



Money Advice Service

What Works Funding Programme

Frequently Asked Questions

6 July 2016 (new and updated questions at the start of the document in blue text)

This document contains frequently asked questions relating to the What Works Funding Programme

Frequently Asked Questions

New questions – 6 July 2016

Project Size/Scope

Q. Is there a target number of people we are expected to help, or is it simply a suitable sample size which would enable us to evaluate the programme effectively?

A. There is no defined target number of people that projects need to help. The focus is on helping a sufficient number of people to enable good quality evaluation and evidence.

Q. Geographically, can we focus just on England for example, or does it need UK wide coverage?

A. You are able to focus on any geography within the UK. Projects are not required to be UK-wide.

Application Process

Q. Can I clarify if there are any stipulations for who can be the two signatories in both the project and organisation information documents?

A. The response really depends on your own governance structure, what The Money Advice Service requires is assurance that the person who has signed the form has the requisite authority to commit the applicant to the contents of their application.

Q. Are original signatures required on hard copies or will electronic signatures suffice?

A. We can confirm that electronic signatures are fine

Q. I am looking at a partnership bid. Do we both need to submit Organisational and Project Information forms? Do we both need to register electronically? Does one organisation need to take the lead?

A. We welcome consortium bids which involve multiple organisations.

To apply to the What Works Fund, only one organisation needs to register on our application portal, but full details of all organisations need to be completed as part of the Organisation form.

We expect there to be a lead organisation who will be our primary contact, this organisation needs to complete both the organisational information and project information forms, the other partners would need to be stated within the 'consortium' section of the organisation information form.

Q. Can you perhaps clarify what is meant in Q C1 Section H – 'cashable reserves' – is this the reserves held by the organisation or something different?

A. Cashable reserves does refer to financial reserves held by the organisation. This is to help us understand the financial position that your organisation is in, and your ability to manage any intervention that we fund you to carry out.

Q. We are bidding in consortium with some partners (which we will list), but on our side, we have delivery partners as part of our model, but aren't part of the consortium. Do we need to list them at this stage, or can this come later?

A. At this stage, please list the lead organisation and the key partner organisations for the project, which may include delivery partners. If some delivery will be sub-contracted to other delivery partners who are not part of the consortium, these do not need to be listed at this point, however please include a note of this intention within the Expression of Interest.

Organisation information

Q: The latest audited accounts I have refer to 2014-15. The 2015-16 accounts are not fully audited or finalised. Should we provide the most recent, unaudited accounts, or would you prefer the older accounts?

We are seeking the most up to date picture of your organisation's finances possible, so we would prefer it if you could provide the information within the most recent, unaudited accounts.

Q: If we are submitting a bid as a lead organisation and other organisations will be involved in the delivery of the project but will not be paid to do so (i.e. they are referral partners) do these organisation's details need to be added to the 'organisational details' EOI form?

If your referral partners are part of the delivery and evaluation of your proposal (ie you want to look at how effective their engagement and referral process is in helping achieve your outcomes), then they need to be included in the organisational information application form. If they are not part of this delivery and evaluation then you don't need to include their details in the form.

Q: Will the fund cover staff costs?

Yes it will but only where staff costs directly relate to implementing a What Works Fund project. If successful at the Expression of Interest stage, we will work with you during the Development stage to understand what requirements you may have, and then identify the best way to resource it (including whether your existing staff has the capacity and skills to carry out the work).

Project Information

Q: Can organisations bid for What Works money to evaluate existing fin cap interventions which are provided by other organisations? Or must the money be used by organisations to evaluate their own interventions?

Any funding that we provide must be for organisations to evaluate their own interventions. We are happy to accept Expressions of Interest from consortiums, where organisations partner to evaluate interventions, but we would expect to see the organisation running the intervention as the lead in any such bid.

Q: Please can you explain what you mean by "engagement"? Is this about promotion and attracting referrals to a service, or engagement within an intervention (techniques to aid retention of information)?

By 'engagement' we mean the techniques and methods to get people to stop and think about their money, and if needed, to change the way they behave in relation to their money (ie spending less,

saving more, budgeting for expenses, paying off debt). We know from lots of research that it's really hard to get people to pause and engage with their finances and change behaviour.

So we want to know how you will reach people and get them to interact with your intervention (so this can include referrals), and then how you will ensure that these people remain engaged throughout and post your intervention.

Q: Will we be able to apply for funding in Stream B, if we have not applied for anything in Stream A?

Organisations are welcome to apply for funding in Stream B regardless of whether they have also applied for funding in Stream A.

Q: You are particularly interested in interventions aimed at 16-18 year olds focusing on preparing for financial independence. Can we work with a younger cohort?

Yes, you can. We have specifically highlighted the 16-18 year old age group as we are keen to attract projects that focus on this cohort. However, we also welcome financial education projects that are aimed at younger age groups.

Updated 27 June 2016*Expressions of Interest application process*

Q: I am interested in expressing an interest in 'What Works Fund' but the link I have to do this takes me to a page for procurement professionals, <https://mas.bravosolution.co.uk/>.

We are using Bravo Solutions to process Expressions of Interest for the What Works Fund. This is a system that we would normally use for our general procurement activity, and we have decided to also use it for the What Works Fund. By registering and logging on to the Bravo portal, you will be able to access our application forms. Registration doesn't take long and there are instructions in our guidance document on how to do this. Even if you register, you may later decide not to put in an Expression of Interest (but of course we hope you do!).

