



What Works Centre for Children & Families

# DOMESTIC ABUSE WORKFORCE PROGRAMMES EVIDENCE FUND

## OPEN CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

Webinar – Wednesday 01  
July 2026



# Agenda



## **Foundations, Overview of Opportunity: 2:00 – 2:30pm**

### **Introducing Foundations**

- Vision, Mission, Domestic Abuse Work

### **Funding Call Details**

- Background, Scope, Partner Engagement

### **Funding Process**

- Funding parameters, Application Process, Funding Call Stages, Timeline

## **Open questions: 2:30 – 3:00pm**

- Questions & Answers

# Format



- We'll be recording today's webinar for internal notetaking purposes and to share on our website for those who could not attend. You can find our privacy policy on our website.
- You can start providing questions in the chat box function. We will track all submitted and aim to answer each one in this session. Where we cannot answer at this time, we will provide an answer on our general FAQ document afterwards.
- All questions and answers from this webinar will be captured in FAQ available for all interested applicants.

# Foundations Team – Funding Call



**Emma Leith,  
*Senior Evaluation  
Officer***



**Dhriti Suresh Eapen,  
*Programmes Manager***



**Jamila Boughelaf,  
*Head of Programmes***



**Sarah Amato, *Senior  
Programmes  
Manager***

## **Unable to attend today's session**

- Polina Bishenden, Evidence & Evaluation Officer
- Liv Martin, Senior Practice Development Advisor
- Ava Berry, Senior Policy Advisor



# INTRODUCTION TO FOUNDATIONS

# FOUNDATIONS

**Foundations is the national What Works Centre for Children & Families.**

We're generating and championing the actionable evidence that improves family support services, so more vulnerable children have the foundational relationships they need to thrive in life.



## VISION

Vulnerable children have the foundational relationships they need to thrive in life.

## MISSION

Generating and championing actionable evidence that improves services to support family relationships.

# OUR PRIORITY AREAS



1. Supporting parenting



2. Strengthening family networks



3. Domestic abuse



4. Relationships for care experienced children



# Domestic Abuse: introducing the REACH plan



- Domestic abuse is one of the four priority areas in our five-year strategy
- Our aim is to examine how to effectively support children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse
- Two publications to date

# Sample DA Projects



We commissioned **Cordis Bright** to conduct a feasibility study of the **Restart programme**, delivered by **SafeLives, Respect, and Cranstoun**. We published a report on this work in October 2025.

We commissioned **IFF Research** to conduct an impact evaluation and implementation and process evaluation of **Bounce Back 4 Kids**.

**Action for Children's Breaking the Cycle** team was supported by the **Behavioural Insights Team** to carry out early -stage evaluation activities, including developing a theory of change.

We commissioned **Verian** to conduct an impact evaluation and implementation and process evaluation of **WeMatter**.

Funding to explore the adaptation and transportation of programmes with an international evidence base to a UK context.

**Please visit our website for more information about our REACH plan and our recent update - REACH: An update on our five year plan - Foundations**

A photograph of a woman with long, wavy brown hair hugging a young child with short, wavy brown hair. The woman is wearing a thick, textured brown knit sweater. The child is wearing a light blue long-sleeved shirt with dark trim at the neck and cuffs. They are outdoors, with a blurred background of dry, brownish vegetation. A teal-colored diagonal graphic element is in the top-left corner.

# FUNDING CALL DETAILS

# Background - Scoping



## Policy Review

- Freedom from Violence and Abuse Cross-Government Strategy
- Department for Education (DfE)
- Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office

## Stakeholder Consultations

- Experts by Experience
- Domestic Abuse Advisory Group
- Sector specialists

## Evidence Review

- Promising approaches
- Existing evidence gaps

## DA Workforce Programme Mapping

- National sector scoping

# Background – Findings



## **1. Workforce capability gaps persist in key areas**

- Knowledge, confidence and practice
- Thematic gaps within coercive control, perpetrator dynamics, cultural competency, and child-centred responses

## **2. Implementation challenges undermine existing training provision**

- “One-off” trainings, limited senior buy-in, insufficient follow-up
- Weak links between learning and frontline practice

## **3. Significant equity and programme gaps remain**

- Marginalised and minoritised ethnic survivors experience poorer access to effective support
- Lack of robust evidence on the impact of workforce development delivered by By-and-For Organisations

# Funding Call – Objectives



**Purpose:** To generate evidence that informs Children's Social Care and the wider safeguarding partnership's understanding of **what works to upskill professionals** to better support children, young people and whole families affected by domestic abuse, including marginalised communities with a particular focus on minoritised ethnic families.

## **Aims:**

- To **generate robust evidence** of promising domestic abuse workforce development programmes by demonstrating their impact, understanding how they support diverse families, and identifying approaches that could be widely adopted across the sector.
- To support organisations to **strengthen their evaluation capacity** and prepare for a future robust evaluation of their programme.

# Funding Call – Two Strand Approach



## Strand 1

An impact evaluation and process evaluation of domestic abuse workforce development programme(s) that are **impact evaluation ready**, or close to ready.



By demonstrating the impact of these programmes, we aim to support the wider adoption/commissioning of effective workforce development support across the sector.

## Strand 2

**Strengthening evaluation capacity** for domestic abuse workforce development programmes that are developed and implemented by **By-and-For Organisations**



To prepare for a future robust evaluation.

