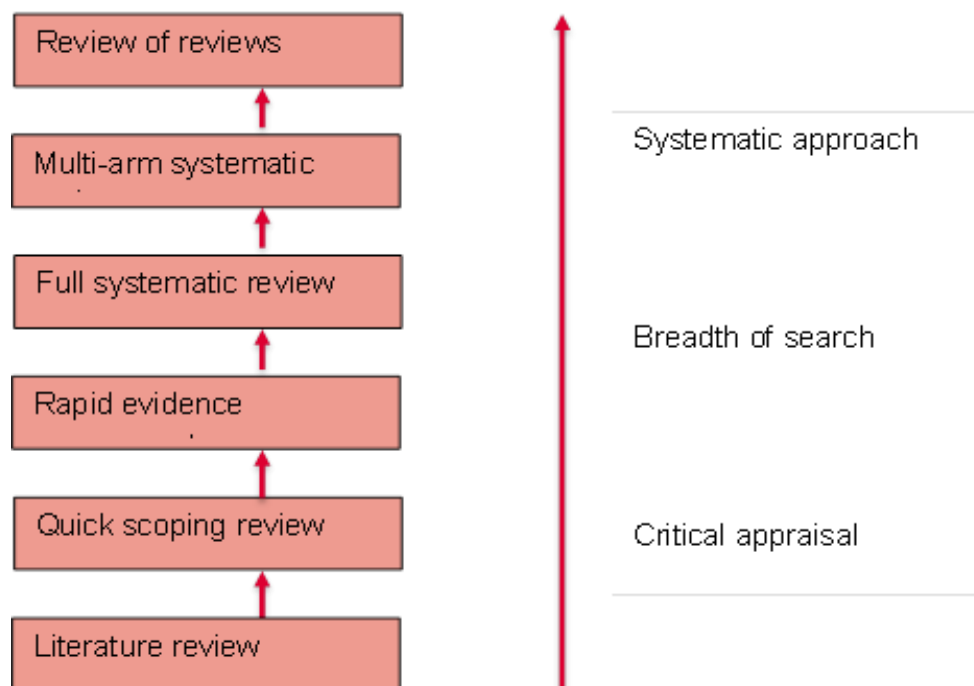
- 3.5 This EOI document details our expectation for the types of rapid evidence review we hope to commission through the framework, and how we expect the framework will function.

### Requirements

- 3.6 The term 'rapid evidence review' is used flexibly to denote a variety of reviews, from quick scans of the evidence, to more in-depth reviews of a wide range of literature. A programme of internal engagement has allowed us to define the term for the purposes of this EOI. The following definition allows a good amount of flexibility, as we expect the exact terms of each review to vary.

- 3.7 As shown in Figure 1, rapid evidence reviews sit between quick scoping reviews and systematic reviews. For quick scoping reviews, the report should provide an informed conclusion on the volume and characteristics of an evidence base, and a synthesis of what the evidence indicates in relation to the question. *Rapid evidence reviews should go one step further and provide a synthesis of what the evidence indicates, following a critical appraisal of that evidence, but without the time and depth required for a systematic review.*

Figure 1



- 3.8 The supplier will be responsible for designing, managing and conducting the evidence review, and producing a coherent report or other desired output (slide deck, presentation etc).

- 3.9 This will require a project team with experience in conducting evidence reviews, as well as the ability to write in a clear and concise way.

## Research questions and topic areas

3.10 We expect to commission reviews that cross multiple types of research question (see Figure 2 for some examples).

**Figure 2**

Type of research question	Example	Notes
Mapping	<p>What current literature is there about exploring retention in the health care workforce?</p> <p>What evidence is there about the impact of seven-day working in acute care, including urgent/emergency care?</p>	We expect the majority of reviews to map academic and current grey literature on a given topic. We may require suppliers to review quality or take a view on the evidence base.
Effectiveness of interventions	<p>Quality Improvement Collaboratives – do they work?</p> <p>What works to improve quality in general practice?</p>	We may require reviews that are able to answer questions about what works and effectiveness.
How to...	How are Growth Accounting approaches used to measure and analyse productivity in the health care workforce in the UK?	We may require reviews exploring methodological approaches.
Barriers to intervention	What are the barriers to GPs' use of evidence-based medicine?	We may require reviews that look at barriers to given interventions.

