



**Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
(MEL) Supplier for the Multi-sport
Activity and Facilities Fund Programme**

**Invitation to Tender
Documentation Pack**

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Section 1. Background to this Invitation to Tender (ITT)

This ITT Documentation Pack

- The information included in this ITT documentation pack have been put together to support a response to tender by the potential supplier organisation(s) / consortia.
- The information contained, other than the relevant evaluation information, should only be used in connection with the development of a tender response to the requirements.
- This pack is made up of:
 - The background context to the purpose of this ITT, including two summary slide decks (Annexes 1 and 2)
 - Information regarding the response to tender process
 - Response to tender guidance
 - Evaluation criteria guidance

This Contract Opportunity

The Active Partnerships National Organisation (APNO) is seeking an external evaluation and learning provider to deliver the evaluation of the Active Partnership Football and Multi-sport Facilities Fund Programme. As part of the project, the supplier will be responsible for developing a clear evaluation and learning plan for the programme, development of data collection tools, ensure quality and consistency of data collection across local Active Partnerships in receipt of grant funding, target support to those areas who need it the most, support a joined-up approach across other national evaluations (e.g. the Sport England-commissioned Place evaluation and Systems Partners evaluation) and support provided through the national evaluation and learning contracts, and be responsible for national-level analysis and reporting of findings and lessons to key audiences.

Who the Active Partnerships National Organisation (APNO) is and what we do

Active Partnerships is a nationwide physical activity and sport network that exists to create a healthier, fairer nation. We take a place-based approach to reducing inequalities through our network of 43 local partnerships. We partner with local and national stakeholders to transform lives through physical activity and affect widespread social change. Our focus is on creating conditions in communities that enable sustainable impact. For more information please visit [our website](#).

The National Team

We are a small team with bold ambitions. As a membership organisation we connect, strengthen, and enable our network. Our role is not to manage local partnerships. We bring places, people, organisations, sectors, policies, and ideas together to make change happen. We might be joining up local partnerships, agencies, and national government departments, using our insight of places to drive national impact; or amplifying voices and agendas to ensure they are carried further than a single organisation could.

One of our core principles is to be a sustainable and ethical workplace. The climate we create as a fair, socially responsible and environmentally focused organisation is important to us. We are working to understand how best we embed this commitment into our everyday work lives, and we are resolute that being an ethical employer and improving sustainability in all areas of our work must be part of our organisational consciousness.

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion is at our core. It is central to our work in tackling inequalities, and we have an authentic and transparent approach to everything we do. From the values we hold to the policies and processes we put in place, and investment we make, our relentless place-based approach helps to reduce inequalities through our diverse network of experts across England. As an organisation we still have work to do but are firmly committed to inclusive practices which demonstrate fairness and equality in everything we do.

All of our work is underpinned by the following values:

- **Passion for our purpose** – our vision is our passion because we all believe in the power of sport and physical activity to change lives and tackle inequalities
- **A collaborative spirit** – we know that when we welcome, listen, understand and respect each other's knowledge and perspectives we're more creative, flexible and open to ideas.
- **Trust brings connectivity** – we work through building relationships.

The Active Partnerships National Organisation (APNO) is seeking an evaluation and learning supplier organisation or consortia, to deliver the evaluation and learning of the Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Fund Programme between August 2024 and May 2027.

The APNO is providing a contract for services for this work.

Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Fund Programme

Sport England¹, alongside the Government, Premier League and the Football Association, jointly fund the Football Foundation², who distribute funding on their behalf to deliver the National Football Facilities Strategy (“NFFS”).

The Government's investment into the Football Foundation forms a key part of Sport England's Uniting the Movement³ (UTM) football and multi-sport commitment. This aims to work with national and local place partners, to target the government's multi-million-pound investment (£158m in 2023-25) into community football and multi-sport facilities so it reaches the places where it will have the biggest impact. The Government funding includes a requirement for 40% of the total investment into the

¹ Sport England is an arm's length body of government established by Royal Charter in 1996. They are responsible for growing and developing grassroots sport and helping more people get active across England. They use their expertise, insight, campaigns and targeted funding from the government and the National Lottery to do just that.

In 2021 Sport England has launched a new strategy “Uniting the Movement” with a 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity. Find out more at www.sportengland.org

² The Football Foundation is a charity that was set up to support grassroots clubs by helping to build and refurbish new and existing community sports facilities and has helped build or improve over 3,000 football pitches over the past 20 years.

³ In 2021 Sport England has launched a new strategy “Uniting the Movement” with a 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity. Find out more at www.sportengland.org

Football Foundation to benefit multi-sport. This is a key positive driver for Sport England and at the core of our UTM football/multi-sport facilities commitment.

The Active Partnership network is key to driving collaboration on the multi-sport offer, working in partnership with the Foundation, National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and other stakeholders as they help to identify priorities and connect local stakeholders into community engagement.

