

Family Hubs Evaluation Innovation Fund: Questions and Answers on the Expression of Interest

Question: Is it possible for (a) research organisations to submit more than one application, and/or (b) for applications to include the same Family Hubs in separate bids?

- (a) No – research organisations or consortiums should submit no more than one application and up to an upper contract value of £400,000. Applications towards the upper-end of the contract value would be expected to evaluate a group of Family Hubs across local authority areas but would not be expected to deliver a large-scale national-level evaluation. The diversity of family hub service models, target cohorts and target outcomes makes a national evaluation at scale unfeasible. The fund is aiming to contract 3-4 separate evaluations of family hub service models.
- (b) No – Family Hubs should only be named in one application.

Question: By when do DfE want SLAs with Family Hubs to be in place? Do SLAs need to be in place prior to EOI submission?

Service level agreements between research suppliers/consortiums and family hubs would need to be developed once a contract is awarded. For the Expression of Interest stage, please ensure that all mandatory criteria is met and that the proposal addresses quality criteria 2.1 (approaches and stated aims of working in partnership with the family hub(s) to be evaluated, including a description of ongoing liaison, project governance and the aims of each partner).

Question: Do submissions need to include all the different Family Hub models?

No. Individual submissions should ideally evaluate hubs with a relative degree of consistency in their service model, target cohorts and target outcomes to ensure that the evaluation can develop a clear theory-of-change and a methodological framework that is suitable for this service model.

Question: Do participating Family Hubs have to be registered on the Family Hub Network?

No. The family hub service model to be evaluated has to deliver services for families with children across a broader age range (e.g. 0-19) than just solely 0-5 year-olds, as per mandatory criteria 1.3.

Family Hubs Evaluation Innovation Fund: Questions and Answers on the Expression of Interest

Question: Are you expecting one consortium registering one expression of interest to bid for four “packages” of approx £400 k each, which would cover different family hub models and offer all the components outlined in the published document — impact/outcome, quantitative and qualitative; evaluation models; value for money analysis, etc.?

Answer: No. research organisations or consortiums should submit no more than one application and up to an upper contract value of £400,000. At Invitation to Tender stage, bids will be scored on value for money and the appropriateness of the evaluation methodology for the scale and reach of the hubs being evaluated.

We are not commissioning a single national evaluation involving one consortium for the reasons set out in the Q&A from the market warming event. The variety of family hub delivery models and variation in target cohorts and outcomes means that a one-sized fits all approach to evaluation is not appropriate.

Question: Are you expecting four different expressions of interest? Would you expect one consortium to submit the four expressions of interest; or four different consortia specialising in different areas (evaluation, economic analysis etc) which then the DfE will invite to work together to produce one framework and set of measurement tools, etc.?

Answer: Research organisations or consortiums should submit no more than one application each and up to an upper contract value of £400,000. The fund expects to contract a total of 3-4 evaluations in total to 3-4 separate research organisations or consortiums. Each contracted organisation or consortium would be expected to participate in a national peer learning programme for the fund where knowledge sharing and opportunities for replication of research instruments would be explored, with DfE facilitation. All bids up to £400,000 should as a minimum involve a mixed-methods theory-of-change evaluation of a family hub service model and evaluate service effectiveness, outcomes and impact, and value for money.

At Invitation to Tender stage, more details will be provided on expectations for suppliers on evaluation methodology and outputs for bids at different contract values within the range of contract costs up to £400,000. This will include details of expected contributions to guidance documents and toolkits for wider dissemination.

At Expression of Interest stage, we welcome bids from a diverse range of research suppliers partnering with different models of family hubs.