3.11 Similarly, we expect reviews to cover a wide range of topics within health and health care. Broadly, teams across the Health Foundation cover areas relating to:

- NHS finances
- Productivity
- NHS workforce
- Service improvement
- Innovation
- Quality
- Population health
- Data analytics.

- 3.12 As such, we are looking to recruit suppliers who can conduct reviews in one or more of these areas. Although expertise in any of the above is not essential if you feel confident in conducting reviews in a wide range of disciplines, it would be advantageous.
- 3.13 We are specifically interested in suppliers who have experience or expertise in the following broad areas:
- Health policy literature
  - Health and health care in all four nations of the UK (specifically Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland).
- 3.14 Suppliers will need to be able to work collaboratively with staff from across the Health Foundation. Although your main contact will be within the research team, the staff working on each review will vary.

### **Review specifications**

- 3.15 It is difficult to classify the exact specification of all reviews, as we expect some variance depending on the exact commission, but on average we expect the following:
- Reviews will be delivered within four to eight weeks.
  - Interim findings will be made available within one month.
  - Reviews will cover both grey and peer-reviewed literature, as appropriate.
  - Reviews will be delivered in a range of formats, as required: slide decks, reports, presentations etc.
  - Reviews will be in-depth and thorough, representing good value for money for the Health Foundation.
  - We expect to pay in the region of £30,000 for each review.
- 3.16 We do not expect the following:
- Full systematic reviews or a review that takes longer than two months to complete.
  - Literature reviews or reviews that are turned around in less than one month.
  - Reviews that will be published externally (these reviews will be primarily for internal use to help us plan and inform our work).
- 3.17 Exact specifications of literature to include and exclude, and level of detail, will be agreed when each review is commissioned.

### **Framework agreement**

- 3.18 As stated above, those successful in this EOI will be added to a framework agreement.
- 3.19 All reviews meeting the description above that the Health Foundation commissions over the next three years will be commissioned through this framework, although we reserve the right to commission outside of this framework if there are no suppliers interested or if suppliers are unable to deliver the required review.
- 3.20 Given the nature of a framework agreement, we cannot guarantee work for any supplier. However, we expect to see between three and four reviews a year over the next three years; indicating a spend of approximately £270,000–£360,000. As such, we hope to recruit four to six suppliers onto this framework.
- 3.21 If successful, suppliers will be invited to negotiate the terms and conditions of our framework agreement. These terms and conditions will stand for the time the supplier is on the framework and will cover all reviews commissioned via the framework.
- 3.22 Individual reviews will be commissioned via the following process:

- A notification will be sent to all suppliers on the framework when a review is requested internally, to gauge interest. The notification will provide key details: timeframe, topic etc.
- A brief specification will be sent to suppliers on the framework who are interested in the commission. Interested suppliers will be invited to submit a very brief proposal (standard one- or two-page proposal form). If more than one supplier is interested, an internal panel will choose which supplier will carry out the review.
- The proposal details and budget will be confirmed in writing with the successful supplier and this, alongside the pre-agreed framework agreement, will set out the terms for that piece of work.

3.23 All effort will be made to keep this process simple and streamlined.

#### **4.0 Costs**

4.1 We appreciate it is difficult for prospective suppliers to provide detailed costings for reviews when the specifications have not been agreed.

4.2 As stated above, we expect the reviews to cost £30,000 on average, although there will be flexibility depending on the specification of each review.

4.3 To help us understand the value for money that each response represents, we will ask you to share day rates for staff who may work on this project. Depending on your organisation, that may be for specific named individuals, or may be representative of level of seniority etc.

4.4 It is emphasised that assessment of responses to this EOI will be on perceived quality of service and demonstrable ability to meet the brief, rather than the lowest cost, but value for money is a selection criterion.

#### **5.0 Response requirements**

5.1 Suppliers are requested to use the attached EOI form when submitting their response. We have endeavoured to keep the process simple.

