

17<sup>th</sup> September 2019

## REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

### **FiMT/EO1901: Understanding the psychosocial determinants of psychological health and wellbeing for veterans' families in the UK**

#### **FiMT Background**

1. Forces in Mind Trust (FiMT) was established in 2011 by a £35 million endowment from the Big Lottery Fund. Our vision is for all ex-Service personnel and their families to lead fulfilled civilian lives, and our mission is to enable successful and sustainable transition into civilian life by funding evidence generation and influence activities that help to further our mission. 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. FiMT has been developing its change model to help shape its commissioning work which supports programmes and outcomes in the areas of: Housing; Employment; Health and Wellbeing; Finance; Criminal Justice System; and Relationships. For more information about FiMT please see [www.fim-trust.org](http://www.fim-trust.org).

#### **Context**

3. The importance of families in the transition process is widely recognized. [The Transition Mapping Study](#) published by FiMT in 2013<sup>i</sup> found that the extent to which a Service-leaver's family is able to provide support is a strong indicator of transition success, and the *Veterans Transition Review*<sup>ii</sup> led by Lord Ashcroft highlighted the impact of the transition process on Service leavers' families.
4. RAND Europe was commissioned by FiMT to conduct a study assessing the evidence base on families of UK military personnel during their transition to civilian life, [Families Support to Transition](#)<sup>iii</sup>. This research study found a lack of objective evidence of the challenges faced by UK Service personnel and their families when adjusting to civilian life, and in particular, a shortage of rigorous research on engagement with families, family breakdown, housing and spousal engagement. The [Families Engagement Programme](#)<sup>iv</sup> also identified a lack of a strong evidence base that quantifies the health and wellbeing of Service leavers' families in the UK.
5. Research conducted by the Families Federations in 2018, [Lifting the Lid](#)<sup>v</sup>, found that some families can feel isolated when leaving the Armed Forces and some reported lower levels of resilience, feeling less safe and secure and being unsure where to turn to for advice and support. Families were also concerned about losing their culture, identity and status after leaving the Armed Forces.
6. Research conducted in each of the UK's four nations has highlighted some of the challenges faced by ex-Service families and gaps in support, as well as gaps in research.
  - Research conducted in Scotland, [Call to Mind Scotland Review of Veterans' and their Families' Mental and Related Health Needs in Scotland](#)<sup>vi</sup>, found that families can play a significant role in supporting veterans to

address their health and social care needs and that families themselves need more support. Some stakeholders in the study stated that they felt families were ‘underserved’ and lacked support with health and practical issues such as housing and debt. The research also highlighted the lack of evidence on the emotional and support needs of families in Scotland.

- Research conducted in Wales, [\*Call to Mind Wales Review of Veterans’ and their Families’ Mental and Related Health Needs in Wales\*](#)<sup>vii</sup> found that there is a gap in terms of evidence of the support needs of families and calls for more recognition of and appropriate support for the practical, social and emotional support needs of the families of veterans with mental health problems living in Wales.
- Research conducted in Northern Ireland in 2017, [\*Current and Future Needs of Veterans in Northern Ireland\*](#)<sup>viii</sup> showed the importance of family support networks and found an absence of academic research on understanding the unmet needs of families of veterans. The findings of the [\*Call to Mind Review of Veterans’ and their families’ mental health needs\*](#)<sup>ix</sup> showed that the problems faced by veterans living in Northern Ireland are potentially more complicated and sensitive than those faced by veterans in England, Scotland and Wales. While there is research into the needs of veterans in Northern Ireland and the factors that impact on need, the effects of being a family member of a veteran is an under-researched issue<sup>x</sup>.
- Research conducted in England, [\*Call to Mind England Review of veterans and family members mental and related health needs assessment\*](#)<sup>xi</sup>, showed that one of the largest gaps in care, perceived by both service providers and veterans and family members, is amongst veterans’ families and carers. A lack of recognition of needs, and support to address those needs, was identified as a contributory factor in veterans’ families feeling isolated and unsure of where to get help.

### **Aim of the Research**

7. The aim of the research project is to increase awareness and understanding of the psychosocial determinants of psychological health and wellbeing for veterans’ families across the UK, focusing on each of the four nations, and coming together to build a clear picture of these determinants. Where possible, research should provide evidence that enables comparative analysis on the basis of geography and other relevant factors. The research should provide an evidence base that can be used by both policy makers and service providers to improve the support available to families.

### **Scope**

8. This research should include families of ex-Service personnel who live in the UK. By ‘families’ we are referring to spouses and partners, and the now-adult children of ex-Service personnel (aged 18 and over). Consideration should be given to the inclusion criteria for families; for example, whether or not relationships formed after the serving person left Service should be in scope.

9. A literature review of key UK and relevant international literature and gaps.

10. The following topics fall within the scope of this research:

- The psychological health and wellbeing of veterans' families in each of the four UK nations.
- The drivers that support psychological health and wellbeing in the face of the challenges that come with being the partner or child of a veteran.
- The relationship between the family members' psychological health and wellbeing and that of the ex-serving person.
- The contribution of the local community (friends, neighbours and community and faith organizations), whether positive or negative, on the families' health and wellbeing.
- Support accessed, any barriers to accessing support, and views on the quality of that support.
- The likely future needs of veteran families in each of the four UK nations.