You can find full details of the What Works Fund, including a recording of our webinar, on the financial capability website: [Financial Capability website](#). You will also be able to find guidance and a Q&A to assist you as well.

Q: Can I access a recording of the webinars?

You can find full details of the What Works Fund, including a recording of our webinar, on the [Financial Capability website](#). You will also be able to find guidance and a Q&A to assist you as well.

Q: Can you send me the application form directly rather than through the Bravo portal?

Our application process is being run on the Bravo Sourcing system because that allows us to manage each application in a fair way. This is especially important as we are expecting around 300 applications. Please get in touch with us if you have experienced any technical problems in accessing this.

Q: Are we able to include appendices in our submission and if we are able to, is there a limit on this?

Scoring of applications will be based on the answers given within the project information form. We will accept appendices, however we will only consider these in so far as they verify information provided within these answers. Whilst there is no specific limit on appendices, we encourage applicants to avoid providing any documentation that is not directly relevant.

Q: What is meant by customer delivery - what evidence of capacity, skill and expertise are you looking for?

Section E1 of the Project Information Expression of Information Form asks you to demonstrate that your organisation has or will acquire sufficient resources with relevant experience and skills to deliver your proposal. To assist you to understand the requirements of this question, we have listed some aspects of project delivery that might be relevant. If your proposal involves direct interactions

with beneficiaries then you may want to use the experience your organisation, or individual staff in your organisation, has in delivering services to customers as a way to demonstrate your capacity to successfully deliver your proposal. However, the evidence you choose to present will depend on the nature of your proposal and the resources you intend to use to deliver it.

Q: I have 2 organisations who would like to submit expression of interests answering different questions, each will be accountable in their own right and each has different accounts, etc. Will I need to log on twice to do this?

You do not need to register separate accounts on Bravo to do this, however we would require each organisation to complete its own application in full.

Q: I will be making two bids: one bid will be through a consortium, the other is stand alone. Do I still only fill out one organisation form, or do I need to do two separate ones?

In this instance we would require two full applications (i.e two organisational forms and two project forms).

Evaluation

Q: Will MAS's Evaluation and Learning Partner work with short-listed organisations to develop an evaluation plan, while we engage the evaluator and lead the actual evaluation work?

You are right - organisations we grant fund will be responsible for undertaking their own evaluation of their project. You can either commission an external evaluator to do this or undertake this in-house with specialist staff (this element will be funded by us).

Although we expect individual projects to evaluate their programme we want to encourage greater consistency of methodology and results across the sector - as such we will require funded organisations to use consistent evaluation tools and follow consistent principles in undertaking their evaluation (such as signing up to the IMPACT principles and using the financial capability outcomes framework, as you mention).

The role of the funding programme's Evaluation and Learning (E&L) partner is twofold - they will support individual organisations to carry out an effective evaluation and they will also support MAS in looking across all funded projects and the Programme as a whole to draw out important insights and evidence that can be shared with the wider sector. For example, in terms of support for individual organisations, the E&L partner will:

- Help shortlisted organisations develop their detailed evaluation plan (which will be required for any final proposal ready for a grant agreement) and if an organisation is awarded a grant, they will help troubleshoot any issues that emerge throughout the life of the project.
- Help shortlisted organisations find an external evaluator if they need one.
- Help to quality assure findings and results from each project's evaluation to help ensure consistency and best practice.

*Scope of Funding***Q: Is funding in Scotland likely to be more focused on existing projects rather than new ones?**

Our approach to assessing expressions of interest will be the same for all nations. We will consider each application on its own merit, whether it is to evaluate an existing project or fund a new project, and are hoping to receive a wide and diverse range of high quality proposals.

Updated questions 23 June

EOI process

Q: I just clarify who can see the applications submitted? Are they available to the public or only to the panel assessing the applications please?

Any responses will only be visible to the assessment team at the Money Advice Service, unless some form of disclosure is required by process of law of a court or other legal order.

Q: Can a membership body apply to the fund in partnership with a small cohort of member agencies to deliver an innovative project at a UK level where the membership body will administer the fund as a lead organisation for the bid?

Yes, that is possible. This would be classed as a consortium bid from our perspective with the membership body as the lead organisation, and the other cohorts (assuming they are individual entities from a legal perspective) being named as consortium members.

Q: If MAS gives my proposal the highest score out of all the proposals that are seeking to answer a particular What Works question, am I guaranteed to go through to the development stage?

Not necessarily. MAS has to ensure that it is getting value for money from the grants we make under the What Works programme. As such, we have set a minimum quality standard that applicants need to achieve in order to be considered for the development phase of the programme. We have set this minimum standard as a total weighted score of at least 40 per cent on the seven qualitative questions covering Idea, Evaluation and Delivery (Sections C, D and E in the Project Information Form). These qualitative questions will be scored on a scale of 0 to 5 (see table below for further details). Any combination of scores across the seven questions that results in a total weighted score of 40 per cent or higher will mean the application has reached the minimum standard and will be compared to other applications that address the same What Works question and ranked alongside these (however meeting the minimum standard will not guarantee that your application will be shortlisted and taken through to the development stage – this will depend on your application’s relative ranking compared to other applications that also meet the minimum requirement).

