

21st April 2023

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL – EVALUATION OF IMPACT ACHIEVED BY FORCES IN MIND TRUST SINCE 2012

### Background

1. In 2012 Forces in Mind Trust (FiMT) was established as a twenty year ‘spend out’ Trust with a £35 million endowment from the Big Lottery Fund, now The National Lottery Community Fund, and currently due to cease operation by the end of 2031. Our vision is for all ex-Service personnel and their families to lead fulfilled civilian lives and our mission is to enable ex-Service personnel and their families to make a successful and sustainable transition into civilian life. FiMT (<https://www.fim-trust.org/>) delivers this mission by generating an evidence base that influences and underpins policy making and service delivery, and by strengthening the Armed Forces charities sector through collaboration and leadership, and by building its capacity.

### Context

2. Each year around 15,000 people leave the UK Armed Forces. The vast majority of Service leavers and their families make a successful transition into civilian life, with their lives having been enormously enriched by their time in service. However, successful transitions are not necessarily easy, particularly when viewed via wider metrics that go beyond resettlement services, employment trajectories, and the personal planning of the Service leaver themselves. When understanding success in holistic terms, it often requires the setting of firm foundations for longer term stability and the successful transition of the whole family and dependants. Some ex-Service personnel and their families will require additional support during their transition journey and evidence has shown that barriers to accessing appropriate support remain, whether that is because of quality and availability of support or because of issues relating to the stigma of taking the initial step to seek help. For the minority of Service leavers who have a difficult transition, there can be significant costs as a consequence, both to the individual and their family, and to the public purse.

### Overview

3. There has been significant progress made over the last decade since the Trust’s inception, to better support Service leavers and their families to transition into civilian life. This has included the introduction of not least resettlement provision for Early Service Leavers, the creation of the Defence Transition Services as part of the MOD’s new Holistic Transition Policy, improved statutory provisions for veterans’ health and the introduction of the Veterans’ Gateway and the Office for Veterans’ Affairs. The MOD’s Career Transition Partnership has also enhanced its offering and will re-contract its resettlement support services in October 2023. Over the last ten years, we believe that FiMT has made a significant contribution to this and other progress, working with organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors, and funding research and other activities that enable ex-Service personnel and their families to transition successfully into civilian life. Despite this progress, research continues to show that not all Service leavers and their families make a successful transition and significant challenges remain. This is why **we are now commissioning a project to assess the difference that FiMT has made as a result of our funding, influence, collaboration and capacity building work; to assess the methodology currently adopted to achieve and measure our impact; and to develop a new or revised methodology that will allow us to measure the impact of our work going forward.**

4. **It is intended that this project will be used to inform our future strategy and investment decisions** for the remaining years of the Trust's life, and the legacy we will leave. By commissioning this project we are aiming to ensure clarity and confidence in our understanding of how and where FiMT can most effectively apply its remaining funds, in order to make as much positive difference as possible to enabling ex-Service personnel and their families to make a successful transition into civilian life.

### Scope

5. This project should:

- Develop a methodology which allows us to estimate the future impact of our work in reducing the barriers faced by ex-Service personnel and their families transitioning to civilian life across our [seven programme areas](#).
- Seek to understand the previous impact that has been achieved and, in doing so, consider the changing context and landscape in which that impact was achieved in order to inform the development of the methodology above. This should consider both the internal (FiMT activities) and external (policy, cultural and attitudinal changes as well as the work of other organisations) conditions that enabled that change to occur.

6. This project will be required to address the extent to which our theory of change, developed as part of our [change model](#), and the activities that sit within it, are translating successfully into real change or have influenced or shaped the conditions for past or future change. This includes change where the intended outcomes and impact are difficult to measure, but when successful, can lead to lasting change in policy and practice. It also includes shorter-term but easier to measure tangible impact that may or may not endure.

7. As mentioned above, this project will also be required to make recommendations on a methodology, or measure, for impact appraisal to assist the Board in making future 'balance of investment' decisions based on cost benefit analysis. This should include assessment of weighing investment against prospective project output but also effectiveness, and recommendations on objective assessment of the amount and nature of Trust staff contribution applied to delivery of outcomes and effect.

### Timescale

8. FiMT is seeking to commission this project by end June 2023. The Trust expects it to be completed and presented to FiMT's Board within 6 months of commencement (ideally at our Board meeting scheduled for 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023). The proposed timetable for the tendering process is as follows:

Deadline for submission of proposals: Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Selection and notification: Early June 2023

Project start: July 2023

### Methodology

9. While we welcome additional suggestions on the best way to conduct this research, it should:

- Assess the impact already achieved over the last 12 years. This should build upon the data already held by the FiMT Executive and, where appropriate, could include interviews with stakeholders involved in influencing and implementing change in the transition space such as government departments, and representatives from statutory and voluntary services.
- Assess how effective our theory of change, underlying programme change models, and [change mechanisms](#), have been in helping us to achieve and measure our impact.
- Develop a methodology to measure the future impact of our work in reducing the barriers to a successful and sustainable transition for ex-Service personnel and their families across our seven programme areas.

### **Approximate budget for the project**

10. The budget available for the project is £60,000-£75,000 (including VAT where chargeable).

### **Intellectual Property**

11. In commissioning this research, the title to all intellectual property rights created or developed during this research (“Foreground Intellectual Property”) will pass to Forces in Mind Trust.

### **Communication of findings**

12. Forces in Mind Trust expects that the findings from the project will be made available in a written report and be presented to its Board at an in-person meeting.

### **Lead organisation**

13. The credibility, experience, and expertise of the lead organisation and any associated partners are critical to the success of this project. We can fund work from registered charities and registered companies.

### **Application process**

14. All proposals will be assessed by the deadline stated above. Any proposal received after this deadline will not be considered.

### **Selection Principles**

15. Forces in Mind Trust will use the following selection criteria:
- The quality of the proposal and understanding of the Request for Proposal (RFP). Robust and thorough research is the primary selection criteria, followed by potential for well-founded, actionable recommendations,
  - The clarity of the proposal in setting out how the research will be carried out,
  - The credibility, experience and expertise of the organisation(s) seeking to deliver this project,
  - The ability in and experience of conducting similar projects evaluating the impact of organisations,

- Ethical credentials.

Knowledge of the transition process from the UK Armed Forces is desirable but not essential. The FiMT Executive will provide all necessary support to provide contextual or subject-specific details.

We will endeavour to offer feedback on all unsuccessful proposals.

### **Information to be included in the project proposal and deadline for submission**

16. We expect the proposal to be a maximum of 8 pages and to contain the following information:

- RFP number and title
- Name and details of 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
- An outline of how the project would be carried out. This should include an outline of the internal and external stakeholders to be consulted during the course of the evaluation
- Examples of other work you have already carried out on this subject or in this area and your expertise on this subject
- A broad indication of cost.

Proposals must be submitted by **5pm on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> May** to Isabel Summers, Assistant Head of Policy, at [isabel@fim-trust.org](mailto:isabel@fim-trust.org). If you have any questions or wish to discuss any aspect of this research/project prior to submission, you can contact Isabel at the same email address.

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Forces in Mind Trust