11. The following are out of scope for this research:

- Children and young people currently under the age of 18.
- Families of ex-Service personnel who are not living in the UK when the research is conducted.

### **Timescale**

12. FiMT is seeking to commission this research project by the end of January 2020 and, although there is no specific completion date in mind, the Trust would like to see it completed and published within two years of commencement. The proposed timetable for the tendering process is as follows:

- Deadline for submission of EOIs: 2pm on 11 October 2019
- Invitation To Tender issued: 28 October 2019
- Deadline for submission of tenders: 6 December 2019
- Interviews: 9 January 2020
- Project start: February 2020

### **Approximate value of the award**

13. The award is expected to be in the region of £250,000 to £300,000 (excluding VAT) but subject to negotiation.

### **Methodology**

14. A mixed-method approach should be used for this research. This should include a review of UK literature relating to the psychological health and wellbeing of veterans' families, and a review of service provision to support those families. The research should identify the period of service of the ex-Service person.

15. Quantitative research should be conducted with families on a range of psychosocial determinants of psychological health and well-being, and their experiences of support, both formal and informal.

16. Qualitative research should be conducted through in-depth interviews with spouses and partners of veterans who are currently living in the UK, and with the now-adult children of veteran families.

### **Intellectual Property**

17. 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 research a royalty-free license (and sub-license if required) to use and exploit the Foreground Intellectual Property.

### **Communicating findings and achieving impact**

18. FiMT expects that any findings from this project will be made available in the public domain. This will include publishing the final report on FiMT’s website and the Veterans and Families Research Hub. It may also include written and other outputs such as a summary of key findings and recommendations or an event, targeted at non-academic key policy and decision-makers. FiMT also expects consideration to be given to how findings may be published in quality peer-reviewed open access journals.

### **Lead organization and named participants**

19. The credibility, experience and expertise of the lead organization and associated partners are critical to the success of this project, in terms of both access to subjects and the final output. FiMT can fund work from registered charities and registered companies which are based in the United Kingdom. For this study we are particularly interested in place-based research and the potential for partnership working across the four nations.

### **Application process**

20. 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 organizations invited to tender for this research project.

### **Ethics**

21. 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 might include families of serving personnel, bidders should be aware that they may need to have MOD ethical clearance through the MOD Research and Ethics Committee, and that this should be factored in accordingly.

### **Selection Principles**

22. 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.

### Information to be included in the EOI and deadline for submission

23. 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 organization, including postal, email and website addresses, type of organization (public, private, voluntary and community sector or other) and with any registration numbers, telephone numbers, and details for the person point of contact.
  - name and contact details of any other organization involved.
  - an outline of how the research would be carried out or the programme delivered. This should include how access to 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 should clearly state whether VAT would be charged, and if so what amount, and whether the figures presented are inclusive of VAT.
24. EOIs must be submitted via [applications@fim-trust.org](mailto:applications@fim-trust.org) by 2pm on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October. 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](mailto:eo@fim-trust.org)



Ray Lock CBE  
Chief Executive  
Forces in Mind Trust

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<sup>i</sup> *The Transition Mapping Study, Understanding the transition process for Service personnel returning to civilian life.* Forces in Mind Trust, The Futures Company, 2013

<sup>ii</sup> *The Veterans' Transition Review.* Lord Ashcroft KCMG PC, 2014

<sup>iii</sup> *Families Support to Transition, A systematic Review of the Evidence,* Rand Europe. Sondergaard S, Cox K, Silfversten E, Anderson B, Catherine M, Gereben Schaefer, Larkin J, 2016

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- <sup>iv</sup> *Better Understanding the Support Needs of Service Leaver Families: Engagement Programme Report*, Brian Parry Associates, 2015
- <sup>v</sup> *Lifting the lid on transition: The families' experience and the support they need*, Families Federations, 2018
- <sup>vi</sup> *Call to Mind Scotland. Review of Veterans' and their Families' Mental and Related Health Needs in Scotland*, Community Innovation Enterprise, 2016
- <sup>vii</sup> *Call to Mind Wales. Review of Veterans' and their Families' Mental and Related Health Needs in Wales*, Community Innovation Enterprise, 2016
- <sup>viii</sup> *Current and Future Needs of Veterans in Northern Ireland*, Armour C, Walker E, Waterhouse-Bradley B, Hall M, Ross J, Forces in Mind Trust, Ulster University, 2017
- <sup>ix</sup> *Call to Mind: United Kingdom. Common Themes and Findings from the Reviews of Veterans' and their Families' Mental and Related Health Needs in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales*, Community Innovations Enterprise on behalf of Forces in Mind Trust, 2017
- <sup>x</sup> *Families Support to Transition, A systematic Review of the Evidence*, Rand Europe. Sondergaard S, Cox K, Silfversten E, Anderson B, Catherine M, Gereben Schaefer, Larkin J, 2016
- <sup>xi</sup> *Call to Mind England. Review of veterans and family members mental and related health needs assessment*, Community Innovation Enterprise, 2015