The Football Foundation's Multi-sport approach is delivered through three key strands:

- **Multi-sport policy:** at least 40% of investment to benefit other sports (including cricket, rugby league, rugby union, hockey, basketball, netball and a range of other sporting activities) across 3G Artificial Grass Pitches (AGPs), grass pitches and changing facilities.
- **Playzones:** a new programme to deliver 278 community small-sided facilities in priority areas to benefit cricket, rugby league, rugby union, hockey, basketball and netball.
- **Strategic grass pitch projects:** Improving grass pitch quality through the Multi-sport Pitch Advisory Service [PAS] and use of the Pitch Power App benefiting cricket, rugby league, rugby union, to identify grass pitches where there are opportunities to deliver new multi-sport opportunities.

The Football Foundation's delivery is aligned to UTM with:

- A strong focus on tackling inequalities within underrepresented groups: equal access for women and girls, lower socio-economic groups, culturally diverse communities and people with disabilities.
- Greater focus on recreational forms of football and sport/activities, particularly through small-sided facilities
- Investment prioritised into communities with the greatest need.
- Community engagement embedded into end-to-end application process for all facility types.

Sport England recognised that the Foundation's multi-sport offer does not benefit all sports or activities in all situations. The UTM implementation plan scoping therefore focused on building-out from the Foundation's approach to address gaps in a coordinated way. This scoping identified the following five **Sport England priority workstreams** to address those gaps and complement the Football Foundation's multi-sport approach:

1. **Non-football grass pitches:** £15m of strategic revenue investment to improve grass pitches for cricket, rugby league and rugby union. Delivered through the Football Foundation and the ECB.
2. **Hockey loan vehicle:** new loan model to support clubs to deliver new and resurfaced hockey pitches through England Hockey.
3. **Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Flexi Fund:** £8m flexible revenue and capital fund delivered through a community-led approach, to support the activation of Football Foundation funded sites, the delivery of non-football PlayZones and the creation of active environments in parks hosting PlayZone and LTA Parks Tennis facilities.
4. **Extended workforce capacity:** additional capacity into the Active Partnership National Organisation and Active Partnership network to support the multi-sport approach.
5. **NGB capacity:** additional capacity into Basketball, Netball and Rugby League to support the multi-sport approach.

This evaluation and learning contract will focus on three of the above workstreams: (3) the Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Flexi Fund (revenue fund), (4) Extended workforce capacity; and (5) NGB capacity. We also want to explore with the appointed Evaluation and Learning supplier the extent to which (1)

Non-football grass pitches and (3) the Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Flexi Fund (capital fund: non-football playzones) and Active Environments can be incorporated into the scope of this Evaluation and Learning contract.

For further information about the above workstreams, see Annex 1.

Key stakeholders

A multi-sport stakeholder strategic group meet 2-3 times a year with senior representatives of Sport England, APNO, Football Foundation and key National Governing Bodies with heightened involvement in the programme: LTA Parks Tennis, England Hockey, England Netball, England Basketball, Rugby League, Rugby Union and the England Cricket Board. A multi-sport Stakeholder Operational Group made up of operational-level representatives from the same organisations meet every 6 weeks to oversee operations. A managing group made up of APNO and SE project team members meet on a weekly basis.

Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Supplier role

We are now seeking a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) supplier organisation(s) or consortia to deliver the evaluation and learning programme of the Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Fund Programme over the period August 2024 – May 2027, focussing on:

- Capacity funding for Active Partnerships and NGBs
- Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Flexi Fund (revenue funding)

And, to the extent it is deemed feasible by the appointed Evaluation and Learning supplier in collaboration with APNO and Sport England:

- Non-football (rugby and cricket) grass pitch investment
- Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Flexi Fund: capital funding - non-football Playzones.

One of the key evaluation and learning questions is to build an understanding of the added value of the central focus of community engagement and adopting a multi-stakeholder approach through the above strands of work. There is significant monitoring, evaluation and learning activity already underway or planned (as is detailed in the next sections), some of which may be useful for the evaluation and learning supplier to collate to help to tell a clear, compelling story of whether and to what extent a heightened focus on multi-sport, community engagement, partnership working and holistic, place-based approaches is contributing and maximising the achievement of key programme outcomes, and importantly, APNO's role and contribution within that.

APNO reserves the right to engage with multiple applications and support negotiations for how multiple applicants will work together on this piece of work.

The full scope of the work is outlined in the next section.

Section 2. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Approach

Purpose of Monitoring

Monitoring data will form an important part of the overall approach. It will be important to understand the breadth of activity to feed into the evaluation and to support APNO's reporting to its grant funding provider, Sport England, particularly to evidence progress against agreed KPIs. We have a draft set of outputs for monitoring purposes (Annex 2) which should be revisited and refined in collaboration with APNO and Sport England colleagues.

Evaluation purpose

The key workstreams in scope for this contract are:

Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Flexi Fund (revenue funding)

To understand whether, to what extent and how a heightened focus on multi-sport, community engagement, partnership working, and holistic, place-based approaches is adding value, contributing to and maximising the achievement of key programme outcomes.

