

Evidence Influence Change

Grant making
Approach
2027-2031



Evidence, influence, change.

Forces in Mind Trust was established in 2011 as a twenty year, time limited trust, with a clear mission: to use our funding to enable ex-Service personnel and their families to make a successful transition to civilian life.

Since then, we have worked with researchers, policymakers, charities, practitioners and the Armed Forces community to build evidence and understanding of what supports successful transition and to influence change where needed.

Together, we have helped create a strong evidence base on the issues that affect those leaving the Armed Forces and their families. This evidence has informed policy development and service provision, helped us to challenge assumptions, and improved knowledge and understanding across government and the charitable sector of the unique experiences and needs of the Armed Forces community.

As FiMT enters the final phase of its planned life, our ambition is unchanged, but our approach is evolving.

Our remaining years are not about winding down. They are about using our resources and relationships to achieve the greatest lasting impact.

We believe the sector understands far more about transition than it did when FiMT was first established. The opportunity ahead, is to ensure that the evidence we already have is translated into better decisions, stronger services and improved outcomes for the Armed Forces community.

That means:

- focusing our grant making on collaboration, innovation and systems change
- working alongside organisations that can turn knowledge into action
- investing in solutions that can continue to deliver benefits long after FiMT itself has closed



What we want to achieve



Our Vision

All ex-serving personnel and their families lead fulfilled civilian lives



Our Mission

To enable ex-Service personnel and their families to make a successful transition to civilian life



Our Aim

By 2031, our aim is that FiMT will have contributed to:

Embedded evidence

That has strengthened understanding across government, charities and wider society of the barriers to a positive transition from military to civilian life, what works to address them, and what a successful transition looks like

Empowered others

Contributing to a more capable and connected system in which policymakers, practitioners, and those who influence them are better equipped and connected to use evidence to drive better decisions for the Armed Forces community

Enabled change

Leveraged evidence to influence policy, practice, and support, translating insight into action and accelerating lasting improvements in outcomes for the Armed Forces community



Our updated grant making approach

To achieve our mission, we are updating our grant making approach to focus on:

Driving systemic change

Catalysing new approaches to understood issues, with a focus on projects that have the greatest potential to influence systems within our existing priority areas

Applying and leveraging existing evidence

Supporting dissemination and application of findings, and convening decision makers and service providers to translate insight into action

Supporting innovation to address known challenges

Taking an innovative approach to tackling issues to achieve systemic change, including working beyond the Armed Forces sector to collaborate with civilian services and organisations that members of the Armed Forces community access



FiMT Challenges: turning evidence into change

At the heart of our approach are the FiMT Challenges – targeted opportunities to address some of the most persistent barriers affecting successful transition.

FiMT Challenges will aim to:

- Target specific evidenced challenges – where change is needed
- Bring together organisations to collaborate on innovative solutions – within and beyond the Armed Forces sector
- Create momentum for change where progress has been limited so far

From problem to impact

Each Challenge is built around a simple framework: the evidence of a problem, what needs to change, what success looks like and what people will experience.



The evidence
What do we know?



The challenge
What needs to change?



The change
What does success look like?



The benefit
What will people experience?



How the Challenges will work

FiMT will identify specific, evidenced challenges where more progress can be made and invite proposals that apply existing evidence to practical change. We want to fund work that brings the right partners together, tests new approaches, and creates learning that can influence policy, practice or service design beyond a single project.

Each Challenge is designed to move from an understood problem to a practical change in systems, services or support – so that members of the Armed Forces community experience earlier, better coordinated and more consistent support.

Challenge	Our ambition
Identifying and responding earlier to unmet need	Find people earlier and intervene before needs escalate
Supporting better transition through earlier and more tailored support	Services deliver proactive, personalised support for those most in need
Sustainable cross-sector collaboration	Create consistent and sustained collaborative pathways, services and processes that improve integration across sectors
Embedding Armed Forces awareness in mainstream services	Ensure everyday services routinely recognise and respond to Armed Forces needs



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The Challenges

Using our evidence base, insight, and through engagement with the sector, we have identified four systemic challenges that stand in the way of a consistently successful transition.

Applications are invited against any of the four, and we welcome collaborative proposals that bring Armed Forces and mainstream organisations together to solve them.

We are not looking for projects that are primarily research, evidence generation or increasing understanding of an issue. Projects must demonstrate a clear route to implementation or practical change. In addition, we are not looking for projects that seek continuation funding for existing services.