Score	Definition
0	Unable to score – Evidence is unacceptable or non-existent, or there is a failure to properly address any issues which required addressing within the question.
1	Reflects limited understanding and misses aspects of the requirements.
2	Reflects that the minimum requirement has been satisfied with minor reservations.
3	Satisfies the requirement with evidence to support the response.

4	The standard of evidence fully meets expectations addressing each element required by the question, with comprehensive detail provided in some but not all areas.
5	The standard of evidence exceeds expectations. The response addresses each element of the question, also providing comprehensive detail in each area.

Q: For Stream A, when are you aiming to have submissions for the Grant Agreement Development Stage in by?

We can't say for certain at this stage as it depends on how many Expression of Interest applications we get and how long it takes us to assess these and agree a shortlist. We anticipate inviting successful shortlisted organisations to prepare a final proposal for a grant agreement by mid-August – but this is dependent on volumes.

Q: When do you expect applicants to hear the outcome of the second stage applications and be able to start project delivery?

We can't say for certain at this stage as it depends on how many Expression of Interest applications we get and how long it takes us to assess these; agree a shortlist and accept final proposals sufficient for grant agreements. We want to be able to start funding projects from the beginning of September but as mentioned this is dependent on volumes of applications.

Project information

Q: We have a project whose funding will end before any WWF would start. We would like to use WWF to continue, develop, refine and evaluate the work of this project. Is this classed as 'scaling up an existing project' or 'a new pilot'?

The three project types are intended as a guide only, and we encourage all applicants to select the one that best describes the project. In the case that funding for existing provision will come to an end prior to any What Works funding may commencing – and the proposed project is intended to be run in the same format – we would suggest selecting project type 1 and including some explanatory notes within the Expression of Interest.

Q: Would the fund support giving a lump sum of money to individuals to help them practice their budgeting?

Unfortunately, funding for this purpose would not be allowable (ie giving money to individuals to practice budgeting). We are looking for projects that seek to understand how to improve people's financial capability within the context of their actual financial means.

Q: Are you primarily looking for large-scale evaluations or multiple smaller-scale ones?

We don't have a preference in terms of large scale evaluations or small scale – both could teach us really valuable things about the effectiveness of an intervention and how to engage people and improve their financial capability. The scale of evaluation will depend on any individual project, its

objectives and its stage of development – we recommend that you have a look at the NESTA standards of evidence to get an idea of what evidence you could learn from an evaluation (page 18 of the Programme guidance).

Funding coverage and period

Q: When will the funds be released to the successful applicants and will these funds be released in stages.

Also, I would like to ask if the Independent Evaluator should form part of the budget that is submitted at Stage 2 or are there separate monies for this?

We will start grant funding successful organisations as soon as we reasonably can, provided the proposal provides sufficient detail to enable a grant agreement to be created. Our planning assumption is that this will be from September - but this depends on the nature of the final proposals, it could be later.

We anticipate linking payment of funds to key deliverables or milestones - the schedule of payment will depend on what we agree with any individual successful organisation and what is appropriate based upon their project and organisation profile.

We do ask you to provide estimated costs for your project in the Project Information application form. This is only for information at this stage and will be used as a starting point to develop a budget if you are successful at the EOI stage. These estimated costs should include how much you think you need to evaluate your proposal. We expect organisations to carry out this evaluation – either in house using specialist staff or by commissioning an evaluator.

Q: Will the fund cover staff costs, ie integrating apprenticeships positions into the delivery of the project?

In principle, this could be allowable as part of the fund. In order for us to assess the suitability of covering the cost of the apprenticeships (or any other staff costs), we would need to see clear rationale as to how this will directly enable and support the project in answering one of our What Works questions.

Q: All projects need to be completed by Feb 18, can you confirm if you have plans for any funding beyond this period? Can we run a project alongside other funded programmes?

We can't guarantee any funding beyond February 2018 at this stage.

It's not a problem for funded projects to run alongside or compliment other existing programmes. But you must demonstrate that your proposal addresses one of our What works questions and can influence financial capability, as well as demonstrating what you can learn and share from an evaluation and that you have the capacity to deliver the project.

Q: Does this funding cover capital costs that may be needed to carry out the program/evaluation? For example computers etc?

Yes we will fund a proportionate and reasonable amount of capital costs (or administrative costs or overheads) where it can be demonstrated that these are necessary in order to deliver the project. If an organisation is shortlisted and invited to the final development stage we will develop and agree final costs together, which will include transparent and justifiable administrative overheads.

For the Expression of Interest application we ask for an initial estimates of costs, including overheads. This is for information only. If an application is shortlisted we will use these estimates as a starting point for discussion and clarification - as such the final agreed amount may be more or less than the original.

Updated questions 20 June

Project information

Q: I've got a project we delivered a year ago, but it didn't have a robust evaluation. Can I get funding to run it again and evaluate it?

In principle we would consider this – as there could be valuable learning and evidence to take away. You would need to demonstrate that the intervention addresses one of the What works questions. You would also need to make a good case that there is something new to learn, and that delivering and evaluating the intervention would add to the broader evidence base. We would anticipate funding the evaluation to a sufficient scale that enables robust evaluation.

If you think this option suits you, you should include a rationale around why you want to do this in the text box under B1 in the ‘project information’ application form.

Q: I ran a programme a few years ago - it showed some good results on financial capability – can I get funding to run this project again?

