

Section 4, Annex A Call-down Contract Terms of Reference

Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform SPHEIR Evaluation PO 7822

INTRODUCTION

The Department for International Development (DFID) leads the UK government's fight against world poverty. We run long-term programmes to help address the underlying causes of poverty and respond to humanitarian emergencies.

DFID require a Supplier to establish, lead and manage the design and implementation of a set of evaluation and research outputs (referred to henceforth as 'the evaluation') to assess the effectiveness and impact of SPHEIR (Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform; referred to henceforth as 'the programme'), in addition to supporting the dissemination of lessons to inform the design of wider DFID programming.

SPHEIR is a Fund to catalyse ambitious and high-value partnerships to transform the quality, relevance, inclusiveness and value of Higher Education.

The SPHEIR programme will provide £45 million over 6 years and is managed by a Fund Manager (FM) consortium led by the British Council, in association with PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), and the Universities UK International (UUKI). Under the SPHEIR programme funds will be awarded to a group of up to 12 projects which must be proposed and implemented by two or more organisations working in partnership (referred to henceforth as 'the partnerships'). The Theory of Change can be found at Annex A.

In January 2020 DFID will take a decision on whether to scale up and extend the SPHEIR programme over a further 4 years from January 2022. If DFID decide to scale up the programme this may also require an extension/scale up to this evaluation.

RECIPIENT

The recipient of this contract will be DFID.

OBJECTIVES

DFID is looking for an experienced and dynamic Supplier to lead evaluation work for the SPHEIR programme. DFID is seeking to evaluate SPHEIR in order to get a better understanding of what design aspects make Higher Education (HE) interventions successful and to improve our knowledge on the longer-term impacts of HE strengthening. This will mean future investments are informed by rigorous evidence.

The evaluation work will consist of three principal strands:

- a) A formative evaluation
- b) Two summative evaluations: one mid-term evaluation and one final theory based impact evaluation.
- c) Linked primary and secondary research projects, including plans to carry out or commission at least two Rapid Evidence Assessments or similar rigorous literature reviews (by end of year 2 and updated with additional evidence by completion of the contract)

Further detail on these can be found in later sections. The Supplier will also be expected to provide short progress reports to DFID either on request or to an agreed timetable. The Supplier will be responsible for ensuring that evaluation findings communicated effectively to a range of stakeholders (drawing on [DFID's Research Uptake Guidance](#)), but will not play a role in implementing any changes.

The evaluation work will be used by:

- a) DFID to evaluate the success of the programme and inform decision making;
- The FM to strengthen the delivery models;
- The UK and international HE sector, other bilateral and multilateral donors, the private sector and NGOs with an interest in this area

Partner country governments, HE Institutions and stakeholders with an interest in this area.

To facilitate wider learning, data collected will be made publically available, when suitably anonymised. The Supplier will need to demonstrate value for money at all times including through proving that administrative costs demonstrate economy and that management processes are designed to maximise value for money.

Any bids for evaluations should include consideration of risks and ethical issues and a statement that the Supplier will comply with [DFID's research/evaluation ethics principles](#). This assurance will then be contractually binding. In practice this will involve:

- a) Considering whether external ethics approval is needed for an evaluation
- b) Ensuring that an evaluation will not cause harm to participants and that participation is voluntary
- c) Ensuring confidentiality is protected
- d) Taking account of international and local legislation, gender and cultural sensitivities
- e) Publication of evaluations
- f) Protecting the independence of evaluations

TIMEFRAME

The contract for the evaluation work will be awarded from late Autumn 2017 for an initial 6 years with the option to extend by up to a further 4 years.

The Inception phase will be 4 months from the start date of the contract.

The following break points will be in place:

- a) At the end of the Inception phase

- b) December 2019/January 2020

Additional break points may be agreed during Inception.

Movement from one stage to the next will be subject to satisfactory performance and completion of each stage.

REPORTING

Reporting outputs under the contract include, but are not limited to:

- a) A detailed Evaluation and Research Plan by the end of the 4 month Inception Phase, including a detailed workplan and timelines. The Evaluation and Research Plan will include:
 - a. Political economy analysis
 - b. Literature review
 - c. Quality of evidence review
 - d. Outcome of discussions on spheres of influence and theory of change
 - e. Stakeholder and network mapping
 - f. Design of the counterfactual impact strategy
 - g. Preparation of a revised theory of change
 - h. Finalising evaluation questions
 - i. Risk management planning
 - j. Preparation of a quality assurance framework
 - k. Preparation of a communication and dissemination strategy.
- b) A formative evaluation of the programme's overall management to be delivered by June 2019
- c) A mid-term evaluation report to be delivered by December 2019
- d) Linked research projects: first drafts of two Rapid Evidence Assessments (or similar rigorous literature reviews) by December 2019
- e) A theory-based impact evaluation covering process and results, and including synthesis of individual project summative evaluations, by December 2022
- f) Completed linked research projects, including updated Rapid Evidence Assessments, by December 2022
- g) Regular reports to provide updates on operational progress, frequency to be agreed during inception phase (likely to be thrice yearly).

The following time frames are subject to change once the contract is finalised and the detailed Evaluation, Research Plan, work plan and timelines have been submitted to DFID by the end of the 4 month Inception Phase”.