This needs to draw on/link in with other multi-sport evaluation already underway, where feasible (see table 1 below). A key part of the Evaluation and Learning supplier's role initially will be to fully understand what data is already being collected, how that potentially fits into this evaluation study and identify opportunities for working with other partners to collaborate on planned data collection methods. See Table 1 for existing/planned evaluation activity across the multi-sport programme, gaps and requirements for this contract.

Capacity funding for Active Partnerships and NGBs

Active partnerships capacity - including measuring the added value of the Active Partnerships in the Football and Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Fund Programme. This includes additional roles and resources into the APNO team, a new application process for revenue funding, additional regional leads and the role of local Active Partnerships (see Annex 1 for further information).

NGB capacity – how this additional capacity has delivered greater opportunities for each of the 3 sports from the multi-sport approach and how this capacity has added value.

We want to understand to what extent and how the additional capacity within the AP network, NGBs and other activity has contributed to strengthening and maximising the impact of the targeted investment into community football, tennis and multi-sport facilities, prioritising tackling inactivity, working with under-represented groups (including what (if any) has made a difference to opportunities for women and girls – as well as the other under-represented groups).

Additional workstreams for possible inclusion

There are other strands of evaluative work across the multi-sport programme that are underway and/or planned – see Table 1 below.

We consider that wherever possible, it would be valuable for this evaluation to include aspects of the wider programme in order to tell a fuller story of the programme and inform greater clarity on the respective role of the APNO's role, in particular:

- Non-football (rugby and cricket) grass pitch investment
- Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Flexi Fund: capital funding - non-football Playzones.

However, we also recognise that a compromise may have to be made in terms of the extent to which these additional aspects of the Multi-sport Programme can be included in this commission given the resources available, and we have given an indication as to what that may include in Table 1 below.

Purpose of the Learning Programme

The purpose of the learning programme is to ensure that key findings and lessons generated through evaluative activity are shared with key partners at multiple levels of the system. This will ensure maximum impact of the evaluation throughout the evaluation period by informing policy and practice. We want to encourage, support and facilitate regular learning cycles throughout the programme. We want learning to take place at different levels of the system and have begun to map out key audiences for the evaluation in the supporting slide deck. This should also include double-loop learning to test and inform learning to potentially reframe goals and ways of working (see Annex 2).

Developing the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework

Since November 2023, the APNO team, led by the strategic lead for Evaluation and Learning, has taken a collaborative approach with key partners including the Active Partnerships network to develop a high-level evaluation framework for the Active Partnerships Football and Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Fund Programme. We anticipate that the framework will need to be tested and iterated further by the evaluation and learning partner, particularly in the first year.

The supporting slide deck (Annex 2) in this ITT Documentation pack sets out the key components of the initial evaluation framework, including:

- The programme Theory of Change (V1)
- Evaluation purpose
- Outcomes of interest
- Key audiences
- Draft Evaluation and learning questions
- Design principles
- Key considerations for analysis, reporting and learning
- Required resources and ways of working

This is a starting position and will need to be developed and refined further by the Evaluation and Learning Supplier to incorporate all feasible aspects of the Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Fund Programme (within scope) to be decided on in collaboration with APNO, Sport England and the Evaluation and Learning Supplier. We consider that it would be valuable to expand the theory of change by including outcomes for different audiences/key partners and strands of work.

Roles in evaluation

We expect that data collection, analysis and interpretation will take place on a number of levels. The role of the local Active Partnerships and their MEL leads (where they exist) is still to be decided in terms of undertaking evaluation activity – data collection, analysis, interpretation and reporting on data according to requirements (in line with the finalised evaluation plan). It will be the role of the Evaluation and Learning supplier (working in partnership with local APs, APNO and SE colleagues) to help work through what that balance looks like in collaboration with Active Partnerships and SE, in terms of what should be collected, analysed, interpreted and reported on at the local level (led by APs/MEL leads) and what should be collected, analysed, interpreted and reported on at the regional

and national level (led by the Evaluation and Learning Supplier) supported by other key partners e.g. regional leads, NGBs). This will be a key priority for the Evaluation and Learning Supplier.

Evaluation support

The draft Evaluation and Learning framework (Annex 2) provides initial considerations for data collection tools and analysis and reporting processes to address the key evaluation questions. This has been developed in collaboration with key partners and local Active Partnerships to take into account varying MEL resource capabilities and resources that exist across the network and the limited capacity of NGBs, clubs and groups in receipt of grant funding.

The consultation process has identified a clear need for flexible guidance, support and training to local Active Partnerships with the requirements of this evaluation. We anticipate that a flexible support package, that includes training, guidance materials, and 1-1 bespoke support for those who need it, could address the varying needs that exist. Any support offer would need to be designed and delivered (and potentially co-developed) with national partners (e.g. Sport England and APNO) and national evaluation partners working across the network to avoid duplication and build in efficiencies, where it makes sense to.