Challenge 1

How can systems better identify and respond earlier to unmet need amongst the Armed Forces community?

The Armed Forces community is becoming more diverse and more complex. Current understanding and responses to need are often shaped by those who engage with services or are represented in data collection and research. This can lead to emerging needs not being identified early enough, delaying effective support.

This Challenge seeks to move from a system based on partial or incomplete understanding of need, to one that identifies changing needs earlier and responds more proactively and effectively.

We are looking for proposals that:

- Improve how organisations identify individuals or groups experiencing hidden, emerging or unmet need.
- Develop or test indicators and models that support earlier identification of risk and intervention, particularly around transition.
- Improve how data and insight are used in decision making, service design or delivery to identify and respond to need.
- Redesign pathways, referral processes or engagement approaches to reduce delays in identifying unmet need.



Challenge 2

How can we better identify and support those who struggle to navigate transition through earlier, more tailored and proactive approaches?

Some personnel and families face barriers to recognising need, seeking help, or navigating complex systems. Whilst many transition successfully, those at most risk are often least able to access and engage with support, due to systems that are inconsistent and difficult to navigate.

This Challenge seeks to reduce reliance on individuals to identify their own needs and find support by embedding earlier identification, proactive engagement and tailored support for those most at risk to improve their transition outcomes.

We are looking for proposals that:

- Improve early, consistent identification of people with greater or more complex transition needs.
- Test practical and scalable approaches to how support is targeted, navigated, promoted and sustained.
- Develop or embed more proactive pathways, including guided, in-reach, peer-supported or integrated models.
- Strengthen earlier transition preparation during service, across life skills, finances, housing, wellbeing or employment.

Grants of up to £250,000 · Apply via fim-trust.org/apply

The full challenge specifications, which explain eligibility, assessment criteria and how to apply and are published at fim-trust.org/apply. Initial applications assessed as a strong fit are invited to submit a full proposal.



Challenge 3

How can we encourage sustainable cross-sector collaboration to provide better support for the Armed Forces community?

Individuals and families often need support from multiple organisations, particularly during transition or during periods of complex need. Yet, many of the difficulties faced by the Armed Forces community arise when moving between organisations. When services are not well co-ordinated, people can experience delays and gaps in support, and effective collaboration is often dependent on individual relationships instead of being embedded within systems.

This Challenge seeks to move from informal, relationship-based collaboration to embedded sustainable, practical and scalable approaches that strengthen the provision of support.

We are looking for proposals that:

- Develop and embed shared pathways, processes or operational models that improve coordination across organisations.
- Test mechanisms for sustainable collaboration: shared roles, data sharing, joint decision making.
- Strengthen collaboration between Armed Forces charities and mainstream services and improve continuity and coordination of support across sectors.
- Embed collaboration into commissioning and organisational systems, not informal relationships.



Challenge 4

How can Armed Forces awareness become more embedded in mainstream public and charitable services to improve access, responses and outcomes?

Many members of the Armed Forces community rely on mainstream public services, rather than Armed Forces specific support. However, awareness of Armed Forces needs often depends on self-disclosure or individual Armed Forces champions, rather than being embedded in everyday practice. This can result in some people being overlooked or receiving inconsistent support. Earlier identification and more consistent responses can improve access and outcomes.

This Challenge seeks to move from inconsistent awareness to routine recognition of Armed Forces connections, that are recorded and acted on.

We are looking for proposals that:

- Improve early, consistent identification and recording of Armed Forces connection, including families and under-represented groups within mainstream services.
- Embed identification as a routine part of operational processes and service interactions.
- Strengthen frontline capability to improve operational decision making, referral pathways and continuity of support once an Armed Forces connection is identified.
- Generate implementation-focused learning with potential for wider adoption.

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What we are looking for

We will support work that:

- Demonstrates clear potential to influence policy or practice
- Builds on existing evidence
- Brings together the right partners to drive change
- Engages decision makers from the outset

We are particularly interested in proposals that:

- Test new approaches to persistent challenges
- Remove barriers within systems and services
- Improve outcomes for those most at risk of a poor transition



How we fund



Open for ideas, focused on impact

We remain an active and ambitious funder who wishes to prioritise funding where it has the greatest potential for lasting impact.



Working across sectors, achieving more together

We remain committed to working alongside partners, not just within the Armed Forces sector, but beyond.



Grounded in evidence, driven by change

We will invest in turning evidence into lasting improvements in policy, practice and services.

 the-forces-in-mind-trust

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fim-trust.org/contact-form

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