Milestone reports should be submitted in draft form 4 weeks before the deadline to allow for feedback and ensure timely delivery of end products.

The first iteration of the evaluation and research plan, due by the end of the Inception Phase, should, at a minimum, contain:

- a) Detailed workplan
- b) Risk management plan
- c) Quality assurance plan

- d) Proposals for partnering with the Fund Manager(s)
- e) Evaluation findings uptake plan.
- f) KPIs proposed by the consultants (the draft KPI's will be the basis, between DFID and the evaluation manager, for agreeing a set of KPIs by the end of the inception period)

The table at Annex B illustrates the reporting process.

REQUIREMENTS

The SPHEIR programme has a number of monitoring, reporting, evaluation and learning requirements.

While the Supplier of this evaluation will not play a role in implementing them, the Supplier will liaise with the FM to ensure they are delivered effectively. The Supplier of this evaluation will be accountable and report separately to DFID the Supplier will be able to act independently of the FM including approaching key stakeholders and institutions as required, although always in consultation with the FM. The FM's roles and responsibilities are set out in Annex C.

DFID may scale up the SPHEIR programme should it prove to be having a strong impact and has the potential to yield better results; consequently DFID may look to extend the duration of this evaluation by up to a maximum of 4 years.

DFID may choose to extend the timeframe or provide further funding, however, at present, no financing is committed beyond 2022. The Supplier shall commit to being fully prepared in the event that any decision is made to scale up (increase) or scale down (decrease) the scope of the programme (i.e. in relation to the programme's inputs, outputs, and deliverables, outcomes and fund element) during the course of the contract.

The Supplier will be responsible for effective communications throughout the life of the contract. In particular, they must establish and maintain professional, responsive and collegiate relationships with the DFID team and the FM. They should also be ready to engage with DFID country offices and other relevant DFID departments as necessary.

The Supplier is responsible for contributing to the development and implementation of the overall programme. In particular by:

- a) Ensuring all data from the evaluation work is made available according to DFID's [Open Access Policy](#). This should be based on existing freely available systems and tools where possible and allow collaboration and data to be shared with DFID and all relevant stakeholders.
- b) Acknowledging receipt of, and responding appropriately to, questions and commissions from DFID and/or the FM on an ongoing basis in a timely manner (acknowledgements within 2 business days, full response to questions or delivery of commissions by the deadline set by DFID and/or the FM unless otherwise agreed).
- c) Ensuring all aspects of the proposed evaluation response must take account of [DFID's Smart Rules](#) and support DFID to seek any necessary internal approvals prior to implementation e.g. Digital Spend approval.
- d) Designing and agreeing with DFID a clear exit strategy for each of the contract break points.
- e) Attending regular meetings with the DFID programme team and the FM.

DFID views women's economic empowerment, displaced and mobile populations, protracted crises, extremism, and the youth and skills agenda as important cross-cutting themes. As such, wherever possible and appropriate, the Supplier should examine the effectiveness of this approach through systemic disaggregation of data, particularly by gender, age, geographical location and income status. The evaluation should explore the differential impact of SPHEIR on women compared to men including whether they are affected differently, their access to benefits and barriers to this.

To maximise the effectiveness of the three strands of evaluation work outlined in the 'Objectives' section and expanded on below, the Supplier will work collaboratively in the evaluation Inception period with the FM and the individual partnerships to ensure that adequate plans are made for contributory evaluations at partnership level and relevant baseline data collection.

Below are a broad range of indicative questions and potential sub-questions, which have been influenced by the [OECD DAC evaluation principles](#). These questions are simply guidelines although the Supplier may choose to apply them if they wish. It is expected that in the inception phase the Supplier will identify which of their questions are a priority and which are feasible to answer and will then agree the final evaluation questions in consultation with stakeholders and DFID. These questions should be revisited during the 4-6 year period of the evaluation, to check they are still appropriate, and revised as necessary. **Please note that these questions are meant as a guide to the areas of interest to DFID and are neither final nor exhaustive.**

Formative Evaluation

This evaluation will mainly examine the overall management and implementation of the early phase of the programme by the FM including the monitoring, evaluation and learning strategy. It will be due by June 2019

The Supplier will be expected to interact with a wide range of stakeholders including awarded projects and DFID to obtain a broad view of the FM's management and implementation approach. Below is a list of example questions to be addressed:

a) *Relevance:*

- Have partnerships devised and continually refined a partnership-level Theory of Change and an appropriate logical framework (or similar results framework) and is oversight of this by FM appropriate?
- Are the activities supported through SPHEIR the right ones given the theory of change?
- Have appropriate interventions been designed and are these on track to produce good quality outputs and achieve outcomes?

b) *Coherence:*

- Did the selection process for partnerships result in a portfolio of partnerships which have a high chance of impact and an appropriate balance of risk and innovation?
- How do the different activities come together and complement each other?
- Does the FM Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) team provide the necessary support to partnerships to ensure they produce adequate and coherent project-level MEL?

c) *Coverage:*

- Who is and is not successfully being reached by the programme, and is there a difference in reach for men and women? Are there different barriers to reach for men and women?

d) *Effectiveness:*

- Did the FM succeed in engaging with a wide range of relevant stakeholders and ensuring the calls attracted high quality, diverse and innovative partnership proposals?
- Is the FM ensuring that partnerships are effectively managed (including management of finances and people)?
- What are the key elements/enabling factors of SPHEIR programme that have contributed to, or detracted from achieving successful outcomes?
- Have there been any unintended outcomes?
- Is the FM Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) strategy fit for purpose?

e) *Efficiency:*

- How did external/internal factors influence delivery of interventions?
- What are the barriers to the implementation of interventions?
- Are the partnerships satisfied with the support and input they receive from the FM?

f) *Coordination:*

- How coordinated is SPHEIR, particularly with regard to similar development activities and external stakeholders?
- What are the barriers to a coordinated approach?
- Did DFID provide effective guidance and oversight of the FM performance?