Football and Multisport evaluation activity

For some aspects of the Football and Multi-sport programme, monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) activities are in place or planned. It will therefore be imperative that the appointed evaluation and learning supplier fosters good working relationships with key partners leading those other evaluation activities. In some instances, it will be valuable to share data, insights and lessons (e.g. impact data, usage data – as to explain the contribution of the AP role on any impact observed) and to potentially collaborate on data collection tools/methods. As such, a collaborative approach will be important, and this should be built into evaluation planning. Key activity is outlined in Table 1 below.

Workstream	Current MEL Arrangements	Gaps and opportunities	Requirements as part of this commission
Capacity funding for Active Partnerships and NGBs	<p>MEL Research led ripple mapping approach with the regional leads, included outcome harvesting and theory of change development specifically for regional leads' role. Possible extension of role in light-touch way.</p> <p>Possible links to System Partner investment reporting processes</p>	Programme-level evaluation for AP evaluation	<p>This will be a key priority for this Evaluation and Learning Programme</p> <p>Explore possible link to System Partner investment reporting processes.</p>
Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Flexi Fund	Programme delivery by APs and solicited national partners.	Currently no arrangements in place: gap filled by this evaluation – both revenue and capital elements	This will be a key priority for this Evaluation and Learning Programme
Football Foundation facilities investments, including PlayZones	<p>DCMS has commissioned an impact evaluation of the UK wide football and multi-sport grassroots facilities programme – this covers football and multi-sport and park tennis investments</p> <p>FF planning a longitudinal survey</p> <p>Review and possible enhancement of post award process</p>	Process evaluation, including evaluating the community engagement toolkit and community-led approach. Options to include in longitudinal study and post award process that FF are planning.	<p>The work strand is out of scope for this Evaluation and Learning contract, however:</p> <p>The Evaluation and Learning Supplier to work collaboratively with the Football Foundation and their evaluation and learning partners to share their data/insights, and potentially support and influence planned data capture methods e.g. longitudinal survey and post award process.</p> <p>Link in with DCMS evaluation to draw on high level impact data if deemed useful for this evaluation.</p>
Multi-sport policy	Monitoring via FF KPIs and performance reporting	Evaluating benefits to each sport and alignment to their strategic priorities	<p>The work strand is out of scope for this Evaluation and Learning contract, however:</p> <p>The Evaluation and Learning Supplier to collaborate with FF and potential to influence their follow up grant process (if deemed useful to the evaluation)</p>

<p>Non-football grass pitch investments</p>	<p>Rugby League and Rugby Union investment is being delivered by the FF and will be incorporated into the DCMS evaluation</p> <p>Cricket investment is being delivered by the ECB</p>	<p>Rugby process evaluation. The rugby codes will provide changes in the number of players and teams pre and post investment including basic demographic information. This will be supplemented by case studies.</p> <p>The cricket pitch investment will follow the ECB's existing post award process with additional surveys for clubs. The ECB will also be able to provide similar information as the rugby codes</p>	<p>Potential to include in scope for this evaluation and learning contract (following discussions between APNO, SE and the appointed Evaluation and Learning supplier):</p> <p>Collaborate with rugby league and rugby union to share data/insights (if deemed in scope)</p> <p>Collaborate with cricket to share data/insights and learning from rugby process evaluation (if deemed in scope)</p>
<p>Pitch Advisory Service</p>	<p>Pitch quality data collected via PitchPower App</p> <p>GMA annual reporting on pitch assessments, pitch quality and wider issues</p>		<p>This strand of work is out of scope for this Evaluation and Learning contract, however, it may be useful to collaborate with FF on data sharing (if deemed useful for this evaluation) and include in qualitative partner interviews</p>
<p>Active Through Football</p>	<p>Upshot is the data collection partner.</p> <p>Leeds Beckett process evaluation covers the first two years of the programme, ending February 24. FF re-procuring for years 3 to 5.</p>		<p>This strand of work is out of scope for this Evaluation and Learning contract, however, Evaluation and Learning Partner to contact the team at Leeds Beckett University to identify opportunities for data/insight sharing if deemed useful to the evaluation.</p>
<p>Hockey Loan Vehicle</p>	<p>England Hockey has the lead responsibility for the development and implementation of measurement, evaluation and learning arrangements.</p>	<p>No arrangements currently in place.</p>	<p>This strand of work is out of scope for this Evaluation and Learning contract, as it is managed separately and responsibilities for evaluation and learning sit with England Hockey.</p>

Alignment with other national evaluations

Throughout the co-design, development and delivery of this Evaluation and Learning approach, the appointed supplier organisation / consortia should ensure synergy and consideration of key existing national evaluations that are ongoing or in the pipeline. These include two large, national evaluations commissioned by Sport England for its Systems Partner investment and Place investment; as well as the evaluation of the Sport Welfare Officers Network which will be commissioned by APNO. See Table 2 below for further information.

A small working group made up of representatives from Sport England and APNO formed in Autumn 2023 to explore ways in which large national evaluations that require the involvement and input of local APs, can begin to more closely align to minimise the resource ask on the network. This work is still ongoing and to date, the working group have identified a number of actions which include:

- Rationalisation and consolidation of learning spaces
- Alignment of reporting cycles
- Merging / building on existing Theories of Change in place for new investments, where it makes sense to
- Utilising existing data collection, analysis, reporting and learning processes that exist for more than one investment/evaluations, where it makes sense to.

