

JOB DESCRIPTION

For Baby's Sake: Consultant to explore barriers to randomised controlled trial evaluation

- Purpose:** Foundations is looking for a consultant with qualitative research skills and subject matter knowledge in domestic abuse and child safeguarding to lead Stage 1 of a practical piece of 'test-and-learn' work, which aims to systematically identify the barriers and obstacles to undertaking a randomised controlled trial (RCT) of For Baby's Sake.
- Number of hours:** Short-term contract, approximately 20 days' work between February and April. Max funding available is £10,000.
- How to apply:** If you are interested in the project, please submit a CV, covering letter, and the costings spreadsheet, and return to evaluation@foundations.org.uk. The deadline for submissions is **12pm (midday) on Thursday 13 February**.

Background

[For Baby's Sake](#) is a trauma-informed, attachment-based therapeutic programme, underpinned by robust safeguarding in partnership with local adult and children's services and working with relevant stakeholders. Both parents join For Baby's Sake, and the programme provides intensive, individual support for each parent (those experiencing the abuse and those perpetrating the abuse), their baby and any other children. The programme begins working with families during pregnancy and continues for up to two years.

For Baby's Sake aims to improve birth outcomes, babies' social, emotional and cognitive development, parental and infant mental health and emotional wellbeing, sustained behaviour including reduction in risk and fewer domestic abuse incidents, and to reduce contact with children's social care.

The evaluation of For Baby's Sake (the B-CARE study) was initially designed as a pilot two-arm RCT, with allocation to an intervention or Business As Usual (BAU) control group. However, the evaluation experienced significant challenges with recruiting families such that Foundations decided to make a strategic shift, pausing the trial during the summer of 2024.



Foundations remain committed to estimating the impact of For Baby's Sake in the most accurate way. However, given the recent challenges recruiting families into the study, it is clear there is more work to do to understand the complexities involved in asking professionals to refer and randomise vulnerable families/unborn babies, scaling up and embedding the intervention in new areas, and understanding barriers to successful engagement and recruitment strategies in the context of an evaluation.

Foundations will be funding a "test-and-learn" approach to understand the barriers to recruitment, randomisation and implementation in greater depth. The ultimate ambition would be to progress to either a pilot or full-scale RCT if the outcome of the "test-and-learn" phase meets the right conditions for progression. We greatly value our collaborative work with The For Baby's Sake Trust and look forward to continuing to work together.

Suggested methodology

The precise methodology will be decided by the appointed consultant, in collaboration with Foundations and The Trust. While some information could come from desk research and previously identified challenges, in order for this work to be thorough and systematic, we would expect some qualitative work (e.g. interviews, focus groups, workshops, case studies) with:

- Representatives and stakeholders across the whole system around the target families - from intervention delivery partners like The Trust, to potential referrers (CSC, EH, midwifery, adult MH) and senior leaders etc.
- Families to understand their experiences (of the service and system) as well as their barriers to engagement.

Descriptive quantitative methods will also be required to estimate the number of eligible families in the delivery sites using available data.

Outputs

At this stage, we anticipate the output will be a report for Foundations outlining the key barriers and obstacles for evaluation, highlighting the ways these impact different groups and any potential solutions that have been identified. Foundations will provide templates, support and guidance for drafting the outputs.

Expectations

Foundations will work closely with the researcher throughout the project to provide support and quality assurance. Throughout the project, the researcher will be expected to:

- Work with Foundations and the For Baby's Sake Trust to refine the appropriate project questions, methodology and instruments to use
- Draft recruitment materials and recruit participants to take part
- Conduct data collection activities



- Liaise with Foundations as well as participants regarding data collection, ensuring that the appropriate data sharing measures are in place
- Triage queries from participating local authorities
- Conduct the analysis as set out in the project plan
- Produce an output summarising the findings
- Conduct all activities in line with relevant Data Protection Laws including and without limitation the UK General Data Protection Regulation, the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and all other relevant country specific legislation
- When requested, assist with writing the project's Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)
- Act as a joint and/or independent data controller with Foundations
- Enter into a Data Sharing Agreement with Foundations either solely or jointly with Foundations and other parties relevant to such an agreement in the context of the project where you are acting as either an independent data controller or joint data controller (if applicable, the Data Sharing Agreement shall also act as the Joint Controller Arrangement)
- Delete all data captured for the project in line with a Data Sharing Agreement we have with you or at least 5 years after the project has completed, whichever is the least amount of time, and confirm the deletion in writing to Foundations shortly after deletion
- Remain in regular contact with project lead.

Person specification

We are seeking a consultant with experience in domestic abuse and evaluation to lead Stage 1 of the 'test-and-learn' approach. The project will require qualitative research skills, including interviewing on sensitive topics. Some quantitative skills are also desirable, i.e. accessing and descriptive analysis of administrative data.

Requirement	Essential	Desirable
Domestic abuse and children's social care expertise		
1. Understanding of the domestic abuse sector and provision for those experiencing domestic abuse and perpetrating abuse	X	
2. An understanding of the evidence bases related to domestic abuse, parents, and babies, including unborn babies, and how it impacts child development	X	



3. Experience in working with or researching topics related to domestic abuse	X	
4. Knowledge and experience related to children's social care systems	X	
5. Knowledge relating to pre-birth and infant safeguarding		X
Evaluation and research		
6. Demonstrated experience in designing and implementing evaluations in a professional setting	X	
Qualitative and quantitative research skills		
7. Proficiency in conducting interviews on sensitive topics	X	
8. Expertise in using trauma-informed methodologies when working with vulnerable populations	X	
9. Ability to access and work with administrative data sources		X
10. Skills in descriptive analysis of quantitative data		X
11. Capacity to synthesise qualitative and quantitative findings into actionable insights	X	
Personal qualities		
12. Strong interpersonal and communication skills, particularly in sensitive or challenging situations	X	



13. Organisational skills to manage project timelines and deliverables effectively	X	
14. Adaptability to work within a collaborative, multi-disciplinary team setting	X	
15. An active commitment to ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion is part of all work	X	

Budget and capacity

Overall budget of up to £10,000 is available for the researcher for completion of the project.

Applicants should note that the £10,000 limit on funding for this piece of work is a maximum value; costing proposals should be proportionate to the scale and nature of the work proposed.

We estimate that the project will take around 20 days in total, though the exact number of days required may be more or less depending on the proposal.

Application process

If you are interested in the project, please submit a CV, covering letter and the costings spreadsheet and return to evaluation@foundations.org.uk. The deadline for submissions is **12pm (midday) on Thursday 13 February**.

Applications will be reviewed by assessors from our Evaluation and Programmes teams. Assessors will consider the following criteria when reviewing applications:

- Methodological and subject matter experience to deliver the project
- Whether the timeline and costings are feasible and meets the necessary criteria.

The next stage will involve an interview to discuss your experience and suitability for the project. If you are invited to interview, we will also share a more comprehensive overview of the project to date. **Interviews will be held between 17 – 21 February**.

If you have any questions, please contact evaluation@foundations.org.uk.

Additional information

Data protection

If staff have contact with computerised data systems, staff are required to process and/or use information held on a computer in a fair and lawful way. Staff are also required to hold data only



for the specific registered purpose and not to use or disclose it in any way incompatible with such purpose.

Safeguarding and Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Equity (EDIE)

Foundations is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and expects all staff to share this commitment. Foundations is committed to building a diverse, equitable and truly inclusive organisation. All posts (and postholders) will seek to ensure diversity and inclusion, while opposing all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation, or social and economic background.