Impact and Mid-Term Evaluations

The theory based impact evaluation (and the mid-term evaluation report) should outline the extent to which the assumptions of the theory of change hold true.

DFID is particularly interested in evaluating the contribution of HE interventions to two potential outcomes: employment and governance. We wish to gather evidence on the full causal chain leading from inputs to outcomes and impacts.

DFID recognises that it will not be possible to use experimental designs for all aspects of the evaluation however we would expect the Supplier to suggest innovative approaches to designing the evaluation so that it is as rigorous as possible in assessing the impact of interventions compared to an estimate of the counterfactual situation.

With regard to employment, we want to know whether a lack of suitably skilled employees is a constraint to economic growth in target countries; and if so, what the specific skillsets which employers need from graduates are; and whether HE in general, and SPHEIR-funded interventions in particular, are producing graduates who are more employable.

With regard to governance, we want to know what skills and attributes are associated with decision-makers who drive more effective and pro-poor governance. We are also interested in the skills and attributes which enable graduates to be active citizens and the extent to which this can drive

improvements in governance. We are interested in whether HE in general and SPHEIR-funded interventions in particular are building the skills and attributes which are needed for decision makers and citizens who are more able to drive development.

The impact evaluations will test the assumptions laid out in the theory of change (Annex A). They should gather evidence on the extent to which the partnerships are driving changes in behaviours, attitudes, skills, processes and institutions and test the extent to which these lead to the two outcomes of interest. Evaluators may choose to use the duration of the formative evaluation to select a subset of partnerships which will form the basis of the impact evaluation.

Each partnership will have its own MEL strategy including a partnership level logframe. Partnerships will be expected to work together to define shared indicators so that data from individual partnerships can be aggregated into a programme level logframe which will be owned by the FM. All the data from partnerships will be made available to the Supplier. The final impact evaluation (and the mid-term evaluation report) should draw on this data as well as data collected directly by the Supplier.

Below are examples of the questions the Supplier could address in the impact evaluation. The mid-term evaluation report should report on whether the programme is *progressing towards* the outcomes/impacts of interest. Again, these questions are meant as a guide to DFID's areas of interest and are neither final nor exhaustive.

a) *Effectiveness:*

- To what extent have partnerships delivered improvements in quality, relevance, scale and affordability of HE?
- Which of the SPHEIR partnerships is most effective in delivering the intended outputs and outcomes?
- What factors in project design are associated with a higher chance of success in driving positive changes?
- Did the interventions improve the performance, governance and influence of HE educations and systems in the areas where the operated?
- To what extent are positive leadership skills such as critical thinking, inter-cultural awareness, tolerance and civic engagement being developed by HE and what is the evidence linking these attributes to better governance outcomes?

b) *Impact:*

- What were the long-term outcomes and (where possible) the wider impacts of the different interventions?
- Was there a differential impact of SPHEIR on women compared to men including whether they are affected differently, access to benefits and barriers to this? Was there a differential impact on marginalised groups and populations in movement?
- Do the assumptions set out in the overall programme theory of change hold true in practice?
- What features do employers (public and private) and self-employed individuals value in university graduates? To what extent are these present prior to the intervention and after?

- Were there any unintended outcomes and impacts?
- What has been the wider effect of developing HE, including on conflict and the contribution to peace building?
- Is there evidence of multiplier effects, including the indirect impact of HE growth on other sectors of the economy?

c) *Sustainability:*

- What factors are expected to influence the continuation of programme benefits after the end of this funding phase?
- Can a scaled up programme deliver wider HE transformation, and what are the key considerations for programme expansion?
- To what extent are positive changes driven by this programme likely to be sustained beyond the life of the project and/or to catalyse other long term changes?

d) *Efficiency:*

- To what extent do the programme and its interventions deliver value for money?
- How could value for money be improved in the programme and costs contained without affecting delivery?

Linked Research Projects and Rapid Evidence Assessments

In addition to the evaluations, the Supplier will be expected to propose a small number of primary and secondary research projects to further test the assumptions of the theory of change.

The Supplier may choose to propose to carry these out themselves or to commission others to do so. The cost of these must be included within the overall budget.

It is acceptable at this stage to propose some potential research projects and to set out the process by which the design will be refined during the first year of the contract.

Primary research projects should test specific assumptions in order to triangulate the findings of the evaluation and/or to gather information on assumptions which will be difficult to measure during the lifetime of the evaluation.

Examples of the type of research projects the Supplier may wish to propose are outlined below. **Please note that these are merely illustrative examples of the type of project we would be interested in and should not be seen as exhaustive.** Bidders should outline in their proposal their suggestions of research project(s) which will add the most value to the overall evidence base.

