

12 March 2026

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

FiMT/EOI2602: Developing a wellbeing measurement for the UK working age ex-Service community

This request for expressions of interest (REOI) seeks proposals to establish a comprehensive framework that will provide a rationale and consistent approach to measuring and monitoring the wellbeing¹ of the working-age ex-Service community.

Forces in Mind Trust Background

1. Forces in Mind Trust (FiMT) was founded in 2011 with a £35 million endowment from the National Lottery Community Fund to improve transition to civilian life for Service leavers and their families. Our mission is to enable a successful transition to civilian life. FiMT delivers this mission by funding high quality, credible research where there is an identified gap in relevant understanding, and by then exploiting the findings, FiMT aims to effect positive change.

Context

2. Each year around 15,000 people leave the UK Armed Forces, with an estimated 2.4 million ex-Service personnel in Great Britain². The vast majority of Service leavers and their families make a successful transition into civilian life, with their lives having been enriched by their time in service. A minority struggle however and may need additional support when leaving the military. Successful transitions are also not necessarily easy, particularly when viewed via wider wellbeing metrics. In addition, emerging data and research has indicated that there is a cohort of working-age veterans and families who are accessing help and information from support services for a wide range of issues including finance, employment and health.

3. Whilst there is now substantial evidence available on the experiences of the ex-Service community, there remains a lack of regular, national, comprehensive and comparable data on the wellbeing of ex-Service personnel and their families. This has made it challenging to understand the scale of need amongst the community as they transition from military to civilian life, identify trends, design and target services appropriately, and evaluate the effectiveness of support.

4. This project forms part of FiMT's work to develop an enduring evidence base on the changing nature and needs of the Armed Forces community, ensuring that FiMT and others stay agile and ready to respond to the evolving challenges faced by ex-Service personnel and their families as they transition from military to civilian life. It is intended that the outputs from this project will provide a foundation to strengthen the evidence on ex-Service personnel and their families' wellbeing that will be used by FiMT as well as by Government, statutory and voluntary

¹ The term 'wellbeing' is multi-dimensional and wider than wellbeing related only to health status. Existing wellbeing definitions and measures, such as the questions developed by the Office for National Statistics, and the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scales should be considered as part of this research.

² This figure is based on 2021/ 2022 census data and it is likely that the number of ex-Service personnel has decreased.

organisations. This will enable a better understanding of wellbeing levels and the drivers of good or poor wellbeing (both related and un-related to service). By improving the evidence on wellbeing, it will also allow for assessment and evaluation of what is and is not working for this age demographic, ultimately enabling those ex-Service personnel and their families to live fulfilled lives after service.

5. The aim of this project is to establish a comprehensive framework that will provide a rationale and consistent approach to measuring and monitoring the wellbeing of the working-age ex-Service community.

Scope

6. This project should focus on developing a wellbeing measurement framework for the working-age ex-Service community. It should focus on the common societal and potentially unique impact of particular factors affecting this community and how best to regularly measure and monitor the wellbeing of those aged between 16 and 64. Due to emerging data and research indicating that there is a cohort of younger working-age veterans and families who are accessing help and information from support services, we are particularly interested in those aged between 16-45. Consideration should be given as to how best to capture this age group, including whether different indicators, methods or engagements strategies are required.

7. This project is not expected to implement a full national survey or collect large-scale primary data. However, qualitative engagement with stakeholders is expected to inform framework development.

8. This project includes both ex-Service personnel and families living in the UK. By ‘families’ we are referring to spouses and partners, and the accompanying now-adult children of ex-Service personnel (aged 18 and over).

9. The term ‘wellbeing’ is multi-dimensional and wider than wellbeing related only to health status. The project will require consideration of, and the potential to provide comparison with, existing wellbeing measures, such as the questions developed by the Office for National Statistics³, and the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scales⁴.

Timescale

10. FiMT is seeking to commission this research project by September and although there is no specified completion date, the Trust expects it to be completed, and output(s) published within 6-9 months of commencement. The proposed timetable for the tendering process is as follows:

- Deadline for submissions of expressions of interest (EOIs): **3pm Friday 10 April 2026**
- Invitation to tender issued: 24 April 2026
- Deadline for submission of tenders: 29 May 2026
- Interviews: w/c 29 June 2026
- Project start: August/September 2026

³[ONS UK measures of national well-being dashboard](#)

⁴[Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale](#)

Approximate value of the award

11. We invite bidders to submit expressions of interest for an award of up to £100,000 (including VAT where applicable), dependent on methodology. Bids will be assessed for value for money and bidders should demonstrate how the proposed methodology is proportionate to the budget and timeframe.

Methodology

12. We invite bidders to consider how best to undertake this project and we welcome suggestions on methodology. We expect the project to include a review of existing evidence, data and measurement frameworks and tools relating to wellbeing. This may include examining existing approaches taken and identifying examples of good practice to measure the wellbeing of the ex-Service and similar communities in the UK or internationally.

