# **Evaluation brief for *Picture This***

## Summary

The Mental Health Foundation (MHF) has over a decade of peer support expertise working with the later life housing sector through facilitated peer support groups. Through previous projects, including [Standing Together](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/projects/standing-together) and [Creating Communities,](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/one-day-in-lockdown#:~:text=The%20Creating%20Communities%20Project%20began,Foundation%20and%20Anchor%20Hanover%20Housing.) MHF has delivered weekly groups enabling older people to improve wellbeing and build social connections, through deeper conversation about their lives, identity and passions.

This evaluation brief is for the *Picture This* pilot project which aims to keep older people (aged 55 and over), who live in sheltered and extra care housing schemes in the London area, connected with family and friends throughout this difficult time via an electronic device (such as Facebook Portal). Participants will be invited to engage in weekly creative activities exploring their experience of lockdown led by skilled facilitators. MHF will work co-productively on the planning of activities by generating new ideas with the people taking part. Participants’ artwork will be uploaded on to a virtual gallery.

The proposed outcomes for the *Picture This* pilot are to:

* 1. Increase participants’ confidence/create meaningful opportunities for engagement
  2. Build participants’ online confidence
  3. Give participants experience and tools to continue engaging with friends and family

This evaluation is for the pilot year, though there is a possibility that the project may run for a second year (though with different targeted beneficiaries). The project aims to reach 120 older people in later life housing. We will be working with on-site staff within later life housing schemes in London, with whom we have collaborated for years (Anchor Housing and Notting Hill Genesis).

Participants will be provided with an art material package consisting of sketch pads, felt tips and coloured pencils and a Facebook Portal or other electronic device. The MHF staff team includes those working in the Empowerment and Later Life team, in addition to four new part-time staff based at the housing schemes, whose role will be to help people in person to set up the Facebook Portal or electronic device and to support participants to engage with the project.

## Budget

£17,000 to £22,000. Bids should be inclusive of VAT.

## Timeline

Delivery of the project is estimated to begin in May/June 2021 and end mid-March 2022.

Discussion would be welcomed at an early stage to consider key milestones for programme delivery and evaluation.

The diagram below reflects the anticipated timings of the programme delivery and evaluation.



## Aims & Objectives of the project evaluation

The initial aims being considered are:

1. Exploring progress against programme outcomes:
   1. Increase confidence/create meaningful opportunities for engagement
   2. Build participants’ online confidence
   3. Give participants experience and tools to continue engaging with friends and family
2. Understanding participants' experiences of engaging with the programme.
3. Identifying lessons on sustainability, feasibility of digitalising the programme and how *Picture This* could be potentially upscaled

We would welcome early discussion to finalise these aims and objectives.

## Research design/methodology

We do not have a set idea about the methodology for this evaluation and we would like you to demonstrate in full your proposed methodology.

Initial considerations include: a weekly single-item scale to determine how beneficiaries are using the technology to connect with others, using the Warwick Edinburgh Wellbeing Scale, virtual focus groups, reflective diaries or participant drawings. We are very much interested in participatory or creative evaluation approaches.

We would like bidders to clearly illustrate how they intend to evaluate the project against its aims and objectives, with specific emphasis on how they would tailor their methodology to suit this particular population group. We would also like bidders to include in their application assurance regarding safeguarding, ethical and data protection considerations.

Evaluators will be responsible for data collection and can be supported by the MHF Project Manager where appropriate.

## Milestones and deliverables

Milestones:

* Session with our Programmes team to work through and document the logic model for *Picture This*

Deliverables:

* A final report (up to 20 pages, excluding references and annexes) that meets the aims and objectives of the research as outlined in Section 4 of this brief, and includes an Executive Summary which also provides a stand-alone summary of key findings from the research. We welcome report designs that reflect the creative nature of the project.
* To host an internal MHF session to share the process of evaluation and findings.
* To have a smaller meeting on lessons learnt from the evaluation and following this up with a written output.

A first draft of the report will be required by 7th March 2022for comments and feedback. The final report will need to be submitted by **4th April 2022**.

