



## Expression of interest

### Title: Strategic School Improvement Fund - Evaluation

Project reference: EOR/SBU/2017/036

Deadline for expressions of interest: 12 midday, Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2017

### Summary

Expressions of interest are sought for a process, impact, and an economic evaluation of the [Strategic School Improvement Fund](#) (SSIF) and the activities funded by it. This will require an overall process evaluation of the fund and individual process and impact evaluations of at least some of the interventions funded. The research should also include a meta-analysis of individual/group activity evaluations to assess which interventions work best in which situations, to what effect, and why. The evaluation is being commissioned by the DfE which will lead the fund's evaluation with support from its partner, the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), which will evaluate a selection of the individual interventions.

### Background

The Department for Education (DfE) wants to achieve a highly educated society in which opportunity is equal for children and young people, no matter what their background or family circumstances.

The government's ambition remains that all children and young people are taught in schools which are at least good (as rated by Ofsted); it is vital therefore that all schools have the resources they need to tackle underperformance.

The £280 million [Strategic School Improvement Fund](#) (SSIF), launched in April 2017, provides grants to support primary, secondary, middle, all-through, alternative provision and special academies and maintained schools, and pupil referral units. It is intended to further build a school-led system, and aims to target resources at the schools most in need to improve school performance and pupil attainment; to help them use their resources most effectively, and to deliver more good school places.

The DfE is working with regional partners to support groups of stakeholders to bid for funds to secure school improvement at a strategic level.

The long-term objective of the SSIF is that more children will be taught in schools which are at least 'Good'. It seeks to: encourage collaborative working between all major actors in the system; ensure access to all local data and intelligence on schools; working in alignment with other improvement funds (Teaching & Leadership Innovation Fund, Opportunity Areas, Northern Powerhouse); and ensure the school-led system learns from interventions which work.

The fund aims to do this through enabling interventions which:

- a. Improve quality of teaching and learning in classrooms
- b. Improve quality of leadership at all levels
- c. Improve progress and attainment across all pupil groups
- d. Improve the evidence base of what works (and what doesn't) to secure sustainable improvement in schools
- e. Improve levels of social mobility

The fund runs from April 2017 through to March 2019.

## Evaluation aims

The DfE in partnership with the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) intends to commission an evaluation of SSIF in order to assess the fund's success against the long term outcomes identified above and generate evidence on what works in supporting schools. It is envisaged that the evaluation will incorporate all funding rounds. The aims of the evaluation project are to assess:

1. the effectiveness, impact and value for money of the overall SSIF
2. in a systematic way, the effectiveness, impact and value for money of individual interventions and/or groups of interventions funded through the SSIF
3. the effectiveness, value for money and impact of the SSIF emergency applications
4. processes, generating learning to inform continued improvement throughout the life of the fund, as well as for future DfE projects.

Impact will be measured over the life-time of the project for all interventions; evaluation duration of specific interventions will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

This is a high-profile evaluation with significant challenges. We need an organisation or consortium which can work flexibly to design and deliver an evaluation considerate of these challenges. The first application round closed on 23<sup>rd</sup> June. Applications are currently being reviewed and we anticipate more information on the number and size of successful applications may be available for the invitation to tender round of the evaluation procurement.

## Methodology

The Strategic School Improvement Fund evaluation programme will comprise the following:

- Overall impact evaluation
- Activity level evaluation
- Economic analysis – VFM analysis

We are seeking expressions of interests from organisations who can demonstrate the capacity, knowledge, experience and flexibility to deliver large-scale, quantitative evaluations and who have significant experience of educational research.

In order to deliver the evaluation required, we envisage that the successful contractor will undertake two key functions:

- 1) Evaluate SSIF as a whole: overarching process and impact evaluations
- 2) Establish, manage and co-ordinate individual intervention evaluations. Although EEF may be undertaking a number of evaluations the contractor will be required to incorporate findings from these into the final programme-level evaluation.

We envisage that the successful contractor will undertake a range of activities including: baselining outcomes; analysis of secondary data; collection and analysis of primary data including interviews and surveys with actors in the system; and a meta analysis.

## Timing

Commissioning Stages	Deadline
EOIs issued	1 <sup>st</sup> August
EOIs due in	17 <sup>th</sup> August
EOIs assessed	23 <sup>rd</sup> August
Invitation to tender Issued	24 <sup>th</sup> August
ITTs due in	14 <sup>th</sup> September
ITTs assessed/interviews by	21 <sup>st</sup> September
evaluation set-up meeting by	27 <sup>th</sup> September

## Assessment criteria

The expressions of interest for this evaluation project will be scored against the following criteria:

- Understanding of the Policy requirement
- Evidence of design and delivery of large-scale quantitative evaluation in education
- Evidence of experience of management of large scale, multi-level evaluations and sub contracting
- Evidence of capacity to deliver on time and to cost

EOIs will be evaluated on these criteria using the scale below, with the full invitation to tender only being issued to those organisations deemed to meet the requirements best.

- 0 – Totally fails to meet the requirement
- 1 – Meets some of the requirement, with limited supporting information
- 2 – Meets some of the requirement, with reasonable explanation
- 3 – Fully meets the requirement, with detailed explanation/evidence in support
- 4 – Exceeds the requirement, with detailed explanation/evidence in support

**Closing date for EOIs: 12 noon, 17<sup>th</sup> August 2017**

Send your EOI form to: [sue.porter@education.gov.uk](mailto:sue.porter@education.gov.uk) and [Evaluation.COLLEGE@education.gov.uk](mailto:Evaluation.COLLEGE@education.gov.uk)

## How to submit an expression of interest

You must submit an expression of interest (EOI) in order to be considered to be invited to tender. To do so, please complete the Expression of Interest Research template found on the Department's

research website. A submission of an EOI does not guarantee an invitation to tender and the Department does not routinely advise organisations that they have not been successful in being invited to tender. Feedback is however available on request.

In order to express an interest you must be registered with us and you will need your ID number. If you need to register then please do so using the online supplier registration form. If you have already registered and have forgotten your ID number, please send an email to [Enquiries.RBU@education.gov.uk](mailto:Enquiries.RBU@education.gov.uk)

All contracts are let on the basis of the [Department's Terms and Conditions](#). You are encouraged to check these before submitting your expression of interest, as these form part of your contractual obligations.

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