This fund is about evaluating and learning what works so we wouldn’t use it to replicate something you have already done – however if your evaluation demonstrated some good results on financial capability (in terms of reach or engagement for example) we would consider funding the intervention again to allow a more robust evaluation of outcomes (in this case you would need to show that the new evaluation would be more in-depth and also that it would deliver a higher standard of evidence). Further, if your intervention demonstrated some good results you might want to consider applying for funding to scale it up and test it with a different demographic. In any of these cases, we would expect you to provide evidence of the original intervention’s effectiveness and positive results.

Q: Can I get funding to evaluate the on-going impact of a programme that may have already ended, for example evaluating whether there has been longer term changes to people’s financial capability because of the intervention (say 6 -12 months after the intervention ended)?

In principle we would consider this – as there could be valuable learning and evidence to take away about the longer term impact of the intervention. To fund something like this we would need to be satisfied that it is possible to evaluate this longer term impact and attribute behaviour to the intervention. We would also need to consider any results from previous evaluations to compare and contrast behaviour.

If you think this option suits you, you should include a rationale around why you want to do this in the text box under B1 in the ‘project information’ application form.

Q: On page 14 of the ‘Project Information’ application form you ask for the funding amount required for the 16/17 financial year (1 April – 31 March). Why have you done this as it is already June 2016 now? What information do we need to include here?

The dates range to illustrate length of financial year.

For 16/17 estimate costs we suggest, for planning purposes, that you assume funded projects will start from the start of September and to include how much you think you ideally need to deliver the proposal in 16/17 from this period.

We only want estimates for this part of the EOI (and these estimates are only for information) – shortlisted organisations will be invited to work up more detailed budgets with MAS in the development stage that may be more or less than the estimated amount.

Q: Are you expecting us to outline how much we'll spend on evaluation and how much on service delivery?

The Expression of Interest form – Project information – asks for how much funding you ideally think you need to deliver your proposal in 2016/17 and 2017/18, including costs types such as staff, overheads and evaluation. We just want estimates at this stage and we intend to work with shortlisted bidders to work up more detailed budgets in the development stage – these may be more or less than the estimated amount.

Q: Are the What works questions equally weighted or are there some areas that are more important than others?

The What works questions are 'equally weighted' in the sense that we won't be preferring any type of question over another.

Q: If the proposed project involves adapting an intervention that has already been used in a previous project, but is not being delivered currently e.g. by opening it up to other groups or changing the format of the support provided, would this be considered to be scaling up and testing?

We would also like to know if projects are allowed to include a few different strands of support if they come together as a holistic package aimed at one of the target groups or are they looking to test one single intervention within each project?

In principle we would consider funding an existing intervention that has ceased in order to evaluate its effectiveness - as there could be valuable learning and evidence to take away. You would need to demonstrate that the intervention addresses one of the What works questions. You would also need to make a good case that there is something valuable to learn and share from the evaluation, and that the proposal will add to the broader evidence base.

If you want to scale up or adapt an intervention that currently isn't being delivered to reach a bigger/different group of people we would expect to see some evidence of the original intervention's effectiveness and positive results. If the original intervention wasn't evaluated, we could consider funding the intervention in its original form and evaluating it in order to test its readiness for scale/adaption (as described above).

If you are unsure what type of project your proposal fits into you should state this in the text box under B1 in the 'project information' application form and provide a brief rationale around what you want to evaluate (ie an existing evaluation that currently isn't being delivered).

With regard to your second question, you may indeed propose a single project that has different strands of support (delivered as a package) – it's the evidence we're interested in and measuring to what degree such an approach has on financial capability (within the context of your chosen What works question). If your EOI bid is successful we will work with you during the development stage to design an evaluation approach that works for your proposal, taking the holistic approach into account.

Q: Could you confirm if you will be following 'full cost recovery' principles or not. And therefore whether we should apply on that basis or not.

Yes, it is our intention to follow the principle of full cost recovery. If an organisation is shortlisted and invited to the final development stage we will develop and agree final grant costs together, which will include proportionate, transparent and justifiable administrative overheads.

For the Expression of Interest 'project information' application we ask for an initial estimates of costs, including overheads. This is for information only. If an application is shortlisted we will use these estimates as a starting point for discussion and clarification - as such the final agreed amount may be more or less than the original.

Organisation information:

Q: Can consortiums apply and how do they do this?

Yes consortiums can apply. The group will need to nominate a lead member – whose details need to be included in the 'Organisation Information' Expression of Interest application. In this application there is also a section (A6) that asks for the details of other consortium members.

Assessment process

Q: Please can I check what needs to be completed and submitted by 8th July. Is it just the 1.1.1 Organisational Information in word and the 1.1.2 Project Information in word? Which both need uploading? Do we need to complete any of the 'terms' PDF forms at this stage?

At this stage all we need is completed organisation information and project information forms.

The declaration at the rear of both forms includes acceptance of the terms and conditions applicable to the type (pilot, scaling or evaluation) of intervention you are applying to have funded

Questions – updated 16 June 2016

Project information

Q. Can you tell me more about project type 2 - scaling up existing services? Under what circumstances can we get funding?

This type of project is about scaling up something that you may already be delivering and then evaluating the impact of the expanded programme to draw out new, or deeper, evidence about the effectiveness of the intervention that adds to our evidence base.