## Working together

In addition to the delivery of the above milestones and outputs, it is expected that the following activities will be undertaken by the successful evaluator:

i. Attend Inception Meeting with key stakeholders

ii. Iterative development meetings - participate in regular catch-ups with the Project Manager, particularly in the first few months of the project, to keep up to date/contribute/stay informed on developments of project.

iii. Provide monthly (or bi-monthly) evaluation check-ins (whether by Teams or email) with the Senior Evaluation Officer at the Foundation. These discussions can help to draw out the key learning points to date (so that these can be fed into the ongoing development of the project) and where appropriate, discuss the implications of the research undertaken on the subsequent stages of research.

## Working with the Mental Health Foundation

Since 1949, the Mental Health Foundation has been the UK’s leading charity for everyone’s mental health. With prevention at the heart of what we do, we aim to find and address the sources of mental health problems so that people and communities can thrive.

Our work focuses on the prevention of mental ill-health and the promotion of opportunities for the development of good mental health, which is reflected in our five-year [strategy.](https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/mental-health-foundation-strategy-2020-2025-making-prevention-happen) Our universal programmes are for everyone because we all have mental health and with the right tools we can protect and promote this at every stage of life. We also deliver targeted programmes because the risk and the impact of mental health problems is greatest for those who experience inequality and disadvantage.

We want to work with evaluators that align with our four organisational values:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Our values** | **How this relates to evaluation** |
| 1. Determined pioneers:   We are passionate, committed, strive for excellence and rigour. We wrestle with tough issues and topics, willing to hold tension and complexity. We search for new approaches, challenge convention and push boundaries. | Our evaluators need to be committed to undertake evaluations to a high standard and be able to adapt their approach if/when challenges arise. We want to work with evaluators that can think creatively to ensure that the data we obtain is as rich and meaningful as possible. |
| 1. Side by side:   We achieve through working together. We pursue connection and shared understanding. We embrace difference and lived experience. We trust our people and partners, and make space for reflection, fun and personal growth. We recognised, and own our power and privilege, and act with humility. | We are interested in participatory approaches where feasible. The Foundation believes that lived experience is incredibly valuable to mental health research, and we would like this reflected in our evaluations. |
| 1. Walking our talk:   We embrace diversity and operate with openness, prioritising the mental health of our staff and supporters. We recognise and learn from our mistakes and seek honest feedback, without spin. We recognize the need to keep listening and acting with authenticity. | It is important that, as commissioners of evaluation services, we work with partners that prioritise the wellbeing of their staff. We want to establish open communication from the outset of a partnership and welcome honest feedback from the people we work with so that we can make improvements and learn how to best support each other.  We also want to understand how evaluators ensure they choose their most relevant researchers for the project, considering diversity and unconscious biases. |
| 1. Making a difference:   We are passionate about the role we can play in achieving positive change. We are about the outcome, not the glory. We generate and share evidence of what works. We are creative and action focused. | We really want to understand the impact of our programmes, how they can be improved and their potential for scalability and sustainability. All our programmes aim to understand what makes a positive difference for mental health and how we can make this happen. We want to work with evaluators that are passionate and committed to making positive change in public mental health, and for this to be reflected in the quality of their work.  We want our evaluations to inform our thinking and develop our evidence around what works regarding prevention and what doesn’t. |

***The language that we use***

It is important that the language we use reflects our values and doesn’t perpetuate mental health stigma or prejudice. We talk about mental health *problems* or distress, as opposed to illness or issues, and generally try to avoid overly medical language. We would welcome a discussion at initiation about the terminology to use/avoid.

## Application details:

Please outline the following in your application:

* Your understanding of our research needs
* Your experience of conducting similar research
* Your proposed research methodology
* Your required inputs from the Foundation and its partners
* Your approach to project management and quality assurance
* Your ability to complete the work to the deadlines set out above
* A budget for this piece of work, outlining the resource required for each stage of the project (please show the day rate for each team member)
* Please include CVs of the research staff who will be responsible for this work

## Evaluation criteria

The following criteria will be used to score proposals:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Weighting (%)** |
| Approach to the project, incl proposed methodology | 20 |
| Value for money and ability to meet timelines | 30 |
| Alignment with the Mental Health Foundation’s values | 10 |
| Track record of working with older people or less-often heard groups | 20 |
| Opportunities for inclusion of participants in evaluation | 20 |

## Tenders

Proposals should be submitted electronically to Jade Yap at [jyap@mentalhealth.org.uk](mailto:jyap@mentalhealth.org.uk) by 5pm on **Monday 26th April.** If you have any questions, please send them to the same address by 5pm on Friday 16th April and we will do our best to get back to you.