External Evaluation and Learning Partners and Learning Leads (e.g. those leading national evaluation and learning partner activity from within APNO and Sport England) have also started to meet semi-regularly to rationalise and consolidate the learning offer.

The appointed Evaluation and Learning Supplier should work with APNO, Sport England and national evaluation and learning providers to incorporate current and emerging actions into implementation plans. The appointed supplier should also consider how to support local Active Partnerships to work in this way.

Table 2: Current MEL arrangements

Workstream	Current MEL Arrangements	Requirements as part of this commission
Sport Welfare Officers Network	Tender out for national evaluation and learning supplier organisation / consortia	Alignment wherever possible around reporting cycles, theory of change development; collaborate/co-develop support provision
System Partner investment	APs and other partners reporting via Smartsheet six monthly to SE on progress against steps, goals and development priorities Ipsos-MORI led consortium appointed to lead collective Evaluation & Learning supplier contract	Alignment wherever possible around reporting cycles, theory of change development, support provision, data collection and analysis methods, use or and sharing of insight and lessons/reflective practice, ways of working
Place investment	SHU led consortium leading Evaluation & Learning for LDPs and Transition Fund places Emerging place-expansion six-part approach – theory of change, evaluation and learning framework, maturity model and surveying, impact reporting, QCA, population level modelling	Alignment wherever possible around reporting cycles, theory of change development, support provision, data collection and analysis methods, use or and sharing of insight and lessons/reflective practice, ways of working
Opening School Facilities (OSF)	Partner reporting via Smartsheet	Alignment with reporting processes wherever possible

Section 3. Specification

Overall requirements

The APNO wishes to enter into a contract for services with an external organisation or consortium to provide the following services to APNO:

- **Develop clear parameters for the evaluation** - we recognise that a compromise may have to be reached in terms of which aspects of the multi-sport activity and facilities fund programme can be included in this commission given available resources, in collaboration with APNO and Sport England colleagues. We have given an indication as to the priorities for this commission in Table 2. We would like to understand from potential suppliers, how they would approach developing parameters for this evaluation and learning activity and an indication of which aspects of the programme could be included and how.
- Develop and test the **programme Theory of Change and evaluation framework**, in collaboration with key national and local partners throughout the evaluation period, particularly the first year. It is anticipated that outcomes will be developed for specific stakeholders within this. Outcomes mapping has been developed by the Regional Leads and the APNO Strategic Lead for Evaluation and Learning has developed a version 1 Theory of Change for the evaluation (see Annex 2). This will need to be developed further in line with the agreed scope/parameters for this commission, in collaboration with APNO, Sport England and local APs/MEL leads. It would also be valuable to consider nested theories of change and/or routes to impact for specific key partners.
- Review, develop and test **data collection tools** for the evaluation in collaboration with test phase Active Partnerships and their MEL leads. Developing tools for local Active Partnerships to adopt and administer will be an immediate priority as the test phase projects are due to begin delivery in July 2024.
- **Develop a clear evaluation and learning plan for the programme** – in collaboration with key partners and evaluation and learning leads at the national and local level (within and outside of the Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Fund Programme). This should involve:
 - consideration as to how existing or planned data collection across the multi-sport programme can be used as part of this commission;
 - identifying opportunities to collaborate/influence planned data collection methods and tools (e.g. Football Foundation longitudinal survey questions); and
 - where, how and by whom remaining gaps can be filled with data collection at the local, regional and national level.
- **Design, lead, support and conduct primary data collection** where required (once a thorough review of secondary data has been assessed for suitability) in collaboration with local partners, to provide the breadth and depth of data required to robustly address the evaluation and learning questions. This may include:
 - supporting the APNO team and NGBs with data collection, potentially through the development of a set of minimum data collection requirements with and for local APs/MEL leads, and the provision of guidance, support and data collection tools;
 - supporting a sample of APs with more in-depth methods (e.g. systems mapping/ripple effect mapping) where resource allow; and
 - conducting primary data (e.g. qualitative interviews with key partners).
- Provide a **flexible package of support** for local Active Partnerships to undertake the evaluation requirements, including data collection, analysis, reporting and use. may include a bite-sized

training package in collaboration with the evaluation and learning supplier for the Active Partnership Sport Welfare Officer Network (we expect that a portion of each programme evaluation budget can be pooled to co-design and deliver a training and support programme for local APs). Support to local APs should be provided in a way that takes account of existing evaluations they may be involved in, and how local partners may be able to utilise or build on existing mechanisms or tools e.g. theories of change, data collection and analysis methods, reporting schedules. It will be important that support, training and guidance is planned collaboratively with other national evaluation providers and leads to avoid duplication/saturation of support packages.