- a) A quantitative observational research project to test critical thinking skills and values of tolerance amongst a group of MPs and compare with their voting records in order to test our assumptions on the links between critical thinking and good governance.
- b) A qualitative observational research project to understand the features of university experience which promote citizenship and leadership skills.

- c) A project which gathers and analyses evidence from unpublished PhD and MSc thesis in the archives of developing country HE Research institutions and/or existing data (e.g. from institutional monitoring or from tracer studies) held within universities.
- d) A quantitative and qualitative observational study to analyse the features of graduates most desired by a range of employers.

In addition to plans for primary research projects which we expect bidders to propose, the bid should include plans to carry out or commission at least two Rapid Evidence Assessments (REAs; or similar rigorous literature reviews) on the links between HE and the two outcomes of interest referred to above (employment and governance). Proposals should include details of the precise research question that these REAs will respond to and an overview of the method which will be used to find, appraise and synthesise evidence. These should be completed by December 2019 and updated with any additional evidence by the completion of the contract.

Evaluation Framework and Criteria

All evaluation work should adhere to international best practice standards in evaluation, including the [OECD DAC International Quality Standards for Development Evaluation](#), and [DFID's Ethics Principles for Research and Evaluation](#).

Bidders should prepare a draft Evaluation Framework, key questions and evaluation criteria. This Framework is expected to draw from the programme Theory of Change (Annex A) and from established evaluation criteria such as those mentioned above. In their proposal, bidders must explain how this Framework would be used to develop indicators and questions for the evaluation, structure and frame the analysis and reporting, and show how the Framework is consistent with the logframe and DAC criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. The framework should outline:

- a) The evaluation questions (including sub-questions if necessary);
- b) The way each evaluation question is expected to be addressed e.g. by identifying relevant monitoring data linked to particular questions, specifying that some questions will be obtained by interview material from certain groups, others from desk analysis of specified documents and others from new planned survey work;
- c) The type of analysis planned;
- d) Estimated costs, activities, timelines and resources needed, and explanation of how the Supplier is using these as starting points when developing milestones, KPIs and payment deliverables;
- e) How the Supplier will help DFID to drive results and achieve scale.

Under all points the Supplier should demonstrate how they can employ a range of mechanisms drawing on new and innovative approaches to encourage transparent, accurate and independent feedback on selected individual partnerships. An example layout of the Framework can be found at Annex D.

OTHER ARRANGEMENTS

To enable bidders to set out estimated costs, we have included an indicative list of partnerships along with their geographic distribution in Annex E. Please note that this list is purely to enable bidders to

demonstrate how they will approach costing and does not indicate a preference for what projects will eventually be selected.

The Supplier will be expected to visit at least one location in which *each* SPHEIR partnership is active within the initial 2 years of the contract.

Once the partnerships have been selected at the end of Inception, the Supplier will be expected to produce a more accurate budget based on the location and foci of projects.

DFID envisage this will be outputs based with an element of the costs linked to achievement of Key Performance Indicators, to be proposed in the tender, but should include indicators for both quality of output and timeliness of delivery.

Satisfactory delivery and quality of all of the activities on the costed workplan will be required for full payment to be released. DFID will quality-assure deliverables, validate activities undertaken and assess the Supplier against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) as part of the approval process for payment. The Supplier may propose how each deliverable will be validated and verified to support this process, but this will subject to DFID approval.

As the impact of HE on development takes place in the longer-term and there is no consistent way to measure HE performance within and between low-income countries, the Supplier will be expected to develop and tailor appropriate methods, mechanisms and benchmarking tools to evaluate the programme within the contract period. This should incorporate quantifiable and unquantifiable benefits to support the continued development of the cost-benefit analysis and forecasting returns beyond the programme cycle.

The Supplier must agree with DFID any budget amendments prior to spending.

CONSTRAINTS AND DEPENDENCIES

The Supplier will report directly to the Head of the Higher Education and Skills cluster in DFID's Education Policy Team (EPT). The cluster will be responsible for day-to-day management of the HE policy and the programmes within it. In addition the Supplier is expected to work closely with DFID country offices, taking account of any particular needs as necessary, for example time differences or language requirements. The cluster may also ask DFID officials from other relevant departments to participate in discussions where appropriate, for example Private Sector Department or the Evaluation Cadre.

The FM MEL team will be responsible for developing the overall Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning strategy including the theory of change and logframe. The Supplier will be responsible for delivering the three strands of evaluation discussed above. They will work closely with the MEL team to advise on MEL strategy (Annex F) and to get updates on any evolution of the strategy.

Thematic and geographic selection of SPHEIR partnerships will occur during the SPHEIR selection process. Therefore more detail on beneficiaries and benefits are yet to be determined. The Supplier should be ready to tailor their approach during the inception phase to the specific partnerships selected.

The pioneering nature of the programme requires a flexible and responsive approach with adaptive management. Baseline data will only be available once we know what partnerships are confirmed under SPHEIR, and will differ considerably between partnerships.

In line with recommendations from the End To End review, the delivery model of this evaluation will be tested, reviewed and adjusted during the initial Inception phase.

