

11th May 2018

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

FiMT/EOI1801SNCO: Senior Non-Commissioned Officers and employment after leaving the UK Armed Forces

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. 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 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. Over the last eighteen months FiMT has been developing its change model to help further shape commissioning work around six outcomes: Housing; Employment; Health and Wellbeing; Finance; Criminal Justice System; and Relationships.
3. For more information about FiMT please visit www.fim-trust.org.

Context

4. FiMT considers employment (full/part time, self/not employed, and volunteering, or a combination) to be a key component of a successful and sustainable transition out of the Armed Forces. The focus for this specific piece of research is the transition into employment on leaving the UK Armed Forces for Senior Non-Commissioned Officers (SNCOs). SNCOs are defined as officers who have not earned a commission, from the rank of sergeant through to warrant officer (or equivalent) in the British Army, Royal Air Force, and Royal Navy (including Royal Marines).
5. This REOI arises from findings in FiMT's 2017 Transition Mapping Study, published in July 2017, which focused on the training, skills and employment of Service leavers. The report highlighted SNCOs as a cohort who may encounter unique challenges when transitioning to civilian employment. The report identified some potential reasons for this, including having achieved senior positions in the Armed Forces, but sometimes with lower levels of educational attainment and then a difficulty in communicating their military skills and qualifications in a way which civilian employers can understand. Lord Ashcroft's Veterans Transition Review also identified SNCOs as the cohort most likely to disagree, at discharge, that the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) resettlement provision had given them confidence in their ability to secure employment or another way forward of their choice. No UK research to date however has fully explored the employment outcomes of this cohort and FiMT is therefore keen to understand what unique types of challenges SNCOs encounter in comparison with other groups of Service leavers, and how these may be addressed.

Scope

6. The scope of this work includes the transition from the UK Armed Forces into civilian employment for SNCOs from all three Services. This should include their employment experiences after leaving the Armed

Forces. This would include examining the reasons why some SNCOs experience challenges in finding, and retaining, employment after leaving military service. The research should also seek to identify what other challenges are experienced by SNCOs linked to employment such as finance, housing, health, and relationships with family and friends. Finally, the research should offer recommendations on how the challenges identified may be addressed to improve employment outcomes for SNCOs.

Timescale

7. FiMT is seeking to commission this research project during 2018 and, although there is no specific completion date in mind, the Trust would like to see it completed and published within 1 year of commencement. The proposed timetable for the tendering process is as follows:

- Deadline for submission of EOIs: 2pm on Friday 8th June 2018
- Invitation to tender issued: Early July 2018
- Deadline for submission of tenders: Mid-September 2018
- Interviews: October 2018
- Project start: November 2018

Approximate value of the award

8. The award is expected to be up to £100,000 (including VAT where chargeable), but is subject to negotiation.

Methodology

9. A mixed-method approach should be used for this research. This should include a comprehensive literature review on the transition of SNCOs from the UK Armed Forces to civilian life. Where relevant, literature from other countries should be included.

10. Qualitative research should include SNCOs from all three Services who have served in the UK Armed Forces. In addition, the views of key stakeholders who assist and support SNCOs in making that transition, as well as civilian employers should also be included.

11. Quantitative analysis should be carried out of the existing data available, and also through new research with the SNCO cohort.

12. Finally, analysis should: identify the challenges faced in securing civilian employment among SNCOs leaving the UK Armed Forces; highlight those aspects that are unique to this cohort when compared to other groups of Service leavers; and make recommendations on how these might be addressed that are applicable to policy makers and service providers across the UK.

Intellectual Property

13. In commissioning this research, the title to all intellectual property rights created or developed during the course of 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

14. 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

15. 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 also the final output. FiMT can fund work from registered charities and registered companies which are based in the United Kingdom.

Application process

16. All Expressions of Interest (EOIs) will be assessed by the deadline stated below. 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

17. FiMT expects all research to be carried out in an ethical manner and bidders must be able to demonstrate how this will be achieved.

Selection Principles

18. 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 credibility, experience and expertise of the organization(s) seeking to deliver this project, both in terms of delivery and also in the exploitation of the subsequent findings.
 - The experience and knowledge of employment, 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

18. 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.
 - An indication of how UK-wide relevance or applicability would be ensured.
 - 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 8th June 2018. If you have any questions or wish to discuss any aspect of this research/project prior to submission, please contact Meri Mayhew at hp@fim-trust.org up until 31st May, or Isabel Summers from 1st- 8th June at eo@fim-trust.org

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ray Lock". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping 'R' and 'L'.

Ray Lock CBE
Chief Executive
Forces in Mind Trust