

4th December 2020

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

FiMT/EOI2002: Ex-Service personnel in the Criminal Justice System in England, Wales and Scotland

FiMT Background

1. Forces in Mind Trust (FiMT) was established at the start of 2012 with a £35 million endowment from the Big Lottery Fund, now The National Lottery Community Fund. FiMT's vision is that all ex-Service personnel and their families lead fulfilled civilian lives. The mission of FiMT is to enable ex-Service personnel and their families to make a successful and sustainable transition into civilian life, and the Trust's strategy is to provide an evidence base that will influence and underpin policy making and service delivery. By funding high quality, credible research where there is an identified gap in relevant understanding, and by then exploiting the findings, FiMT effects positive change.
2. In 2018 FiMT launched its strategy entitled 'FiMpacT – Living the Third Age of FiMT' which described our overarching approach to our future work and how our Change Model (including our Change Mechanisms) would be used to deliver greater impact. This strategy also described how FiMT would use a programme approach to guide our future activities. This REOI falls under FiMT's Criminal Justice System Programme.
3. For more information about FiMT please visit www.fim-trust.org.

Context

4. Avoiding any adverse contact with the Criminal Justice System is a key component of a successful and sustainable transition out of the Armed Forces. While the majority of ex-Service personnel make a successful transition, and do not go on to offend, there are a small minority who do. **The focus of this research will be on ex-Service personnel who offend after leaving the Armed Forces. The research has two aims: (1) to examine the current processes and mechanisms in place to identify ex-Service personnel. This should take a whole system approach, from when they first come into contact with the system, from receiving a caution or being arrested, through to the courts, prison and probation; and (2) to examine the barriers to uptake of support for both ex-Service personnel in the Criminal Justice System and their families.**
5. It is not currently known how many ex-Service personnel are in the UK Criminal Justice System. Official statistics estimate that ex-Service personnel make up 3.9%¹ of the adult prison population in England and Wales and 3.1%² of the adult prison population in Scotland. No data is collected in Northern Ireland at present³. The statistics available for England, Wales and Scotland provide a limited and distorted picture, only taking into account ex-Service personnel who choose to disclose their service status, and little is currently known of the rates of, or barriers to, disclosure. In addition, the data does not include ex-Service personnel in other areas of the Criminal Justice System, such as those on probation or those convicted but under community orders. There is also a lack of data on those who are at risk of offending, such as those who may

¹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/842613/Ex-service_personnel_in_the_prison_population_Q2_2019.pdf

² [Armed Forces Charities in the Criminal Justice System \(2019\)](#)

³ [Supporting & Serving Military Veterans in Northern Ireland \(2017\)](#)

have been identified by social or welfare services as being at risk or who are in the lower end of the system, perhaps having received police cautions but no formal convictions. Without this data, it is impossible to gain a full picture of the scale, offending profile and needs of ex-Service personnel who offend, and difficult for policy makers and support providers to make informed decisions about what interventions should be put in place.

6. Previous research⁴ conducted on the profile and needs of ex-Service personnel in the Criminal Justice System suggests that, while ex-Service offenders tend to have similar practical needs when compared to the non-veteran offending population, such as accommodation and financial issues, a number of differences have been found. Ex-Service personnel are more likely to be male, white, and older, and are more likely to have qualifications and experience of secure employment. Ex-Service personnel are also more likely to have experienced mental health issues, harmful or hazardous drinking, and physical health problems than those who have not served.

7 Across the UK there are a number of support services, both statutory and voluntary, available for ex-Service personnel in the Criminal Justice System. It is important that ex-Service personnel can be identified within the system to ensure that appropriate and tailored support is properly resourced, and that these personnel are made aware of this support.

8. In England, Wales and Scotland, there are multiple non-veteran and veteran specific referral programmes, such as the Liaison and Diversion service and the Veterans in Custody Support Officer (VICSO) Scheme. These services provide assistance to ex-Service personnel who offend and support a range of needs. However, while there is significant support available, services are not consistently applied across the nations (with veteran-specific support in Northern Ireland provided only by the voluntary and community sector), take-up is often inconsistent and the same services can differ from location to location. Some work has been undertaken to map the support available, such as The Veteran Support Map⁵, which focuses on support to prepare ex-Service personnel for release from prison. However, there is no central body which coordinates the services and support available.

9. Families play an important role in ensuring Service leavers make a successful transition, with positive relationships identified as a preventative factor for offending⁶. Previous research has found that support for families of veterans in custody predominately comes from voluntary sources such as Armed Forces charities⁷. However, to be able to receive the support available, families are reliant on veterans to firstly identify themselves as a veteran and secondly, declaring that they have a family. Many families are therefore often unaware that there is any support available for them or their ex-Service family member and, if they are aware, they may not know how to access it, or which support service is right for them.

Scope

10. In acknowledging the current situation in Northern Ireland and the difficulties identifying ex-Service personnel, this research will cover the criminal justice systems in England and Wales, and Scotland only. FiMT is however committed to undertaking research across the whole of the UK and will seek to commission a separate study in Northern Ireland in 2021.

11. This research should review the current processes and mechanisms in place for identifying ex-Service personnel within the Criminal Justice System, identify any shortcomings, and, if appropriate, make practical recommendations on how identification could be improved.

⁴ [Offending behaviour, mental health and welfare needs of Veterans in Liaison and diversion services \(2018\)](#)

⁵ <https://mod.co-financing.org/veteran-support-map/>

⁶ [Offending behaviour, mental health and welfare needs of Veterans in Liaison and diversion services \(2018\)](#)

⁷ [A Needs Assessment of Veterans in Custody, their Families & Children \(2020\)](#)

12. This research should examine any barriers to uptake of support (both actual and perceived) for both ex-Service personnel within the Criminal Justice system and their families.