The Supplier along with the FM will provide a 'Ways of Working' document of how they will work collaboratively at different stages of the programmes, including how they will provide technical review of partnerships, innovations and how to feed in their advice without duplicating roles. The precise timings, roles and responsibilities will be agreed as part of the Evaluation Strategy.

The Supplier will be required to validate programme-level learning, therefore must be independent of the FM.

DFID will assess the performance of the Supplier as agreed during the Inception Phase, and the Supplier will be expected to submit progress reports in line with DFID's programme cycle and contracting requirements.

DFID expects a consistent level of expert resources to be made available for the duration of the programme. As part of this the Supplier should consider how best to provide the necessary in-country support whilst delivering exceptional value for money.

DFID expects the Supplier to remain up to date on wider DFID developments and to ensure that this evaluation remains relevant and aligned to wider DFID evaluation priorities.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The call for the partnerships under the SPHEIR programme is currently open until 20th February 2017. Suppliers will be unable to bid for both the partnerships and this evaluation.

As per the above provision, any Suppliers (including subcontractors) that have an interest in both will need to make a decision between bidding for the partnerships or this evaluation.

DIGITAL

All digital¹ content produced by the Supplier is subject to UK government digital principles as set out by the Government Digital Service (GDS). All digital developments should:

- a) Put the needs of users first;
- b) Learn from and improve these services over time; and,
- c) Be freely available for other DFID programmes to use.

For more information see <https://www.gov.uk/designprinciples>.

The Supplier should consider the use of digital elements to maximise value for money while ensuring the evaluation remains inclusive and fully accessible. Any proposed digital elements will require approval in line with DFID's [Smart Rules](#).

¹ Digital is defined as any service provided through the internet to citizens, businesses, civil society or non-government organisations. This includes, but is not limited to information services, websites, transactional services, web applications (e.g. maps), mobile apps, and extranets. For DFID this includes services provided by others but funded by DFID programme spend.

The Supplier should not propose unnecessary bespoke systems or tools to implement instead make use of existing and freely available systems and tools in all aspects of the evaluation where possible. All communications activities in support of development results must be targeted at specific audiences rather than the general public and be delivered in a cost-effective way. DFID's approval is needed for all spending relating to the development and delivery of digital elements of externally facing work.

TRANSPARENCY

DFID has transformed its approach to transparency, reshaping our own working practices and pressuring others across the world to do the same. DFID requires Suppliers receiving and managing funds to release open data on how this money is spent in a common, standard, re-usable format and to require this level of information from immediate sub-contractors, sub-agencies and partners.

It is a contractual requirement for all Suppliers to comply with this, and to ensure they have the appropriate tools to enable routine financial reporting, publishing of accurate data and providing evidence of this DFID – further IATI information is available from <http://www.aidtransparency.net/>.

BRANDING

Partners/Suppliers who receive funding from DFID must use the UK aid logo on their development and humanitarian programmes to be transparent and acknowledge that they are funded by UK taxpayers. Partners should also acknowledge funding from the UK government in broader communications but no publicity is to be given to this Contract without the prior written consent of DFID.

DUTY OF CARE

The Supplier is responsible for the safety and well-being of their Personnel (as defined in Section 2 of the Contract) and Third Parties affected by their activities under this contract, including appropriate security arrangements. They will also be responsible for the provision of suitable security arrangements for their domestic and business property.

The Supplier is responsible for ensuring appropriate safety and security briefings for all of their Personnel working under this contract and ensuring that their Personnel register and receive briefing as outlined above. Travel advice is also available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website and the Supplier must ensure they (and their Personnel) are up to date with the latest position.

This Procurement may require the Supplier to operate in a seismically active zone and countries considered at high risk of earthquakes. In some locations minor tremors are common. Earthquakes

are impossible to predict and can result in major devastation and loss of life. There are several websites focusing on earthquakes, including <http://geology.about.com/library/bl/maps/blworldindex.htm> . The Supplier should be comfortable working in such an environment and should be capable of deploying to any areas required within the region in order to deliver the Contract (subject to travel clearance being granted).

This procurement may require the Supplier to operate in conflict-affected areas and countries which are highly insecure. Travel to many zones within the region will be subject to travel clearance from the UK government in advance. The security situation is volatile and subject to change at short notice. The Supplier should be comfortable working in such an environment and should be capable of deploying to any area required within the region in order to deliver the Contract (subject to travel clearance being granted).

The Supplier is responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements, processes and procedures are in place for their personnel, taking into account the environment they will be working in and the level of risk involved in delivery of the Contract (such as working in seismically active, dangerous, fragile and conflict-affected environments). The Supplier should ensure their personnel receive the required level of training and, if appropriate, complete a UK government approved hostile environment training course (SAFE) safety in the field training prior to deployment.

As the countries/areas of work involved in this intervention are currently undetermined, DFID is not in a position to be able to provide a Duty of Care assessment at this point. On this basis, DFID assumes that this programme will be rated as 'Medium/High' risk. Therefore, as part of their response, bidders will be asked to submit a 'generic' response to provide assurance to DFID that they can manage Duty of Care responsibilities in even the most challenging of environments. See Annex G for further information on Duty of Care Risk Assessments.

During the programme, it is DFID's expectation that any contracted supplier will provide a full Duty of Care assessment for each potential country/area of work where in-country ground work is expected to be necessary.

