

29th May 2018

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

FiMT/EOI1802: Understanding the transition to civilian life for ex-Service personnel with physical conditions as a direct result of Service or acquired whilst in Service

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 & Wellbeing; Finance; Criminal Justice System; and Relationships.
3. For more information about FiMT please visit www.fim-trust.org.

Context

4. FiMT considers Health and Wellbeing (mental and physical health) to be a key component in being able to achieve a successful and sustainable transition into civilian life from the Armed Forces. Health and Wellbeing is currently one of FiMT's highest priority areas and the purpose of this commission is to examine one specific aspect of Health and Wellbeing: to understand the transition to civilian life for ex-Service personnel with physical conditions as a direct result of Service or acquired whilst in Service.
5. Having carried out a consultation exercise with key stakeholders, it is apparent that those Service personnel who leave the Services on medical grounds and with physical conditions can face particular challenges and may be more likely to experience difficulty when transitioning to civilian life and subsequently. Some potential reasons include the nature of an unplanned and early departure from the Armed Forces, or no longer having access to military facilities after leaving. FiMT is commissioning this research to help the Trust and other stakeholders to better understand this cohort's transition to civilian life, and to ensure it is as successful as possible.

Scope

6. This research should include personnel (Regulars and Reserves), who have served in the UK Armed Forces and departed the Services on medical grounds, with a physical condition as the primary reason. All three Services should be included, and geographical context and other relevant environmental factors should be considered by the researcher.
7. Under the scope of this research are physical conditions which have resulted in departure from the Armed Forces on medical grounds. These could be conditions which are directly Service attributable, or else

have occurred whilst the person was serving and led to their departure. Whilst this research will include the WIS (wounded, Injured and Sick) cohort who have been discharged via the Defence Recovery Pathway, this is not the only cohort which should be included. Bidders should note that due to the high standards of physical health required by the Armed Forces, personnel may leave the Armed Forces with diagnoses which would not normally be associated with life-limiting conditions eg sleep disorders. These could be categorized under the following Ministry of Defence (MOD) categories¹ of departure as follows:

P3 – fit for light or restrictive duty

P4 – pregnancy or maternity

P7 – fit for limited or restricted duties in the UK only

P8 – medically unfit for any form of military service

P0 – unfit for duty, but under medical care (not used by the Royal Navy)

8. This research should cover the following topics in the context of the ex-Service personnel, as well as those preparing to leave, and categories listed above:
 - a. The support available during the transition into civilian life for ex-Service personnel with Service-related physical conditions, or physical conditions acquired whilst serving. This support should include, but not be limited to, employment, housing, finance and the role of support networks.
 - b. What provisions (statutory and charitable) are specifically in place to assist and support those during the transition to civilian life.
 - c. An analysis of the support provided, including reflection on provision offered to ex-Service personnel (by the military charity sector) compared to relevant cohorts within the general population where similar physical conditions and circumstances are faced.
 - d. The financial compensation and support offered by the MOD and the State in terms of entitlement or eligibility, accessing financial support, and gaps in terms of what people are entitled to and what is being claimed.
 - e. Suggestions (if appropriate) on what further or better support could be offered during transition from the UK Armed Forces. This could include support not currently available in the UK if necessary.

9. The following are out of scope for this research:
 - a. Assessment of any clinical or other medical treatments (except in connection with the support set out in paragraph 8a above).
 - b. British Nuclear Test Veterans.
 - c. Ex-Service personnel living in residential care.
 - d. Physical conditions acquired after leaving the Armed Forces.
 - e. Mental health conditions as the primary reason for medical discharge (recognising that mental health factors may be associated with the physical condition).
 - f. People who were medically discharged before 1st January 2016.

Timescale

10. 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 the report completed and published within 2 years of commencement (allowing for a limited longitudinal follow up of Service leavers).

Approximate value of the award

11. The award is expected to be in the region of £150,000 (excluding VAT) but subject to negotiation.

¹ These are the categories used at the time of writing, but may be subject to change and bidders should be aware of this.

Methodology

12. A mixed-method approach should be used for this research. This should include a comprehensive literature review of both UK and international literature relating to the transition from the Armed Forces to civilian life for medical conditions.
13. Qualitative research should be conducted with Service leavers who are preparing to leave the Armed Forces, or have left on medical grounds since 1st January 2016 with physical conditions directly arising from Service or acquired whilst serving. A longitudinal element should be included to understand the longer-term outcomes of individuals who left on medical grounds. Qualitative research should also be carried out with key stakeholders including the Ministry of Defence, and charities operating to support those who leave on medical grounds.
14. There should be quantitative analysis of available data on Service leavers who leave the UK Armed Forces on medical grounds to provide an overview of the cohort.
15. The output from this research should be a report setting out the transition of personnel who leave from the UK Armed Forces for primarily physical health conditions, along with recommendations of how and where the process could be improved.

Intellectual Property

16. 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

17. FiMT would expect 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 deliverer audience. 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

18. 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

19. 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

20. FiMT expects all research to be carried out in an ethical manner and bidders should be able to demonstrate how they will ensure this. As this research includes serving personnel, bidders should be aware that they will need to have MOD ethical clearance through the MOD Research and Ethics Committee and this should be factored in accordingly.

Selection Principles

21. 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 the UK Armed Forces and an understanding of the resettlement process from the UK Armed Forces to civilian life.
 - Ethical credentials.

Feedback on unsuccessful EOIs will be at FiMT discretion.

Information to be included in the EOI and deadline for submission

22. 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. These costs should clearly state whether VAT would be charged, and if so what amount, and whether the figures presented are inclusive of VAT.

EOIs must be submitted via applications@fim-trust.org by 13th July 2018. If you have any questions or wish to discuss any aspect of this research/project prior to submission, please contact Isabel Summers at eo@fim-trust.org.



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Forces in Mind Trust