13. The focus of this work is on ex-Service personnel in the civilian Criminal Justice System. Serving personnel in the Military Corrective Training Centre are therefore out of scope.

Timescale

14. FiMT is seeking to commission this research project by the Spring 2021 and, although there is no specified completion date, the Trust expects it to be completed and published within 18 months of commencement. The proposed timetable for the tendering process is as follows:

- Deadline for submission of EOIs: 2pm on Friday 15th January 2021
- Invitation to tender issued: mid-Jan 21
- Deadline for submission of tenders: mid-Feb 21
- Interviews: Mar 21
- Project start: Summer 21

Approximate value of the award

15. The award is expected to be up to £250,000 (including VAT where chargeable) but is subject to negotiation.

Methodology

16. While we welcome additional suggestions on the best way to conduct this research, the methodology should include:

- A comprehensive review of the Criminal Justice System in England and Wales and the Criminal Justice System in Scotland. This should examine the processes and mechanisms in place for identifying veterans, from first 'contact' with the law (usually police station custody suites) through to the courts, prison, and probation. It should also include whether the processes currently in place are fit for purpose (i.e. to accurately inform numbers and as a result resource provision).
- Qualitative research with stakeholders in the above criminal justice systems to gain a detailed understanding of current identification mechanisms and processes for ex-Service personnel and the actual and potential barriers (including psychological) in taking up support for them and their families. Stakeholders should include, but not be limited to, health, social and welfare services, representatives from the police, prison and probation services, and voluntary organisations.
- Qualitative research with ex-Service personnel who are currently in the above criminal justice systems and their families to better understand the barriers to uptake of the support available.
- Quantitative research on the number of ex-Service personnel in the criminal justice system is beyond the scope of this research project. Whilst quantitative data is useful, the priority is to first understand the processes and mechanisms currently in place to identify veterans, and establish whether they are fit for purpose.

Impact and Influence

17. In line with Forces in Mind Trust's impact approach, this research should identify conclusions and recommendations to effect positive change in the mechanisms and processes for the identification of ex-Service personnel and their families in the Criminal Justice System. Conclusions and recommendations should also inform strategies for better uptake of support services. This should include exploring senior decision makers attitudes to any proposed changes.

18. All proposals should identify practical ways to ensure effective dissemination of research findings and recommendations. This could include, but should not be limited to, workshops, case studies and designed infographics and animations. We welcome innovative ideas. The resources and time needed to complete these outputs, including any outsourced design work, should be included within the overall costings.

Intellectual Property

19. In commissioning this research, the title to all intellectual property rights created or developed during this research ("Foreground Intellectual Property") will pass to FiMT. FiMT will grant the researcher a royalty-free license (and sub-license if required) to use and exploit the Foreground Intellectual Property.

Communication of findings

20. FiMT expects that any findings from this project would be made available in the public domain. This will include posting the final report on FiMT's website and the Veterans and Families Research Hub as a minimum, but may also include other written outputs such as fact sheets, evidence summaries or online blogs specifically targeted to a relevant, non-academic policymaker or service provider. This could also include oral presentations at conferences and meetings with relevant stakeholders. FiMT would also expect consideration to be given to how findings may be published in quality peer-reviewed open access journals.

Lead organisation and named participants

21. The credibility, experience, and expertise of the lead organization and associated partners are critical to the success of this project, both in terms of access to subjects and the final output. FiMT can fund work from registered charities and registered companies.

Application process

22. All Expressions of Interest (EOIs) will be assessed by the deadline stated above. Any EOIs received after this deadline will not be considered. A detailed Invitation to Tender (ITT) will be sent to all those organisations invited to tender for this research/project.

Ethics

23. FiMT expects all research to be carried out in an ethical manner and bidders must be able to demonstrate how this will be achieved. As this project will focus on ex-Service personnel, we do not anticipate a requirement to obtain approval from the Ministry of Defence Research Ethics Committee (MODREC).

Selection Principles

24. FiMT will use the following selection criteria to determine which organizations will be invited to tender:

- The quality of the EOI. Robust and thorough research is the primary selection criteria.

- The clarity of the EOI in setting out how the research will be carried out.
- The likelihood of the EOI's Impact and Influence proposal to make long-term and sustainable impact.
- The credibility, experience and expertise of the organization(s) seeking to deliver this project, both in terms of delivery and in the exploitation of the subsequent findings.
- The experience and knowledge of the Criminal Justice System, and the transition process from the UK Armed Forces.
- Ethical credentials.

Feedback on unsuccessful EOIs will be at FiMT discretion.

Information to be included in the EOI and deadline for submission

25. FiMT expects the EOI to be a maximum of 8 pages and to contain the following information:

- EOI reference number and title.
- Name and details of lead organisation, including postal, email and website addresses, type of organisation (public, private, voluntary and community sector or other) with any registration numbers, telephone numbers, and details for the person point of contact.
- Name and contact details of any other organisation involved.
- An outline of how the research would be carried out or the programme delivered. This should include how access to a cohort/cohorts would be expected.
- Examples of other work you have already carried out on this subject or in this area and your expertise on this subject.
- An indication of cost, a broad allocation of costs, and what proportion would be requested from FiMT.

EOIs must be submitted via applications@fim-trust.org by 2pm on Friday 15th January. If you have any questions or wish to discuss any aspect of this research/project prior to submission, please contact Isabel Summers at eo@fim-trust.org.



Ray Lock CBE
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Forces in Mind Trust