If the programme activities take place in medium or high risk locations, DFID will share available information with the Supplier on security status and developments in-country where appropriate.

Tenderers must develop their ITT response (if invited to Tender) on the basis of being fully responsible for Duty of Care in line with the details provided above and should confirm that:

- a) They fully accept responsibility for Security and Duty of Care.
- b) They understand the potential risks and have the knowledge and experience to develop an effective risk plan.
- c) They have the capability to manage their Duty of Care responsibilities throughout the life of the contract.

Acceptance of responsibility must be supported with evidence of capability - **please see paragraph 28.7 of ITT Volume 1 Supplier Instructions for further guidance.**

If bidders are unwilling or unable to accept responsibility for Security and Duty of Care as detailed above, or if DFID deems the arrangements proposed by bidders to be materially insufficient, the ITT will be viewed as non-compliant and excluded from further evaluation.

BACKGROUND – SPHEIR PROGRAMME

SPHEIR (Strategic Partnerships for Higher Education Innovation and Reform), is a new £45m Fund to catalyse ambitious and high-value partnerships to transform the quality, relevance, inclusiveness and value of Higher Education (HE).

This marks a new commitment by DFID to be innovative and ambitious in testing what works to enhance the impact of HE. It aligns with growing efforts across HMG to promote international education.

DFID's Higher Education taskforce, which was convened in 2014, concluded that HE contributes to development in three ways, and achieving these three outcomes will underpin DFID's approach:

- a) Economic development and growth
- b) Public services and government effectiveness
- c) Equity.

DFID's approach will be innovative, collaborative and bring in a range of partners to catalyse system-wide change, leading to our vision of success:

- a) To improve the quality and relevance, scale and affordability of HE in select DFID focus countries.

To improve the performance, governance and influence of HE systems and HE institutions in select DFID focus countries.

It will shape and incentivise demand for partnerships to address identified issues in the HE system by:

- a) Preparing and strengthening HE systems in low income countries for the future, building on learning from other contexts, and improving the regulatory environment
- b) Supporting better performing HE provision with relevant curricula and improved pedagogy
- c) Attracting and testing new approaches and taking them to scale to increase quality, affordability and Value for Money (VfM).

We expect partnerships to help boost the relevance and quality of courses, promote new technologies and delivery models, and generate employment-ready, productive and entrepreneurial graduates. Examples of the types of partnerships it will support include:

- a) Building distance learning capacity to increase access (e.g. open universities)
- b) Improving affordability and financing (e.g. innovative delivery models)
- c) Improving relevance of degrees and graduate employability (e.g. tailoring curricula to market need).

The Programme will provide £45 million over 6 years and be managed by a Fund Manager (FM) consortium led by the British Council, in association with PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), and the Universities UK International (UUKI).

Funds will be awarded competitively to partnerships (which must consist of at least two organisations working together) seeking to support HE reform. Each partnership will receive up to £5M to carry out work for up to 4-5 years.

The programme selected 2 initial partnerships in September 2016, with the aim of launching the first set of partnerships by the end of 2016. One of these initial partnerships focusses on Sub-Saharan Africa and one on mobile populations in the Syria region.

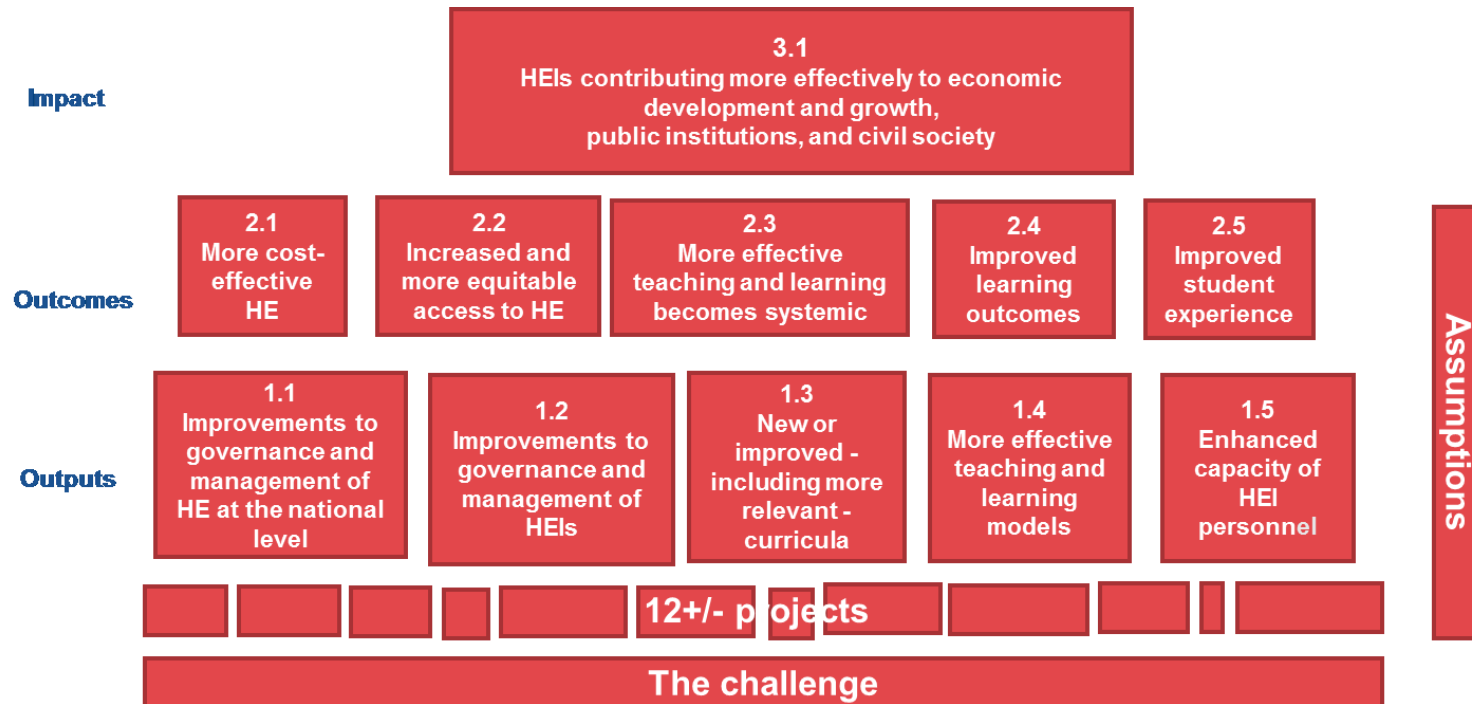
A further open call for proposals was opened in October 2016. Approximately 10 further partnerships are expected to be selected for funding from this round with the expectation that these will be launched by the summer of 2017.