It's about learning something new about what works to improve financial capability or testing assumptions about what you think is working well. For example:

- you might want to expand your intervention to a larger group of people in order to carry out a more robust evaluation and measure the effectiveness of the intervention at scale (enabling for instance you to carry out a larger sample survey or establish a control group).
- you might want to expand your intervention to test its effectiveness in a different context or jurisdiction, such as a different country (within the UK) or in a regional or urban area.
- you might want to expand your intervention to reach a different demographic to see whether your approach works with a different group, such as a vulnerable or hard to reach group or a different age group.

It all comes down to what you, and the wider sector can learn from operating your expansion at a different scale.

At this stage we're not prescribing the extent to which you should expand or scale - but you do need to tell us how doing so will address a What Works question, influence financial capability outcomes and identify what you hope to learn from such an expansion. You will also need to provide some indicative cost estimates at the Expression of Interest stage.

Where you are proposing to scale up an intervention and you progress through the Expression of Interest stage we will require evidence that your intervention has been effective in order to justify funding its expansion. The degree of evidence will depend on what you are hoping to achieve - for example where a large scale expansion is being proposed (around £1m as an example) we would expect this evidence to include a theory of change and evidence of the intervention's positive impact so far.

Where this evidence doesn't exist, our funding can be used to evaluate the intervention to determine its readiness for scale and further trailing.

If you are not sure which project type to apply for, then just say this in your Expression of Interest.

Q: Can an organisation apply for projects against more than one strand? I work for a partnership which could be the accountable body for any partnership bids.

Yes they can – but for each project they will need to submit a separate 'project information' expression of interest form. If an organisation is submitting more than one project for funding (including on behalf of a partnership) they only need to fill in the 'organisation information' expression of interest form once.

Q: Are you asking projects funded by your 'scaling up' strand to start and finish by Feb 2018 or can they continue to deliver after this date.

Any activities paid by the fund needs to finish by February 2018. This include completion of a planned evaluation.

Q: Can we submit two separate bids for different stages of the same project. E.g applying for pilot funding (project type 3) for something that we then scale up and test (project type 2) within the same funding round.

Unfortunately there are no guarantees that any pilot would be successful, and thus we could not commit to funding a pilot and scaling of the same intervention/project at the same time. We would however encourage your organisation to bid for the funding relating to the pilot phase of your project, we believe it is likely there will be further rounds of funding in the future, should your pilot be successful.

Organisation information

Q: The organisation information form asks for a Twelve Month Financial Summary for a period within the last 12 months. We have this information but it is not audited. Do you want financial information that isn't audited or do you want details of our most recent audited accounts?

If your organisation has been in existence for more than twelve months, but the most current set of accounts are yet to be audited, please enter the figures from the most recent set of (unaudited) accounts in the relevant boxes within section C of the organisation information form.

If your organisation has been in existence for less than twelve months, please enter the management accounts information into the relevant boxes within section C of the organisation information form.

If your organisation's turnover does not require having accounts audited, please enter the relevant details from the accounts submitted to either companies house or the charities commission into the relevant boxes within section C of the organisation information form.

Q: It still possible to submit an expression of interest without the company details?

No, we require organisations to submit company details.

Q: Within our planned project, we will work with a number of selected local branches/centres. Are we required to provide the names and details of the local branches/centres that we will work with within the Consortium Members section of the EoI form?

This depends on the legal structure of your organisation. If each centre is a legal entity in its own right, then you would need to provide each centre's details as a consortium member, with the lead organisation of the consortium being the one managing the network. If each centre is not a separate legal entity then you would not need to complete the consortium section, it would be classed as a stand-alone application.

Evaluation questions

Q: Would evaluation funding have to be used for a qualified evaluator or could it be a member of staff without an evaluation qualification but who has evaluation experience?

The funding could be used for an external evaluator or an internal member of staff working specifically on that project, as best suits the project in question. It may be that an existing member of staff has enough experience and skills for the evaluation. The Programme's Evaluation & Learning partner would work up a detailed evaluation plan with shortlisted applicants to determine what is best for each individual project.

Q: Where can we find existing evidence of what works so that we don't submit an application that is duplicating something that has already been shown to work?

Our Evidence Hub which can be found on the Fincap website is a repository of published evaluation reports, which would be a good place to start! Here's the link:

http://www.fincap.org.uk/users/sign_in

Q: What happens to the evaluations at the end?

All evaluations will go on the Evidence Hub, but we would also encourage organisations to share their learnings in as many ways as possible with other organisations providing and funding interventions.

Q: I work with groups with particular needs and we will need to use specialist evaluation materials. Will we have to pick an evaluator from a list of agreed ones?

Our Evaluation & Learning partner will work with shortlisted organisations to develop an evaluation plan that is appropriate for your intervention and the target groups they work with. They can help find an appropriate evaluator; it won't be restricted to an approved list but rather would be based on working together to understand what evaluation you need to do and how best to resource it to achieve our mutual goals.

Q: Some things, like work with children, could benefit from long term evaluation. Is it possible for our evaluation plan to cover a longer time period than the funding is available?"

At this stage we can't guarantee funding beyond the end of February 2018 – as such we expect all evaluation activities funded by our grants to be completed by then. It might be possible that the evaluation activity funded through this grant could form part of a longer term evaluation plan which you intend to fund in different ways – but in order to secure funding you would still need to demonstrate that you can use our grant to deliver meaningful results, in terms of building the evidence case, over the funding period.

