Independent Evaluator: Financial Capability for Young People in Transition Project

Job title: Independent Evaluator (“the Evaluator”)
Recruiter: The National Skills Academy for Financial Services (“The Skills Academy”)
Contract: Consultancy
Location: London
Closing Date: 24/03/2017

Description: Seeking an independent evaluator to work alongside the project team to design, implement and carry out the project evaluation, including an end of project evaluation report.

Who we are:
The National Skills Academy for Financial Services (“the Skills Academy”) is an employer-led charity working with the UK Financial Services Industry. The mission of the Skills Academy is:

- To help people, particularly from disadvantaged communities, to secure employment in the financial services sector.
- To contribute to the improvement of the diversity of the workforce in the financial services sector.
- To support skills development in the financial services sector.
- To improve the financial capability of the wider UK population.

Financial Capability for Young People in Transition Project

The project aims to improve the financial capability of young people aged 16-24 at key transition points, such as starting work or living independently, through the creation of learning resources for use by young people and the delivery of accredited training for the youth practitioners that support them.

The project will comprise the following key activities:

- Development of course and training materials for a new qualification aimed at enabling youth practitioners to develop the skills to help improve the financial capability of 16-24 year olds.
- Development of resources for youth practitioners to use with the 16-24 year olds they work with or support.
- Delivery of financial capability training to 200 youth practitioners using the new qualification’s course materials.

Project Evaluation and Approach

The Youth Transition project aims to test the following research question:

‘To what extent do financial capability resources and accredited training for Youth Practitioners, co-created with young adults and youth practitioners, help support young people to manage their finances and make effective financial decisions at key transition points, such as starting work or living independently?’
The purpose of the project evaluation is to explore how the youth practitioners have used their training and qualification to support the young people they work with and to measure the impact this has had on helping the young people to manage their finances and make effective financial decisions at key transition points.

A Theory of Change has been developed outlining the mechanism by which the project outcomes will be achieved through its activities. A set of outcomes and indicators have been identified against which the success of the project shall be measured (see Appendix 1).

The final evaluation design is subject to completion by the Evaluator however it will include both an outcome evaluation and a process evaluation, using a mix of qualitative and quantitative methodologies including pre and post intervention surveys, focus groups, interviews and case studies (see Appendix 2 for more information on the evaluation approach).

**Associate Evaluator**

To ensure a separation of the delivery team and the project evaluation, the Skills Academy is looking to commission an independent evaluator to work alongside the project team to design and implement all elements of the project evaluation and ensure that it is conducted in accordance with industry best practice.

**Key Deliverables:**
(See Appendix 3 for a timeline of evaluator activities)

- Work alongside the Skills Academy to determine the final evaluation design.
- Contribute to the refinement of the project’s Theory of Change through ongoing monitoring and review of the project evaluation process.
- To design data collection tools to ensure statistical conclusions can be drawn for both the process evaluation and outcome evaluation.
- To work with the Project Manager to ensure sufficient data is collected through the agreed evaluation methods and in a timely and efficient way.
- To maintain data relevant to the evaluation process and provide up to date information on evaluation techniques to the Programme Manager as required.
- To analyse quantitative and qualitative data collected for outcome evaluation including from pre and post intervention surveys, interviews and case studies.
- To analyse quantitative and qualitative data collected for process evaluation including from pre and post intervention surveys, questionnaires, focus groups and interviews with programme participants.
- To produce a written report outlining the evaluation results based on the Theory of Change outcomes and indicators, including the development of case studies.

**Skill and Experience**

- Professional experience in programme and project evaluation (designing, conducting and leading evaluations; applying qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods).
- Experience in evaluating youth projects, financial capability projects or in evaluating impact from projects based on a Theory of Change.
- A qualification in evaluation or social research techniques.
- Ability to work independently and as part of a small team.
- Excellent oral communication and report writing skills.
- Experience of designing effective data collection tools.
- Experience of undertaking effective data analysis on both qualitative and quantitative data.
Prior experience of working with the Theory of Change evaluation approach.

**How to Apply**

Please send the following documents to Priya Sorathia at Priya.Sorathia@nsafs.co.uk and CC’ Sara Mohideen at Sara.Mohideen@nsafs.co.uk:

- CV and contact details for correspondence.
- A covering letter outlining your relevant skills, suitability and experience to meet the above criteria.
- If you have had experience in evaluating any youth or financial capability projects or projects based on a Theory of Change, please provide a brief example of how you delivered the work effectively.
- An outline of your proposed budget and a detailed breakdown of all costs and timescales, including the number of days for each task. An appropriate allowance for expenses should be included. In presenting your budget, please indicate VAT where this applies.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to the Skills Academy Offices in London between 3-5<sup>th</sup> April where the Project Manager and Head of Community Projects will discuss the evaluation proposal in more detail.
### Appendix 1:

