



Championing advice and counselling

Tender for consultancy: Research and Evaluation freelancer

Youth Access is looking to hire an experienced Research and Evaluation freelancer to drive the delivery and completion of our upcoming evaluation work.

About Youth Access

Youth Access exists to make sure all young people have somewhere to turn to, and someone to talk to, wherever and whenever, they are in need.

Along with our growing network of 190 'Youth Information, Advice and Counselling Services' (YIACS), we champion young people's right to access high-quality local services which offer a range of support to help young people tackle the diverse challenges they face as they move into adulthood.

About this project – [Equal Access in Mind](#)

Right now, 16-25-year olds are facing the sharpest edge of the mental health 'crisis'. Too often, they're left on long waiting lists, told they're not 'sick enough' for help, or abandoned when they're too old for children's services. The situation is particularly bad for young people of colour:

- [Young people from BAME communities feel less able to access traditional mental health services](#)
- [Black people are four times more likely to be detained under the Mental Health Act](#)
- [Young people of colour are more likely to be turned away for early intervention](#)

Over the past two years, Youth Access has partnered with 12 members around England on a project called Equal Access in Mind (funded by DCMS) to look specifically at how to improve access to, and experience of, youth counselling services for our target group of young women (young women from BAME communities).

Significant outputs for this tender are:

1. Evaluation of our upcoming delivery of a Community of Practice (a collaborative series of workshops for our members, to support them in becoming more racially aware and responsive service providers).
2. Supporting the design and analysis of focus groups which target young women who have engaged with the project.
3. Production of a brief report to be produced on initial project findings.

We are looking for an organised, dynamic self-starter with experience in designing and delivering project evaluations and focus groups. The ideal applicant will have strong stakeholder management skills to enable them to collaborate effectively with both internal and external colleagues.

Aims and objectives

Background context of the evaluation for Equal Access in Mind:

The overarching aim of the evaluation is to understand the immediate project-specific and sector wide outcomes of the Equal Access in Mind project. This can be broken down into the following objectives:

- **Outcome evaluation (interviews, focus groups):**
 - Has the project/Tampon Tax funding increased the numbers and proportion of young adult women (generally and in our target groups) helped by the YIACS delivery partners?
 - What are the factors that facilitate young adult women's access to person-centred, community-based mental health support?
 - How should YIACS and other services tailor their approaches to best meet the needs of this group?
 - What is the experience of young adult women (generally and in our target groups) of accessing and receiving support in YIACS? How does that experience differ from that of other client groups helped by YIACS?
 - Has the project led to improvements in the accessibility and quality of service experience offered by YIACS to young adult women (generally and in our target groups)?

Activities to develop the outcome evaluation are already underway and being led by our external evaluation partner (Health Inequalities Research Network (HERON)).

HERON is leading on the majority of our evaluation work for this project as they have ethical approval to do so.

The successful applicant will be expected to **support** the design and analysis of the project-wide evaluation work (outcome evaluation, focus groups), but will **lead** on the evaluation activities for the Communities of Practice evaluation (outlined below).

- **Community of Practice evaluation:**
 - This series of 4 workshops will need to be evaluated separately from the wider project. The successful applicant will **lead on this activity** as it is not supported by HERON.
 - Baseline and post-workshop surveys have already been designed. The successful applicant will be expected to analyse both sets of results in

order to support Youth Access to evidence **participants reported knowledge improvement**. This will be a small sample of responses (maximum of 10).

- The workshops are taking place on 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th February 2021. The evaluation of these data will need to be completed by no later than **10th March 2021**.
- The results will need to be displayed and disseminated in an accessible way to the project funder and partners.
- **Focus groups:**
 - Young women from our target group (**from 4 YIACS/services**) will be identified prior to this contract starting.
 - The successful applicant will work with HERON to a) design these focus groups (questions/themes/format) and b) support the analysis the data/findings, in order to support Youth Access to evidence **young women's positive experiences of using those YIACS/services**. This will be a small sample size of approx. 20 participants.
- **Initial findings shared with partners:**
 - As a result of the above evaluation work that will have taken place, the successful applicant will work with HERON to support the production of a brief report which outlines initial findings and analysis. This report will be shared with project partners.

Timeline & deliverables

The below outlines the expected evaluation deliverables. The dates shown are confirmed and have therefore already been agreed with external stakeholders.

Deliverable	Expected no later than
Community of Practice - Evaluation	10 th March 2021
Focus groups - Design and Delivery	31 st March 2021
Brief report on initial findings	30 th April 2021 <i>(but you will support on this until the end of this contract)</i>

Application

Interested individuals are invited to submit an expression of interest summarising their interest in, and suitability for, the role. This should be sent to jess@youthaccess.org.uk by no later than midnight on **31st January 2021**.

We are keen to award the contract sooner than this if we find the appropriate person.

Please note, we envisage this contract lasting until the end of March 2021 (approx. 30-days of work) but there may be scope to increase this.