Q: We're at a point where we don't even have a baseline. Would the funding help us establish this?

We're interested in evaluation at lots of different levels of evidence, to build up the evidence you have to an appropriate next level. It could be possible that collecting the information needed for a baseline, or 'pre' intervention measures, might be a feasible part of an evaluation plan, but this is the kind of detail that would be worked out with the evaluation and learning partner, for shortlisted interventions after EOI stage.

Q: How will you establish the counterfactual?

Different projects will likely begin with different levels of evidence requirements and different evaluation approaches will be appropriate – a counterfactual, for example, is appropriate for help to prove that your intervention has resulted in changes in behaviour, rather than anything else happening. At the EOI stage we want to know what you intend to learn and share from the proposed intervention and its evaluation, rather than a detailed evaluation plan. We do, however, ask for an estimate of your evaluation costs at the EOI stage – this is just for information and will be refined further if you are shortlisted. The Programme's Evaluation & Learning partner will work with shortlisted organisations to address these kinds of questions and work out ways to do what is most

appropriate for the project in question, including, where relevant, thinking about whether comparison groups are needed and when and how to get them set up.

Questions – updated 9 June 2016

Q; Why the age bracket for this funding suggests projects focus on an age bracket starting at 16-18 year olds? Are fincap projects for those under 16 covered by separate funding?

A: For questions 1.1 – 1.4, we're interested in interventions that can help children and young people – this includes children under 16. In terms of ways to make financial education scalable, cost effective and sustainable for schools (question 1.1) we've highlighted 16 -18 year olds as we are particularly keen to address a lack of understanding of what works in this area. However, this isn't exclusive – we also welcome proposals aimed at children under 16.

Q: Is it possible to view the questions on the EOI before registering for the e-tendering portal?

A: No – you need to register to download and view the application forms. We recommended you do this as soon as possible – registration doesn't take long and there are instructions in our guidance document on how to do this. Even if you register, you may later decide not to put in an Expression of Interest (but of course we hope you do!).

Q: Is it possible to discuss some ideas with you before making an application?

A: We can clarify guidance for you– however as this is a competitive process we can't help you shape your application. We suggest you email through further questions with specific queries that we can pick up with you

Q: Are there any grounds on which our application will be excluded prior to the EOI assessment of mandatory and qualitative criteria?

Yes, there are some limited grounds. It will be based on the information your organisation provides in the Expressions of Interest Organisation Information form, as well as any background checks we undertake on your Organisation. For example, if your Organisation's Objects and Powers are not aligned to the purpose for which you are seeking funding or the finances of your Organisation do not demonstrate its ongoing viability, we would not be able to take your application any further.

Also, Section D of the Organisational Information form covers eight compliance requirements that we will need to be satisfied with, as well as your signed agreement to the declaration in Section I. If there are any shortcomings in relation to these compliance issues, we may exclude your bid. However, if we consider these matters could be resolved through further enquiries, information, and/or an express commitment to address these shortcomings we may work with you to seek a resolution and progress your application through the assessment process, and if appropriate, grant award.

Original Frequently Asked Questions - published 2 June

Programme aims

1. What is the purpose of this fund?

The core aim of the What Works Funding Programme is to strengthen the evidence base around what types of interventions can make a measurable impact on people's financial capability, and to share this insight across the wider sector. The Programme will also invest in strengthening the capacity of the sector to deliver consistent and high-quality financial capability interventions, based on evidence of 'what works' and robust professional standards.

2. How much funding is available?

Up to £7 million has been made available during 2016/17 to fund 'What Works' projects. .

The Programme consists of two parts – Stream A will fund and evaluate projects seeking to help answer our 'What Works questions'; and Stream B will fund pilot activity focused on capacity building and sharing of best practice amongst financial capability practitioners.

We have committed up to £600,000 of the total fund to deliver Stream B.

The application processes for Stream A and Stream B will be phased. Stream A is open from 1 June, with applications due by 8 July 2016. Stream B will open in July 2016.

3. How much money can my organisation bid for?

The What Works Fund is intended to enable evaluation and funding of a diverse range of projects and interventions across the UK. As such we do not want to be prescriptive regarding appropriate levels of grant at this stage.

In line with our primary purpose of building an evidence base, our guiding principle for considering value for money will be focused on the quality of evaluation and what can be learned about impact.

As a general guide, our Guidance documentation sets out our high-level estimates to help bidding organisations develop their proposals. These are:

- Grants to evaluate an existing intervention we would estimate to be between 10–20% of the intervention's delivery costs, although this is strictly a guide figure and the cost may be more or less.
- Grants to expand the scope of an existing intervention to reach a new audience and evaluate its impact could be between £50,000 and £1 million depending on scope and target group.
- Grants that would develop and test new pilot interventions for a specific audience could be up to £250,000.
- Effective, learning-focused evaluation is central to this grant programme. As such we do not expect to award grants under £5,000.

Following the Expression of Interest stage, we will work with shortlisted organisations and with our Evaluation & Learning Partner to refine and agree detailed project budgets.

Guidance on funding Stream B will be released in July 2016.

Application process

4. How do I apply?

For Stream A, we are asking organisations to submit an Expression of Interest by 12 noon on 8 July 2016. In order to access the application pack and submit an application you will need to register online via www.fincap.org.uk

There are two Expression of Interest application forms that need to be filled in:

- Form 1 – Organisational Information (financial information about your organisation)
- Form 2 – Project Information (high level outline of your proposal, what you want to learn and share and your capacity to deliver it)

We also require three printed and signed copies of both application forms posted to us. Address details are included on the first page of the Guidance document.