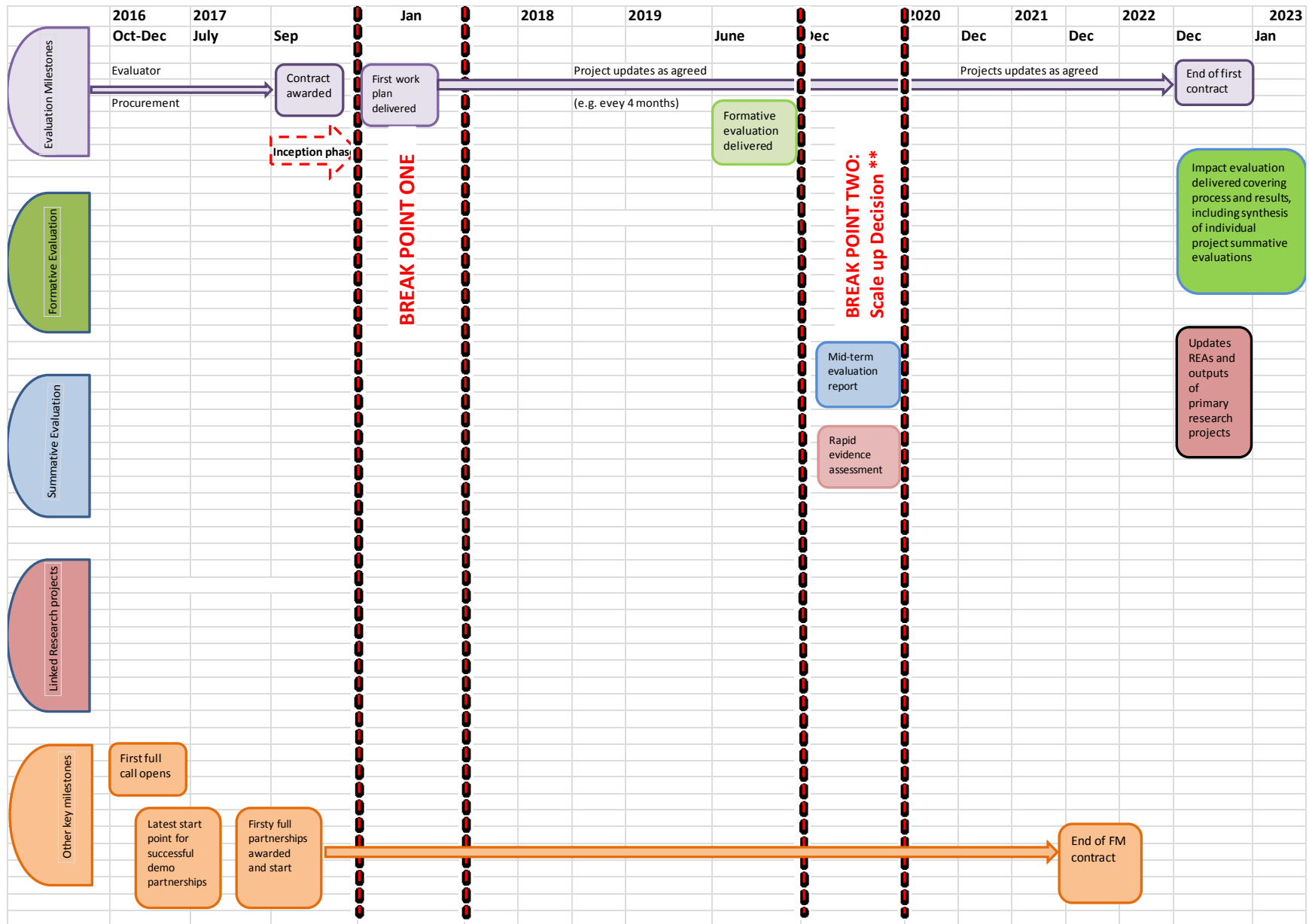
An External Advisory Group has been established to provide independent leadership, guidance and advice to the programme, particularly on key issues including but not limited to geographic and thematic priorities, risks, potential scaling up of funds, evaluation and lessons sharing. The group consists of high level stakeholders and will operate in an advisory capacity, ensuring DFID has access to independent advice and technical expertise.