#### Theory of Change outcomes and indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theory of Change Outcome</th>
<th>Key Indicator (s)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Young people check their bank balance regularly</td>
<td>Young people know how much money they have spent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Young people set up a budget plan for their present circumstances</td>
<td>Young people know what money they are receiving and spending each month, and can identify any points to address</td>
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<tr>
<td>Young people feel more confident that they can take control of their finances</td>
<td>Young people have improved confidence and a more positive mind-set towards money and money management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people have increased motivation and understanding of how to budget on a day-to-day basis</td>
<td>Young people have improved knowledge of ways in which they could manage their money better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people have increased understanding of how basic financial products and systems work</td>
<td>Young people have improved knowledge of basic savings and credit products, and what issues they may face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people put money into savings regularly/ increase how much they save regularly or reduce debt regularly (if required)</td>
<td>Young people have (more) money saved each month or reduce their debt each month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people set up a budget plan for a future key transitions point, such as living independently or beginning work</td>
<td>Young people have a budget plan related to a key transition point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people seek advice and guidance relating to their finances (if required)</td>
<td>Young people understand more of the concepts, products and options relevant to their financial situation, know where to go for relevant advice and actively seek advice when they do not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people have increased understanding of actions needed to achieve financial resilience and how if they do nothing it may undermine their ability to navigate certain transitions in the future</td>
<td>Young people understand the idea of financial resilience, and have increased motivation to take action to achieve their goals of navigating transition points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people have increased knowledge of where to go for help and advice about money management and savings and what questions to ask</td>
<td>Young people understand where to go for advice and guidance about financial matters and are more confident about what to ask for</td>
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<tr>
<td>Young people have increased understanding of the risk of debt and how to get out of it</td>
<td>Young people are less likely to take out loans without thinking through the risks and the future impacts</td>
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</table>
Appendix 2:

Evaluation Approach

The project Evaluation will include both an outcome Evaluation and a process Evaluation as outlined below:

Outcome Evaluation

- A mix of qualitative and quantitative data shall be captured through pre and post intervention surveys, interviews and case studies:
  - 200 youth practitioners will be surveyed pre intervention, immediately post intervention and three months after the intervention to gather feedback on how they used the training and the impact they had on the young people they supported.
  - A minimum of 20 youth practitioners will be interviewed by telephone and case studies will be developed from the interviews to demonstrate the experience of the Youth Practitioners and young people they work with (covering a representative mix of different organisation types, beneficiary youth groups and needs).

Process Evaluation

- The effectiveness of the process involved in the project will also be assessed through a mix of qualitative and quantitative methodologies captured through pre and post intervention surveys, focus groups and interviews. Practitioners will be asked to review the effectiveness of the co-creation approach, how they have found the presentation and delivery approaches used in the training, and to what extent the model helps them to help young people.
- A questionnaire will be produced as part of a set of online resources for the 16-24 year olds to be completed with support from the youth practitioners in order to gauge the user experience and effectiveness of the new resources. The young people will be asked to comment on aspects of process such as the navigation, ease-of-use, types of activities and design. Data will also be collected through monitoring user registrations onto the online resource.
- Feedback from this process may also shape the project’s Theory of Change.

Data Analysis

- The qualitative and quantitative data collected from the surveys, focus groups and interviews shall be analysed against the outcomes and indicators identified in the Outcomes Framework above to measure the effectiveness of the qualifications and resources.
- All qualitative data will need to be analysed thematically, in relation to the key elements of processes and outcomes being tested. Data recorded from narrative responses in interviews will need to be presented in a grid format that can be compared to other responses including in relation to gender, ethnicity, various transition points and types of need.
- All quantitative data will need to be populated in pre-designed Excel templates so that data can easily be compared and analysed across different sub-groups of youth practitioners and young people. This will also facilitate the presentation of data statistics, such as ranges, averages or proportions.
- The data will be used to look for correlations between youth practitioners and the young people impacted by the project. So, for instance, if a youth practitioner responded negatively towards an aspect of the process of the training, considering how that may affect the young people they work with.
• Monitoring data will also need to be collected, to ensure that our analysis is representative of a wide variety of youth organisation type and reflects a breadth of young people impacted, including in relation to gender, ethnicity, various transition points and types of need.

Data collection from the young people
• Data will only be collected from the young people, namely the end beneficiaries, after they have received support from the Youth Practitioner. This is on the basis of not deterring them from engaging with the available support through pre-intervention data collection.
• Due to the nature of the end beneficiaries, engagement in the Evaluation will be conducted and maintained through the youth practitioners, with support from the Skills Academy. Youth practitioners will be given guidance on how to collect data, including the different methodologies used as part of their training. This is on the basis that the Youth Practitioners will be best placed to note and record the impact, and from a safeguarding perspective best placed to assess how to measure the outcome in a sensitive and non-invasive manner. They will be given a standardised template to complete as part of the data collection process.

However the project will allow them some discretion in choosing the best method available (one-to-one interview, asking the young person to complete a form) to assess the progress of the young person.
• Where possible, youth practitioners will be asked to measure how the support received has improved the young person’s confidence, understanding of financial concepts, where to go for further information, what actions they may take and whether they feel better prepared for relevant points of transition.

Appendix 3:

Timeline of Evaluation Activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 2017</td>
<td>• Set up and confirmation of evaluation processes.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Data collection activities commenced</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2017- July 2017</td>
<td>• Data collection activity from participants – case studies, interviews, surveys;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Collection of data; data analysis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 2017- October 2017</td>
<td>• Data collection activity from participants – case studies, interviews, surveys;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Collection of data; data analysis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2017-January 2018</td>
<td>• Data collection activity from participants- case studies, interviews, surveys;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Collection of data; data analysis;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Creation of final evaluation report;</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Milestone: final evaluation report complete.</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 2018- March 2018</td>
<td>• Key messages from evaluation promoted.</td>
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