13. This project should identify and assess:

- appropriate indicators for measuring wellbeing for the working age ex-Service community
- where gaps exist in data collection, measurement tools and frameworks to measure and monitor the wellbeing of the working age ex-Service community
- the ability of existing frameworks and tools to meaningfully assess the wellbeing of the working-age ex-Service community
- the ability of existing frameworks and tools to identify the drivers of wellbeing (both related and unrelated to service in the Armed Forces)
- the ability of existing frameworks and tools to evaluate the impact of current and future policy and interventions designed to support the ex-Service community
- the rationale for and value of introducing a national wellbeing measurement for the working-age ex-Service community
- the estimated cost and resources involved in introducing a national wellbeing measurement for the working-age ex-Service community

14. As part of this project, we would like the successful bidder to develop a comprehensive framework that will provide a rationale for, and a consistent approach to, measuring and monitoring the wellbeing of the working-age ex-Service community during transition. The framework should:

- Clearly articulate a model of wellbeing for the working age ex-Service community
- Assess the suitability of existing tools and data sources
- Recommend options for implementing a consistent, sustainable national measurement, including guidance and rationale on frequency, comparability and governance considerations.

15. A range of statutory and voluntary services exist to support the Armed Forces community, as well as a range of organisations that routinely conduct research and collect data with the community. This project should capture the views of those who work closely with the community in order to understand current data collection activity, identify gaps and duplication, and understand the practical considerations around implementation and sustainability.

16. We would expect bidders to have experience of developing similar measurement frameworks and understand the experiences of the Armed Forces community. In addition, bidders should consider how they will ensure that any wellbeing measurement framework(s) created are inclusive and able to capture the diverse experiences, perspectives and needs of the ex-Service community. We invite bidders to include relevant experience within their expression of interest.

17. Evaluation of the impact of the Defence People Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027⁵ is not included in this scope of the project. However, reference to it is included here to ensure that there is awareness of the Ministry of Defence Strategy and the current tools in place to measure and support the wellbeing of serving personnel.

Impact and influence

18. The intended output of this project is a clearly articulated framework which sets out the rationale and a consistent approach for understanding wellbeing in the working-age ex-Service community. This should include a recommended set of measurable indicators and tools (new or existing) suitable for ongoing national monitoring.

19. In line with FiMT's impact approach, this project should identify specific conclusions and practical recommendations for policy makers and practitioners, which take account of external factors and societal opportunities and challenges, to effect positive change. Recommendations should be assessed for feasibility and insights from those responsible for their implementation should be sought where possible. Recommendations should also follow the 'SMART' objectives principle where appropriate.

20. Bidders should identify the key stakeholders responsible for and involved in supporting and collecting data on and conducting research with the UK Armed Forces community and include an action plan for how they intend to connect and engage with the stakeholders throughout and after the project. At a minimum, the project team should set up an advisory group to oversee the project and provide advice and guidance.

21. All expressions of interest should identify practical ways to ensure effective dissemination of and engagement with the project outputs and recommendations, taking account of the environment and organisations in which findings and recommendations would be applied. This could include, but should not be limited to, workshops, case studies and designed infographics. We expect the successful bidder to engage with relevant stakeholders throughout the project to ensure maximum impact and consideration should be given to how best to achieve this. 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

22. In commissioning this project, the title to all intellectual property rights created or developed during this research ("Foreground Intellectual Property") will pass to Forces in Mind

⁵ [Defence People Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2027](#)

Trust. Forces in Mind Trust will grant the successful bidder a royalty-free license (and sub-license if required) to use and exploit the Foreground Intellectual Property.

Communication of findings

23. Forces in Mind Trust expects that any findings or outputs from this project would be made available in the public domain. This will include posting the final report on our website and the Centre for Evidence for the Armed Forces Community, funded by FiMT website as a minimum. It may also include other written outputs such as fact sheets, 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.

Lead organisation and named participants

24. The credibility, experience, and expertise of the lead organisation and associated partners are critical to the success of this project, both in terms of access to subjects and the final output(s). We can fund work from registered charities and registered companies.

Application process

25. All expressions of interest 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 project.

Ethics

26. FiMT expects all projects to be carried out in an ethical manner and bidders must be able to demonstrate how this will be achieved. Bidders should be aware of the timescale and resources needed to gain the approvals required.

Selection Principles

27. FiMT will use the following selection criteria to determine which organisations will be invited to tender:

- The quality of the EOI.
- The clarity of the EOI in setting out how the project will be conducted.
- The likelihood of the EOI's Impact and Influence proposal to make long-term and sustainable impact.
- The credibility, experience and expertise of the organisation(s) seeking to deliver this project, both in terms of delivery and in the exploitation of the subsequent findings.
- The experience and knowledge of conducting similar projects. This includes experience and knowledge of assessing and developing inclusive wellbeing measurement frameworks and working with the Armed Forces community and/or support sector.
- Ethical credentials.

We will endeavour to offer feedback on all unsuccessful EOIs.

Information to be included in the EOI and deadline for submission

28. We expect 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 project would be conducted and delivered.
 - 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, including the proportion that would be requested from FiMT.
29. EOIs must be submitted by **3pm Friday 10 April 2026**. Please submit applications via the application page on the FiMT website found [here](#). Fill out your details and when you reach the question 'Which programme do you wish to apply for' select 'REOI Submission'. Later in the form you will find the option to attach documents, please attach your EOI to the second section - 'Upload project outline'. If you have any questions or wish to discuss any aspect of this project prior to submission, please contact Isabel Summers-Smith, at isabel@fim-trust.org

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