SPHEIR is experimental and represents a step change in DFID's support to HE. Depending on the demand and performance of the partnerships, there is scope to increase or decrease the level of funding.

There will be approximately 12 SPHEIR partnerships, each supported with a grant of £1-5m over 3-5 years. Grants will only be given to partnerships operating where there is demand, and value for money will be ensured through knowledge transfer and services from diverse suppliers.

ANNEX A: THEORY OF CHANGE





ANNEX B: REPORTING TIMELINE

*Rapid Evidence Assessments (or similar rigorous literature reviews) should be completed by the end of year 2 and updated with any additional evidence by the completion of the contract.

** If DFID decide to scale up and add funds this gives up to 2 years to work out how they will be spent and agree the budget, etc. for activating the contract extension (assuming FM performance is satisfactory) before the current contract ends. If evaluator performance is not satisfactory then DFID has the option to exit the contract and explore alternative management arrangements including procuring a new evaluator or managing the remainder of the programme in-house.

If DFID decide not to scale up and DFID is content with evaluator performance then the contract will run to its original term of 6 years with no extension.

If DFID decide not to scale up and DFID is not content with evaluator performance then DFID can invoke the break clause. In this case, DFID will need to identify an alternative management arrangement for the remainder of the programme and agree a reasonable exit/transition process with the evaluator.

ANNEX C: FUND MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

The FM will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the programme, geographic and thematic prioritisation, establishing and facilitating the bidding process, engaging Higher Education actors and brokering new partnerships, performance management, communications and outreach, monitoring and reporting of individual partnerships, and establishing robust financial mechanisms to assure value for money. The FM will have overall responsibility for the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning strategy of the programme. As such, they will:

Work with DFID to establish and adapt a programme level theory of change and overall logframe for the SPHEIR programme;

Support funded partnerships to develop an appropriate monitoring framework and approach for their partnership

Support partnerships to develop an appropriate evaluation strategy which may include experimental or quasi-experimental approaches to test aspects of the intervention;

Support funded partnerships through the monitoring cycle, including helping to identify what data to collect and how and when to collect it – including baseline data;

Identify opportunities for partnerships to group together to carry out (or commission) thematic evaluations or analysis of pooled data

Ensure adherence to aid effectiveness principles and cost-effectiveness;

Quality assure the data and progress reports provided by funded partnerships;

Aggregate the data and progress reports into regular programme level progress reports for DFID and other stakeholders set against milestones and targets in the agreed logframe;

Aggregate end of project data into an overall project completion report for each partnership; and,

Update the SPHEIR programme logframe annually at the annual review stage.

ANNEX D: EXAMPLE LAYOUT OF EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

Evaluation question	Data to come from:	Analysis to be undertaken
Did the intervention work? - did it work for the key target groups?	Survey data	Comparing survey findings at baseline and follow up in a non-intervention area with the intervention area for the population as a whole and the sub-group of particular interest, the very poorest.
Does the intervention appear sustainable? A) Did Government take on the intervention? How was this	A) Stakeholder interviews – Government,	A) Narrative around what Government has or has not done and how

<p>achieved/ Why was it not achieved?</p> <p>(if Government did take over)</p>	<p>development partners, academics, civil society</p>	<p>DFID/ other partners worked with them to try and secure the prize of them taking on the intervention</p>
<p>B) Did costs remain unchanged?</p>	<p>B) Analysis of routine data collected on costs</p>	<p>B) Detailed analysis at facility level on costs over time with particular comparison of the 12 months before Government took over and 12 months after</p>
<p>C) Was user uptake maintained?</p>	<p>C) MIS data on user numbers and baseline, mid term and follow up survey data</p>	<p>C) Trends in user numbers over time and analysis of the survey data for those using and not using at baseline to see who was still using at mid term and follow up after Government took over</p>

ANNEX E: INDICATIVE COUNTRY DISTRIBUTION OF PROJECTS

The table below provides an example of how the projects could be distributed geographically. Please note that this is purely to allow bidders to come up with an indicative budget to enable DFID to assess the bidders' approach budgeting. It does not indicate any preference by DFID for how the projects should be distributed geographically. The list does not indicate the full eligibility for the call and thus the real distribution of projects may include countries not in this list and some countries on this list may not be covered by the selected portfolio. In addition, it is anticipated that a number of SPHEIR projects will involve multiple countries.

	Project											
Country	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Bangladesh			X									
Burma												X
DR Congo										X		

Egypt				X				X				
Ethiopia						X	X					
Ghana					X	X					X	
Jordan	X											
Kenya		X				X	X					
Lebanon	X											
Malawi						X						
Morocco				X								
Mozambique						X			X			
Nepal												X
Nigeria					X						X	
Pakistan			X									
Rwanda		X				X						
Sierra Leone											X	
Somalia							X					
Tanzania		X				X						
Tunisia				X								
Uganda		X				X						
Zambia						X						
Zimbabwe						X						

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