- Design and execution of **appropriate methods of analysis** to answer the key evaluation questions. This may include conducting national, regional and sport-level analysis and supporting local partners to conduct local level analysis to inform their own learning and reporting processes. This may include providing support for the development of the central **digital platform (Smartsheets)** for collating information from local partnerships and analysing and reporting on data.
- **Co-design and facilitate the effective sharing and communication of lessons and findings.** This should include a variety of creative approaches and should include methods for bringing key partners to come together to discuss what is/isn't working and good practice. It will be important that insights and lessons are generated, shared and reported in real time as well as regular formal review points. It will be important that learning approaches are planned collaboratively with other national evaluation and learning providers and leads to avoid duplication/saturation of learning spaces.

Deliverables / Outcomes

- To develop a **clear project plan** with associated timelines. We expect the plan for year 1 (August 2024 – March 2025) will be more fully developed and expect that plans for subsequent years can be firmed up towards the end of the previous year in collaboration with APNO. Detailed evaluation plans should be agreed prior to each delivery year. An outline of a project plan is required (as part of the response to tender process) to provide an indicative timeline for key elements of this project's development. A detailed project plan will be required in the early implementation phase of the contract.
- To **update the programme Theory of Change** to include all aspects of the Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Fund Programme in scope for this evaluation study, and to illustrate outcomes for different activities/key audiences.
- To develop a **clear evaluation and learning plan** for the study period, in collaboration with key partners and Evaluation and Learning leads. We expect there to be a **central MEL framework** with common elements and minimum requirements (e.g. for data collection), across APs involved which should be flexible enough to allow for variation across NGBs/sports and local AP areas, in terms of context, priorities, ways of working and capacity.
- Design and develop a **set of data collection tools** for the collection of data required for the evaluation at the local, regional and national level.
- To provide a package of flexible **guidance, support and training** for the effective implementation of data collection tools, analysis and sense-making at the local level. We expect that requirements will be more intensive in year 1 and may tail off in subsequent years. Any guidance, support and training should be designed in collaboration with national partners and other national evaluation and learning partners.
- Provide national and local partners with semi-regular **progress and impact reports and presentations** to key audiences, in line with specific areas of interest. This should include

communicating national level analysis and lessons to local APs to inform local-level learning and developments in regular cycles. This should also be aligned to the funder requirements of Sport England, who have requested that local APs submit evaluative data back to Sport England every 6 months.

- The **sharing of lessons and findings** should also be built into plans. The content and format of lessons sharing and communicating findings will be decided in collaboration with the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning supplier once they have been appointed.

Ways of working

- **Working with key partners (data collection):** it will be important to work collaboratively with key partners involved in the wider Football and Multi-sport programme (outlined in Table 1) to understand what data is being collected elsewhere, determine whether it is of use to this evaluation and negotiate data sharing arrangements if feasible. This will include the Football Foundation who collect KPIs and are planning to collect usage data for new facilities; DCMS commissioned impact evaluation of new Football and Multi-sport facilities and the evaluation and learning partner supporting the regional leads on undertaking ripple effect mapping.
- **National evaluation suppliers** will be required to collaborate closely in the development of frameworks, tools, ways of working and support provided to align wherever possible. National evaluation suppliers to support the join up of evaluation asks at a local level, join up around support provision and seek efficiencies and alignment of data collection tools, analysis techniques and reporting requirements. It will be particularly important to work with the national evaluation and learning partners for Sport England's Place Investment because of the overlap of places being invested in for the Multi-Sport Activity and Facilities Flexi Fund (see Table 2).
- **Seek efficiencies** wherever possible e.g. aligning reporting frameworks, analysis techniques, data collection methods where the same methods/tools can have application across multiple evaluations. This way of working should be built into support offer to the network.
- **Advocacy and support:** throughout the framework development, a collaborative co-design approach should be fostered working in partnership with the APNO to drive innovation with better decision-making by including key strategic decision-makers / national partners on this journey
- **Working with APNO:** As the APNO is responsible for tendering this opportunity, they will manage the award of the contract and support its development throughout the timescales of this contract. The appointed supplier will therefore be expected to work closely with, and accountable to, the Strategic Lead for Evaluation and Learning within the APNO with an agreed monitoring process in order to achieve identified and agreed objectives.
- Alignment to **APNO values** in the way that the evaluation partner(s) operate throughout the evaluation period (see Section 1)
- **Equality, equity, diversity and inclusion:** a fully inclusive approach to evaluation and learning, where EEDI is fully considered and embedded in each component of the evaluation design and delivery.

Section 4. Timescales and budget

Timescales

The indicative timescale for this procurement process is set out below:

Stage	Date
Invitation to Tender issued	Monday 24 th June 2024
Deadline for expressions of interest (EOIs)	Wednesday 10 th July 2024
MEL Suppliers Workshop for further information about the ITT	Wednesday 10 th July, 10-11.00 (online: Teams)
Deadline for clarification questions	Friday 12 th July, 12.00
Deadline for application submission	Thursday 18 th July, 10.00
Shortlisting	18-22 July 2024
Interviews	Thursday, 25 th July 2024 (in person: NCVO, London)
Notification of result to successful applicant	Monday, 29 th July 2024
Project commencement	August 2024 (subject to contract)

The APNO reserves the right to amend the above timetable.

