

SE1161 – Place National Evaluation and Learning

Market Engagement Q&A

1. Is there an overall Theory of Change for your current –based investment, or just at place level at the moment?

A Conceptual Framework has been iteratively produced through the work of the current NELP with the initial 12 places we invested into, formerly referred to as the Local Delivery Pilots (LDPs). This is the best overall articulation of the work, as it identifies 10 cross-cutting conditions, each representing different types of actions which are contributing to causing change within local places, which create the foundations and enablers (short-term outcomes) for reducing inequalities in inactivity which reduce physical inactivity, increase physical activity, and/or improve positive experiences for children and young people (long-term outcomes).

Each local place we invest in are encouraged to utilise the Conceptual Framework and learning from our current NELP, alongside their local data and insight, to collaboratively produce a theory of change with a diverse group of stakeholders. This is one of the components of the Place Evaluation and Learning Approach.

2. Many thanks for the presentation. Are you able to describe the overall target beneficiaries (if known) within the target places? And within this, in terms of the profile – particularly in relation to under 16s (if relevant) and other age groups.

This will vary across each Place investment and is agreed with Sport England as part of the awarding process. We are asking for places to identify how their place-based systemic approach will contribute to one or more of our four long-term outcomes e.g., reducing inequalities in inactivity within a place, increasing physical activity, reducing inactivity, and/or improving positive experiences for children and young people. Predominantly, place based systemic approaches focused on people with greatest need, based on inequalities.

We have worked to create a Place Needs Classification index to provide a basis for identifying places we want to work with, which shows greatest need in terms of inequalities in being physical activity. We will include this in the Invitation to Tender documentation pack for Suppliers.

3. Can you say any more about the data modelling? Will this be delivered through this contract or just a close relationship developed between those delivering this

work, with the data modelling supplier? Furthermore, do you have any other ideas about local data modelling and what this might entail?

We have awarded a separate Data Modelling and Simulation contract to help us establish what is possible in modelling and simulating the contribution of the investments made in Uniting the Movement in relation to our four long-term outcomes. That contract will take us some way in being able to do that. This NELP Supplier may work with the Supplier of that contract, to identify what might be required to enhance that work, and the types of data needed to strengthen estimating the contribution of the investment to the four long-term outcomes. We will invite ideas as part of the Invitation to Tender for how that could work.

We are open to how local data modelling could be enhanced as part of the Place Evaluation and Learning Approach in local places.

We are also looking to retender Active Lives in near future, and this NELP could work with the Supplier of that contract to access relevant data to support future modelling and simulation at different levels e.g., a local place (local authority) level and at a programme (across all places we are investing in) level.

4. You mention 80–100 new places. Increasing places across the cycle might have an impact on how this could be costed.

Noted, an increase of 20 places can have a resourcing implication and impact on the delivery model. We will provide a list of the places, and scale of size e.g., whole-of-place or MSOAs within a place and include this in the Invitation to Tender documentation pack for Suppliers.

We need to think about ways of being efficient with the resourcing over the duration of the contract to account for the increase in places which you will be working with. For instance, in how data is analysed and synthesised. We are also open to reprofiling the contract across the years of the contract, to respond to need and demand. This contract also requires the Supplier to be creative in thinking about how to deliver on each of the objectives and consider the collective resourcing for evaluation and learning for this work e.g., within local places, in Sport England, and what the NELP will have.

On the developmental priorities, as we work with more places this may result in a 'new need' where we can release some new resourcing capacity to be able to respond to that, without it negatively impacting on the resourcing allocated and fulfilment of the other objectives to the levels of quality required.

5. Can you expand on the November start considerations for the budget?

We are looking to start contracting with the Supplier during October 2024, and subject to when that contract is executed, we would then work with the Supplier to release resourcing needed to recruit capacity and facilitate development of methods, tools, and/or resources required. This is so the NELP can work from the 1st April 2025 at full capacity and capability. We will not expect the NELP to commence on working on the objectives before 1st April 2025.

6. Can you expand on the Data Modelling and Simulation component of the Place Evaluation and Learning Approach?

This is a new area of innovation for the Place Evaluation and Learning Approach. It is linked to a separate contract that has been awarded where we are determining the feasibility of data modelling and simulation approaches for estimating the contribution of our investments combined in relation to the four long-term outcomes. We see the opportunity for how that work can connect, and contribute to, the Place level evaluation and learning. As such, we are interested in how modelling and simulation can support 'investment' level estimations of the contribution of all investments into place- based systemic working in relation to the four long-term outcomes. In addition, how data modelling and simulation may be informed by the other components of the Place Evaluation and Learning Approach.

7. Can you expand on the Developmental Priorities envelope?

What we know now, based on the need and priorities we have established through our engagement work with key stakeholders, has been translated into the core objectives for this contract. However, we anticipate that as this work is taken forward with more, new places, and as the work deepens in some places, and as the Place Evaluation and Learning Approach is mobilised, over the duration of the contract, that new priorities and needs will occur.

The intention is to ensure that there is a separate budget line for developmental priorities which could include the testing of ideas to innovate and improve aspects of the evaluation and learning approach before it is then mainstreamed, and/or in responding to new local-national evidence needs and priorities. The developmental nature of the priorities means that it is for test and learn and does not assume or expect that the developmental priorities will indeed work.

We would look to identify, discuss, and agree on, the developmental priorities to take forward each year/within a financial year with local places, Sport England, and the NELP.

8. Can the Invitation to Tender documentation be clear about the National Evaluation and Learning Partners requirements for the Place Universal Offer.

This is a good point and noted. Our current engagement work in developing the specification for the Invitation to Tender includes working through the ask of a National Evaluation and Learning Partner in contributing to the Place Universal Offer.