5.2 Supplier information to include:

- organisation name, address, registered address (if different) and website address
- description of the organisation's activities or services
- history and ownership
- organisational governance and management structure
- most recent company accounts.

5.3 EOI form to include:

- a brief response, detailing how you will be able to deliver the types of review we are requesting
- summary of the experience of the key personnel who will be involved in the project
- sample costs, primarily day rates of those who would be involved in this type of project
- any other relevant information the Health Foundation should take into account
- primary contact name and contact details
- links to examples of similar work completed
- two client references

- a statement of your willingness to reach a contractual agreement that is fair and reasonable to both parties (attached is a copy of our standard contract – please outline any disagreements you may have with this).

## **6.0 Instructions for responses**

- 6.1 The Health Foundation reserves the right to adjust or change the selection criteria at its discretion. The Health Foundation also reserves the right to accept or reject any and all responses at its discretion, and to negotiate the terms of any subsequent agreement.
- 6.2 This EOI is not an offer to enter into an agreement with the Health Foundation; it is a request to receive proposals from third parties interested in joining the advertised framework agreement. Such proposals will be considered and treated by the Health Foundation as offers to enter into an agreement. The Health Foundation may reject all proposals, in whole or in part, and/or enter into negotiations with any other party to provide such services whether it responds to this EOI or not.
- 6.3 The Health Foundation will not be responsible for any costs incurred by you in responding to this EOI and will not be under any obligation to you with regard to the subject matter of this EOI.
- 6.4 The Health Foundation is not obliged to disclose anything about the successful bidders, but will endeavour to provide feedback, if possible, to unsuccessful bidders.
- 6.5 Your bid is to remain open for a minimum of 180 days from the proposal response date.
- 6.6 You may, without prejudice to yourself, modify your proposal by written request, provided the request is received by the Health Foundation prior to the proposal response date. Following withdrawal of your proposal, you may submit a new proposal, provided delivery is effected prior to the established proposal response date.
- 6.7 Please note that any proposals received which fail to meet the specified criteria will not be considered for this framework agreement.

## **7.0 Selection criteria**

- 7.1 Responses will be evaluated by the Health Foundation using the following criteria (in no particular order):
- Ability to deliver on all required services or outputs, specifically:
    - ability to answer multiple types of research question
    - access to appropriate sources of evidence
    - ability to deliver within specified timescales
    - ability to deliver reviews in a range of formats.
  - The quality and clarity of the proposal.
  - Evidence of proven success in similar projects.
  - Responsiveness and flexibility.
  - Transparency and accountability.
  - Value for money.
  - Financial stability and long-term viability of the organisation (due diligence will be undertaken on all shortlisted organisations).

## 8.0 Key dates

Date	Deadline
15 October 2018	Expression of interest launched
2 November 2018	Expression of interest questions submitted via email to <a href="mailto:rapidevidencereviews@health.org.uk">rapidevidencereviews@health.org.uk</a>
9 November 2018	Responses to questions via email and posted on website
23 November 2018	Deadline for submissions
14 December 2018	Final decision communicated

- 8.1 We will not be holding interviews for acceptance onto the framework, but may ask you for answers to specific questions.
- 8.2 The start date is to be agreed following the final decision, but will be as soon as is practical (probably early 2019).

## 9.0 Confidentiality

- 9.1 By reading/responding to this document you accept that your organisation and staff will treat information as confidential and will not disclose information to any third party without prior written permission being obtained from the Health Foundation.
- 9.2 Suppliers may be requested to complete a non-disclosure agreement.

## 10.0 Conflicts of interest

- 10.1 The Health Foundation's conflicts of interest policy describes how it will deal with any conflicts which arise as a result of the work which the charity undertakes. All external applicants intending to submit responses to the Health Foundation should familiarise themselves with the contents of the conflicts of interest policy as part of the process and declare any interests that are relevant to the nature of the work they are bidding for. The policy can be downloaded from the Health Foundation's website at: [www.health.org.uk/about-us/](http://www.health.org.uk/about-us/)