# Strand 1 – What are we looking to achieve?



- Identify and evaluate a promising domestic abuse workforce programme. As such, **participation in and facilitation of an independent evaluation is a core requirement of this funding.**
- Approximate outline;
  - **Set-up & scoping (5 months):** Complete preparatory work including finalising partnerships, refining materials and confirming delivery timelines before programme delivery begins.
  - **Delivery (up to 15 months):** Recruit workforce participants, deliver the programme, and collect evaluation data while using most of the funding to supplement delivery costs.
  - **Analysis and Reporting (up to 5 months):** Analyse evaluation data and produce a final published report, with delivery partners supporting workshops and output review where required and funded.
  - **Project Wind-up (last 3 months):** Publish reports, complete financial and progress reporting, and support lessons learned, dissemination and sustainability discussions where required and funded.

# Strand 1 Scope – What can you expect?



- **Collaborative relationships** with the appointed evaluator and Foundations, working together to design the evaluation strands during the set-up phase:
  - Impact evaluation – for example, a randomised controlled trial (RCT)
  - Implementation and process evaluation (IPE)
- **Some changes to implementation**, depending on the evaluation design. For example:
  - Randomising which individuals or areas receive the programme and which do not
  - Introducing new surveys so we can measure outcomes (or building on existing ones)
  - A focus on fidelity to the delivery model – ensuring as much consistency as possible
- **Ethical approval** will be obtained externally and **data sharing agreements** will be put in place between partners.
- More information: [Working With Foundations](#)

# Strand 1 Scope – Programme Type



## Must Haves

- Programme beneficiaries **CYP and families**, including marginalised groups and minoritised ethnic families.
- Recognises **children as victims in their own right**, not adult only focused.
- **Early Family Help, wider Children's Social Care.**
- Addresses **key skills gap**; cultural competencies, coercive control, perpetrator dynamics, child-centered practice, multi-agencies, and family courts, but could include others.
- Builds **knowledge, motivation, techniques**, and **embeds practice** (not just training).
- Includes **ongoing** capacity support.
- Extends beyond training to take into consideration the **organisational and systemic context**.
- Has an existing Theory of Change, or willingness to develop/refine.
- Has been delivered consistently, not in development.
- Delivered in England.

# Strand 1 Scope – Programme Type



## Nice to Have

- Wider Safeguarding Partnership (health, police, education).
- Uses various formats, such as in person, online, mentoring, implementation support.
- Targets different career stages.
- Intersecting needs.

## Cannot Be

- One-off training with no follow-up or reinforcement;
- Approaches that only focus on awareness-raising;



# Funding Process



# Funding Parameters

- £125,000 up to £250,000
- 27 months, January 2027 to March 2029

## ***Applicant Eligibility***

- Any entity who aligns with the detail of this Call Specification; local authorities, charities, third sector organisations, universities, social enterprises, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).
- Applying organisation must have agreement/partnership with the programme developer, if different.
- A demonstrated commitment to evaluation work and the capacity to fully participate in the evaluation activities of this call.

*Please see the full details of eligibility and project scope in the Call Specification guidance.*

*A reminder that Foundations reserves the rights to change timelines budget, scope, and will provide updates on our website as relevant.*

# Application Process



Two stage application process;

1. Full application – to determine eligibility and alignment of the programme with the call
2. Interview and selection stage - shortlisted applicants will be invited to interview.

To apply, please submit your full application by **12PM (midday) Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2026**

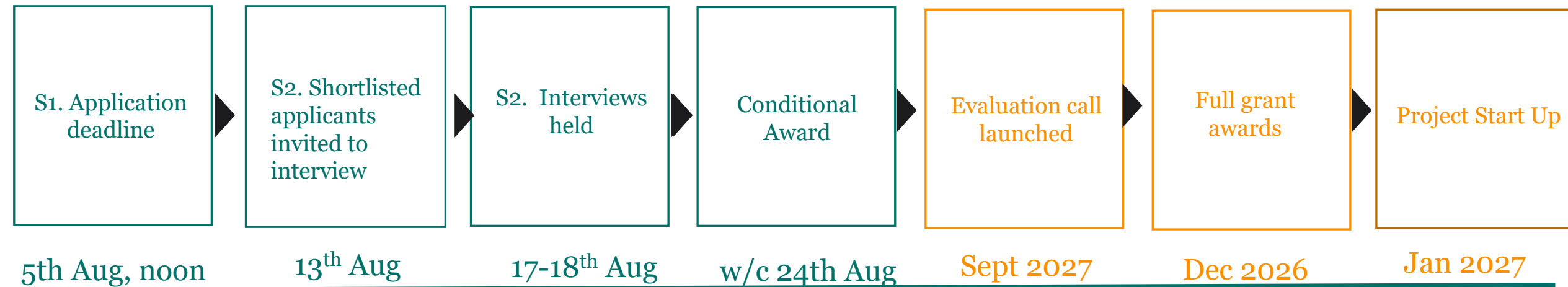
# Application - What We Are Looking For



- **Inclusivity** in delivery
- Programme **content** and target **audience**
- Programme **stability** and **evidence base**
- Delivery **capacity** and **scalability**
- **Evaluation** and **data readiness**
- **Motivation** and **ability** to engage in an independent **evaluation**

*Please see the full details of application criteria in the Call Specification guidance.*

# Application Timeline



A reminder that Foundations reserves the rights to change timelines, and will provide updates on our website as relevant.

# Application Support



## Webinars

1. 1st July, 11-12h
2. 22nd July, 14-15h

## FAQ

- Regularly updated on website
- All questions raised and answers included

## Assessment

- Determine suitability
  - Provide tailored feedback
- Direct engagement, *potentially*

- You are welcome to email anytime at; [programmes@foundations.org.uk](mailto:programmes@foundations.org.uk)
- Please include 'DA13.B DAWE' in the subject heading



# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

# Thank you!



- Webinar slides and FAQ document will be uploaded with questions/answers from today.
- Reminder of our email address; [programmes@foundations.org.uk](mailto:programmes@foundations.org.uk)