We would expect that the evaluation and learning tools and resources produced by a NELP, and the findings and learning from the analyses and syntheses, will form part of the Place Universal Offer. We also expect that, tools and resources will not be suffice in building knowledge, skills, and confidence, to do and use evaluation and learning, in places we are no directly investing in. Therefore, we expect that this will require a NELP to provide a form of training to support developing knowledge and understanding, and skills and confidence in applying and doing evaluation and learning in practice, as a universal level of support.

We will provide a series of bullet points within the Invitation to Tender documentation which outlines what the key requirements of a NELP will be in relation to the Place Universal Offer.

9. The Market Engagement Slides, and expanded upon in the last objective of the work, refers to working with other Evaluation and Learning Partners across Sport England Investments, can you confirm the breadth of the ask?

The NELP for Place, will be expected to be aware of, and at minimum align and be informed by, the work of other NELP across Sport England investments. We know that, at the point of this contract commencing, there will be a NELP for our System Partner, Movement Fund, and Leading the Movement investments. There is also an interdependency with the NELP working with the Supplier of Moving Communities as part of the Place Evaluation and Learning Approach.

In line with our Organisational Value of collaboration within each contract, we expect all NELP to be aware of, align, and where possible, collaborate, to ensure that we are maximising efficiencies in the use of evaluation and learning resources across investments, and avoiding duplication where possible. A focus of our work is to better manage multiple evaluation and learning occurring within places, and the reporting of that into Sport England.

Within the Invitation to Tender documentation Sport England will set out how the Evaluation and Learning Team, and ways of working within the organisation, and across investments, will facilitate collective leadership and management of evaluation and learning.

10. What data will be collected through Moving Communities Place and how will that be shared with a NELP and used to support methods included within the Place Evaluation and Learning Approach?

Moving Communities is not a method which collects data, it is a data management tool, which enables places to bring different data together, which is predominately delivery of physical activity in formal settings, focused. This can contribute to evidence for aspects of a local places Theory of Change.

The Moving Communities key data fields are; number of visits by activity, numbers of participants by age, gender and home postcode, and where possible ethnicity and disability.

Local places will be required to routinely capture, collate, and update the data they are bringing together on that platform.

We will convene a session between the NELP and the Suppliers for Moving Communities to agree access to relevant data from Moving Communities Facilities and Moving Communities Place. The data from places is aggregated at different levels depending on user access rights.

We envisage that Moving Communities will provide a data set which contributes to understanding the volume of local physical activity delivery within a place, that is amenable to data capture within the resourcing available, methods used, and priorities for evaluation.

11. A large contract value over 3 years with some degree of flexibility – how would you expect a supplier to be profiling the budget of this contract and how would this be managed throughout the contract duration?

It is for the Supplier to determine how to profile the budget to deliver on the objectives of the contract. We are open to Suppliers profiling the budget over the course of the contract in ways which work for them to deliver the objectives. We recognise that this will be viewed differently for Suppliers. For example, there may be a higher cost for delivery of total services for Year 1 and 2 of the contracts due to set up and development costs which will drive efficiencies and reduce resourcing demand in Year 3 and 4.

We will manage this flexible as part of our contract management approach which we will co-create during the Inception Phase of the contract. We are also open to supporting in-year reprofiling of budgets.

12. What are the ways of working expected of a NELP can this be clear within the ITT?

We expect ways of working as guiding by our Organisational Values, and Principles for Place-based systemic working, as set out within the Presentation slides for the Market Engagement session.

Within the Invitation to Tender documentation, we will set out key principles and ways of working and expect prospective Suppliers to suggest ways of working as part of how they will fulfil the objectives of the contract within their tender response.

We will work with the NELP once awarded the contract, during the Inception Phase to establish and agree on our ways of working together, and with local places and key partners. We will iteratively reflect on, and adapt, this, as part of how we manage the performance of our NELP.

13. Can you expand on the handover with the current NELP?

The intention is to start contracting in October 2024, and subject to when the contract is executed, it would allow time for handover meetings with the current NELP ahead of the contract commencing 1st April 2025.

14. Are there any fundamental competencies for the NELP?

In line with the Objectives of the contract, and our learning about evaluation and learning in place-based systemic working, and from our recent conversation with the Evaluation Task Force, foundational competencies in the follow areas would be advantageous:

- Realist Evaluation and other forms of theory-driven evaluation
- Developmental Evaluation
- Collaborative Evaluation
- Culturally Responsive and Equitable Approaches to evaluation
- Evaluating Complexity in Adaptive Systems
- In Qualitative Comparative Analysis, or other forms of this methodology, in alignment with Configurational Comparative Analysis
- Ways of analysis and synthesising heterogeneous data
- Facilitating peer-peer learning and practice
- Working relationally and building capacity, capability, and confidence, in evaluation and learning
- Communicating the technical aspects of evaluation and learning, and the findings and learning from the evaluation, in ways which are accessible, and facilitate sense-making and action

In addition to the above, we would encourage suppliers to access and consider the American Evaluation Associate (2018) Evaluator Competencies and/or the UK Evaluation Society's Framework of Evaluation Capabilities.

15. Can you expand on the role of the DCMS in this evaluation?

Sport England has recently developed a new KPI framework with DCMS for Uniting the Movement. Within the KPI framework there are a series of KPIs related to Sport England's investments into place-based systemic working. The Place Evaluation and Learning Approach is aligned with these KPIs to ensure that the types of data required to fulfil future KPI reporting requirements are met.

In relation to your role as a NELP, as part of your work, you may lead and facilitate sessions with DCMS colleagues and other senior strategic leaders on the findings from the evaluation over the duration of the contract.