Full instructions are available in the pack and queries can be raised securely online after registering.

Stream B applications will open in July 2016.

5. What's the expected timeline for applications/funding?

The Programme consists of two parts – Stream A will fund and evaluate projects seeking to help answer our 'What Works questions'; and Stream B will fund pilot activity focused on capacity building and sharing of best practice amongst financial capability practitioners.

The application processes for Stream A and Stream B will be phased.

- Stream A:
 - Organisations applying for Stream A are required to submit an Expression of Interest bid setting out their proposal and providing some key information about their organisation. These are due by 8 July 2016.
 - We will shortlist Stream A proposals over July and August, and then invite shortlisted applicants to proceed to a Grant Agreement Development stage, where we will work with bidders to submit a final proposal sufficient for a grant agreement.
 - We aim to notify bidders for Stream A on the outcome of their Expression of Interest and provide more detail on the Grant Agreement Development stage by mid-August, depending on volumes of initial applications.
- Stream B:
 - We will call for Expressions of Interest for Stream B – 'Building the sector's capacity' – during July 2016 once the bidding period for Stream A has closed.
 - We aim to shortlist Stream B proposals over August and early September, with a view to notifying inviting shortlisted applicants to the Development stage by the end of September.

6. How quickly can we get funding for my project?

We hope to be able to start funding projects during September/October 2016. However, this will depend on the volume of Expression of Interest applications and the number that we take through to the Grant Agreement Development stage. We expect to fund some organisations sooner than others, depending on the maturity and readiness of the proposals.

Duration of funding

7. How long can my project last for?

Interested organisations are invited to put forward proposals for projects to be funded up to February 2018. All project activities funded by the grant, including evaluation, must be completed by this date.

However, we expect that only a minority of projects will need to run through to this date, and we are looking to fund projects that deliver high-quality standards of evidence as early as possible.

Whilst we are inviting proposals for projects that run into 2017/18, the portion of grants covering 2017/18 will need to go through our usual annual budgeting processes.

8. What are my obligations once the funding ends?

Once the intervention has come to an end, been evaluated and the results shared on the Financial Capability Evidence Hub, there are no further obligations. However, in assessing applications we will take a favourable view of organisations requesting funding for evidence that they think they can make use of in their other delivery activities, or use to attract more funding for financial capability delivery, thus extending the impact of the evidence on their 'business as usual' activities.

9. Will MAS help me find new funding to continue the project if the evaluation says that it's working well?

Whilst we cannot make any firm commitments about funding interventions for the future, the primary purpose of this programme, and other initiatives such as the Evidence Hub and IMPACT Principles, is to help ensure the sector is underpinned by a strong evidence base. This will help funders to focus on supporting interventions that are based on evidence of what works. The Government is currently consulting on its plans for a new money guidance body, due to come into existence in April 2018. The consultation indicates that the new body will commission interventions that fill gaps in the financial capability area, based on firm evidence of what works.

10. Will there be future rounds of funding?

We hope to hold future rounds of funding for the What Works Funding Programme. We believe this to be a very important programme for the sector and anticipate high demand for funding. Once we complete this round, set up projects and assess where the key gaps may be, we will look to the viability of future rounds.

It is our aim to build the evidence base to pave the way for the new money guidance body that the Government announced in March 2016. This new body will commission financial capability interventions on the basis of what is proven to work and where there are gaps in provision. We envisage that the evidence and insight we gather through this Programme, as well as any future rounds of funding, will provide a starting point for the new body.

Funding priorities and eligibility

11. What will these grants fund?

The Programme is made of two parts – Stream A will fund and evaluate projects seeking to help answer our ‘What Works questions’, and Stream B will fund pilot activity focused on capacity building, enhancing professional standards, and sharing of best practice amongst financial capability practitioners.

Stream A: ‘What Works’ evaluation and pilot activity

Organisations should apply for this funding if they want to:

1. evaluate an existing financial capability programme that they are already providing and learn what’s working and how the programme can be improved;
2. expand and evaluate an existing financial capability intervention and test its effectiveness in reaching and helping a wider group of beneficiaries or a particularly hard-to-reach group; or
3. test and learn from a new approach to improving financial capability through a pilot project and evaluate its effectiveness.

Across all three types of project, grants will fund evaluation activity.

Funding of delivery will also be available, limited to the extent required to enable the evaluation activity to be completed to a high standard.

Stream B: Building the sector’s capacity

Up to £600,000 of the total funding will be committed to piloting activity focused on capacity building and sharing of best practice amongst financial capability practitioners.

Full details on Stream B will be made available in July 2016.

What the grants will not fund

Examples of projects or aspects of projects that are unlikely to be eligible for funding through Stream A include, but are not limited to:

- projects that, once they have developed a full proposal, do not have a clear rationale or theory for how it can help to improve people’s financial capability;
- projects that do not help to answer at least one of the ‘What Works questions’, either fully or in part;
- projects based outside the UK or targeting people outside of the UK;
- general service delivery to sustain existing core activities of organisations, except in the case that existing funding is coming to an end and there is a strong case for extending delivery to enable evaluation (the focus will be on assessing the minimum delivery costs necessary to acquire a robust standard of evidence);
- projects that are unable to conclude and deliver the funded evaluation activities by February 2018;
- retrospective funding for projects and activities already completed;
- costs incurred or committed by the organisation prior to being awarded What Works funding.