Payment for services: the contract is up to a maximum of **£395k inclusive of VAT** between August 2024 and May 2027. Please note: payment will only be made by APNO on receipt of a valid VAT invoice from the successful organisation.

Length of Contract: the contract is for 34 months from August 2024 and continue until 31st May 2027.

The APNO has the right to amend this start and end date depending on any amendments that may have to be made to the programme or tender process.

Section 5. Response to Tender requirements

Key questions

The lead organisation is required to put together a response to tender document and respond to the questions below:

1. Please describe how and why your **organisation / consortia's experience and expertise** ensures you are well placed to provide services to APNO to develop and deliver a high-quality evaluation approach for the Multi-sport Activity and Facilities Fund Programme.

Please append relevant biographies and CVs. This should include:

- An understanding of the requirements of the brief
- An understanding of the wider context in relation to unequal access of sports facilities and considerations for this evaluation based on the broader context. Please include any direct experience you have working in this space and what you've learned.
- Track record of organisation or consortia's relevant expertise and experience in complex, systems-based evaluation.
- Team members and their proposed roles in the project. This should include short biographies of the proposed team and appended CVs.

2. Describe the approach to developing the **monitoring, evaluation and learning framework** and how you would ensure the involvement of key partners. The evaluation and learning framework (Annex 2) presents initial ideas for data collection and analysis approaches, however, we are open to alternative methods and approaches. Please include thoughts on the balance between direct data capture and supporting others to collect data at the local level. Including how a balance will be sought between robust evidence of outcomes achieved and the contribution of the Network on those; with the need to work in collaboration with local APs and be aware of the limited local capacity in some areas.

This should include:

- Effective ways to work collaboratively with key partners in the development and design of the approach and methods
- Testing and iterating the theory of change and the evaluation approach
- The balance between robust evaluation and a supportive, meaningful local approach
- Considerations about attribution versus contribution
- Clear, succinct data collection methods and tools – reflecting on the distinction between primary and secondary data collection
- Analysis at different levels
- Reports and presentation to key audiences
- Research ethics and considerations around data protection, sharing and use including GDPR compliance. Please append relevant policies and procedures.

3. Describe your approach to **capacity building, partnership working and facilitating learning** at all levels

This should include:

- How you would work collaboratively and embody the values of Active Partnerships (and with national partners), to engage them throughout the evaluation period
- How you would plan to collaborate with partners collecting evaluative data and insights inside and outside of the Multi-sport programme to inform this evaluation and learning programme;

- Your proposed approach to building/developing a learning culture at the national, regional and local level, including how you would approach designing and facilitating learning spaces
 - Your proposed approach to providing appropriate, proportionate and flexible evaluation support, guidance and training across the network.
 - How you would ensure this evaluation and learning approach is appropriately linked with other national evaluation and learning programmes.
4. Please describe your approach to **inclusion, research ethics, safeguarding and governance**.
- This should include:
- Key considerations and processes regarding research ethics. Please include organisation's research ethics statement and policy.
 - Data protection and management and GDPR considerations and processes. Please include organisation's relevant policies.
 - Safeguarding statement/policy(ies) of organisation(s) and how this will be applied to this evaluation and learning programme.
 - Governance arrangements, including quality assurance and sign off processes.
 - Equality, diversity and inclusion considerations.
5. Please identify any possible **issues or challenges** that could be encountered during the evaluation period and describe how you would attempt to overcome or avoid these. You should present this in a table to identify any potential risks and their mitigations associated with the issues or challenges you consider may be encountered.
6. **Project costs:** What is the cost for your organisation/consortia to provide this work up to a maximum of **£395k inclusive of VAT** to be achieved by the end of May 2027. Please provide the headline cost breakdown and a more detailed cost breakdown for year 1 (up to March 2025). Please include a table with activities, costs for each activity and day rates.
7. Please provide a clear **project plan** to include indicative timelines for key activity and milestones for the evaluation and learning programme (this can be appended as an additional attachment). Please note: the project plan may need to be shaped further with the APNO team and key partners once the evaluation and learning supplier has been appointed.
8. Please state whether your organisation/consortia can begin delivery from August 2024.
9. Please include general information about the applying organisation(s). This should include:
- **Organisation type** (Charity, Community Interest Company, Local Authority, University, Company Ltd by Guarantee, etc.)
 - **Registration Number(s)** (if applicable)
 - **Email address**
 - **Full Postal address** (all correspondence relating to this application will be sent to this address)
 - **The lead contact for this project** (name, position in organisation, telephone, email)
 - **Named Partners/Collaborators on the proposal and 1 sentence about the role they will play (if applicable).**

The response to tender should **not exceed 10 pages** (this does not include appendices)



Please submit any questions to via email to jharrison@activepartnerships.org

The Application Form should be submitted **by Thursday 18th July at 10.00am via email to** jharrison@activepartnerships.org

Section 6. ITT Evaluation Process and Interview

Assessment and Evaluation Panel

The responses provided will be assessed against the criteria below. An assessment panel will review all submissions and score the responses, as part of the short-listing process. An assessment panel meeting will then be held with the panellists to collate scores and validate the process. The 3-4 submissions with the highest score will then be invited to interview, which will take place on **Thursday 25th July 2024**.