Further information on project eligibility for Stream B will be available in July 2016.

12. What are the target groups that MAS is interested in?

We have sought to provide a wide range of 'What Works questions' that cover all life-stages and priorities of the Financial Capability Strategy for the UK. This reflects that financial capability is important to everyone. However, we recognise that some people need more support than others, and so have included a number of questions that focus on specific groups, such as vulnerable children and young people, and the 'struggling' and 'squeezed' segments of the working-age population. We have made a specific commitment in our 2016/17 Business Plan to test interventions that help people in the 'struggling' and 'squeezed' segments of the working-age population to budget and/or save, so these hold a special interest for us.

The questions are relatively broad in scope and so we expect that most proposals will have a more specific focus, whilst contributing to answering the overarching question. For example, each project helping to answer the question of how we can make financial capability interventions accessible to vulnerable children is likely to focus on a specific group of vulnerable children, such as children in care or children with learning difficulties.

13. What if my project/idea doesn't fit neatly into your scope, but could make a difference to financial capability?

We have sought to provide a wide range of 'What Works questions' that cover all life-stages and priorities of the Financial Capability Strategy for the UK. We are therefore asking applicants to think about and articulate how their proposals help us to collectively answer these questions.

These questions are relatively broad in scope and so we expect that most proposals will have a more specific focus, whilst contributing to answering the overarching question. For example, each project helping to answer the question of how we can make financial capability interventions accessible to vulnerable children is likely to focus on a specific group of vulnerable children, such as children in care or children with learning difficulties.

We are therefore asking applicants to suggest which overarching question they believe their proposal **best** helps to answer.

Evaluation

14. How much should be spent on evaluation?

Our priority is to fund high-quality evaluation. Following the Expression of Interest stage, we will work with our Evaluation & Learning Partner and with the bidders invited through to the Grant Agreement Development stage to develop full and appropriate evaluation plans, including fully defined costs.

As a guide for the Expression of Interest stage, evaluation costs can be estimated as 10–20% of the delivery costs, subject to the nature and scale of the project and evaluation activities. We do, however, encourage applicants to think through the realistic costs of their proposals and only use these figures as a guide.

15. What will happen to the evaluation findings?

All evaluation results will be placed on the Financial Capability Evidence Hub, and we intend to promote them widely so that they are used by as many people in the sector (and worldwide) as possible.

16. What is a ‘theory of change’?

A theory of change is a way of describing the underlying principle and framework that describes how an intervention, project or service improves financial capability. The What Works Fund will use a ‘theory of change’ approach to understand and test the extent to which different interventions are successful in improving financial capability. After the Expression of Interest, our chosen Evaluation & Learning Partner will support short-listed bidders to develop an initial theory of change for their project as part of their full proposal – and this theory of change will be further refined if the organisation is awarded a grant.

17. Can I use my What Works Fund grant to cover the staff costs/salary of my existing Evaluation Manager/Officer?

Yes, you can. While we will not fund general core costs for your organisation, our funding is for funding the costs of evaluation. You could use your grant to commission an independent external evaluator, or to employ a specialist evaluation member of staff for the duration of the grant (or to fund the cost of an existing specialist evaluation member of staff – where their time is spent working specifically on this particular evaluation). During the Development stage, we will work with you to understand what evaluation you need to do, and then identify the best way to resource it (including whether your existing staff has the capacity and skills to carry out the work).

18. I want to use my grant to train an existing member of staff who is not currently an evaluation specialist, so that they gain evaluation skills and can then carry out the evaluation of our project. Can I use the grant to pay for their training – and then their staff costs/salary?

Yes, this may be possible – where their time is spent working specifically on this particular evaluation, and providing the member of staff can gain the necessary skills in time to carry out the evaluation. During the Development stage, we will work with you to understand what evaluation you need to do, and then identify the best way to resource it (including whether your existing staff has the capacity and skills to carry out the work).

Project support

19. Apart from funding, what support can MAS offer?

A range of resources are available on the Financial Capability Strategy website (fincap.org.uk) which we encourage applicants to use to support the completion of the Expression of Interest. These include the Financial Capability Strategy, the Evaluation Toolkit and the Evidence Hub.

As part of this Programme, we will engage an Evaluation & Learning Partner, responsible for:

- evaluating the overall success of the programme;
- providing assistance in helping organisations create detailed evaluation plans and initial ‘theories of change’ as part of the Development stage ahead of awarding funding;
- helping organisations to find an evaluator, if required;
- acting as a point of contact for funded projects and their evaluators to ensure evaluation outcomes align with the Programme’s aims and to help solve any issues; and
- providing further advice and guidance to help ensure the quality of each project’s evaluation.

The results of any intervention will be shared on the Financial Capability Strategy Evidence Hub, hosted on the Financial Capability website, where you will also be able to see the results of evaluations from other interventions.

Money Advice Service Grant Managers will also liaise with funded projects to ensure key deliverables are being met, risks are mitigated and that we draw out the necessary insight and evidence to share with the wider sector.

Terms and conditions

20. What conditions does the funding come with?

We have included Terms and Conditions of the grant funding within the Expression of Interest application pack.