Assessment Criteria:

Criteria and the related questions	Weighting
<p>Q1. Experience and expertise This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of the requirements of the brief • An understanding of the wider context in relation to unequal access and engagement of sports facilities and considerations for this evaluation based on the broader context • Track record of organisation’s relevant expertise and experience in complex evaluation. This should include short biographies of the proposed team and appended CVs 	20%
<p>Q2. Evaluation approach and methodology This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective ways to work collaboratively with key partners in the development and design of the approach and methods • Testing and iterating the theory of change and the evaluation approach • The balance between robust evaluation and a supportive, meaningful local approach • Considerations about attribution versus contribution • Clear, succinct data collection methods and tools – reflecting on the distinction between primary and secondary data collection • Analysis at different levels • Reports and presentation to key audiences • Research ethics and considerations around data protection, sharing and use. 	20%
<p>Q3. Capacity building, partnership working and learning This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to foster positive relationships with local and national partners, ensuring they are part of the journey • How you would plan to collaborate with partners collecting evaluative data and insights inside and outside of the Multi-sport programme to inform this evaluation and learning programme; • Effective approach to foster a learning culture at the national, regional and local level, including designing and facilitating learning • Effective approach to evaluation support, guidance and training • Considerations on working collaboratively with national evaluation providers and partners 	20%
<p>Q4. Inclusion, research ethics, safeguarding and governance This should include:</p>	20%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key considerations and processes regarding research ethics. Please include organisation’s research ethics statement/policy. • Data protection and management and GDPR considerations and processes including relevant policy documents; • Safeguarding statement/policy(ies) of organisation(s) and how this will be applied to this evaluation and learning programme. • Governance arrangements, including quality assurance and sign off processes. • Equality, diversity and inclusion considerations 	
Q5. Value for money To what extent the organisation’s cost for this service provides optimal value for money to achieve the full requirements of this tender opportunity. This should include a breakdown of costs and day rates for each team member against key activity (detailed for Year 1; summary for subsequent years).	20%
Q6. Identification of relevant issues and challenges that may be encountered with possible solutions (using a table to identify risks and their mitigation).	Y/N
Q7. A project plan has been included provided an overview of key project timelines (detailed for Year 1; summary for subsequent years).	Y/N
Q8. Organisation is able to start delivery August 2024.	Y/N

The Interview process

If your organisation / consortium is successful at assessment stage and invited to interview, you will be asked to expand on specific areas of your response(s) or to clarify or substantiate responses.

We anticipate the interview taking no longer than 1.5 hours.

The interviews will take place on **Thursday 25th July 2024**. Interviews will be **in-person** and will take place at the NCVO - Regents Wharf, 8 All Saints St, London N1 9RL.

You will be notified if you have been invited to an interview by **Monday 22nd July 2024**.

The Outcome

Following the interviews, the interview panel will discuss and confirm selection of the preferred supplier.

The preferred supplier will be notified by **Monday 29th July 2024**.

Please note, if you are selected as the preferred supplier, you will be required to attend an inception meeting **w/c 29th July** and start delivery soon after. In your submission, please confirm you are able to do this, subject to the timely review and signing of the contract for services.

If you have any questions about the ITT, please contact:

Jackie Harrison - jharrison@activepartnerships.org

Before completing a response to tender, please read the following information regarding Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Assessment. You should only proceed if you are happy to comply with the Freedom of Information and Data Protection requirements.

Freedom of Information

As a registered charitable organisation, we have to comply with The Freedom of Information Act 2000. The Act gives members of the public the right to request any information that we hold. This includes information received from organisations such as:

- grant applicants
- grant holders
- contractors
- people making a complaint.

Some information is exempt from The Act, such as personal details. If information is requested under the Freedom of Information Act, we will release it. If you think that information you are providing may be exempt from release, you should email us and tell us why when you apply.

Data Protection

As a registered charitable organisation, we must comply with the Data Protection Act 1998. We are committed to protecting your privacy and will ensure any personal information is handled properly under the Data Protection Act.

We will collect and process the following information:

Organisation name

Organisation type

Email

Postal address

Name of lead contact

Senior contact

Named collaborators

Under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the lawful bases we rely on for processing this information are:

We have a Legitimate Interest

We will use the information you give us in your Application Form for:

- assessing responses to tender
- monitoring the tender project
- evaluating the way our funding works and its affect.

We may also give copies of this information to individuals and organisations such as:

- Accountants and auditors
- Other organisations or groups involved in delivering your submission.
- Other organisations for the prevention and detection of fraud.

We will keep the Invitation to Tender responses until the process is complete, and an organisation has been appointed. We will then dispose of your information by digital deletion and supported by our IT provider (this will be a period of between 6-12 months).