



Connecting Q locally: Applicant guidance document

1. Background

Through Connecting Q locally, the Health Foundation is seeking to provide a fair and transparent process for Q groups and partner organisations to apply for funding to help Q members build and strengthen their networks across the improvement landscape and provide opportunities for learning. Funding has previously been provided through small grants to Q partners and Special Interest Groups and we are now looking to build on learning from these earlier calls and invest in a wider range of activities to develop the Q community and make it easier for members to connect and collaborate.

2. Connecting Q locally

The offer is relevant to Q groups and partner organisations who are already leading on building and connecting the Q community in their local or thematic area, as follows:

- Q partners
- Q Special Interest Groups (including those with a regional focus)
- Local organisation-based Q groups

Through this programme the Health Foundation is looking to fund Q groups and/or partner organisations to help Q members build and strengthen their own networks across the improvement landscape.

Proposals that we can fund through this programme must focus on one or more of the following areas of interest to Q:

- Building connections within and across regional boundaries to share learning and showcase best practice.
- Local or regional networking.
- A thematic area of interest such as a Special Interest Group.

Applicants will need to provide a clear rationale for the activities and methods chosen and demonstrate how these will lead to tangible outputs or meaningful outcomes that benefit the Q community.

Activities could include:

- Local facilitated networking activity providing opportunities for Q members to build local support networks and learn and collaborate together.
- Showcase events or educational site visits that also facilitate local networking and sharing of best practice.

- Activity to convene and connect Q members around areas of special interest to build thematic improvement micro networks and support Q members to learn and collaborate together.

Please note the list above is for illustration and is not exhaustive.

3. The funding offer

We have set a limit for this funding - a minimum of £5,000 to a maximum £20,000 for a small number of proposals. Please note that this does not mean that all applications need to be at this maximum level. If we receive good quality applications that require smaller resources or could be delivered in a shorter time scale, we will be pleased to consider them. Proposals that actively demonstrate value for money and build in ideas around sustainability are encouraged.

We are inviting applications from Special Interest Groups, Q partners and organisational groups and have a limited budget for awards therefore we expect this call to be very competitive. You should review the criteria carefully and make your case as clearly as you can.

What we will expect to fund

- Activities that will lead to tangible outputs and/or meaningful outcomes that will support members to learn, connect and collaborate and contribute to a growing sense of community within the Q membership.
- We will fund staff costs that are directly linked to supporting the methods and activities proposed but would not expect these to make up the entirety of funding.
- We will fund reasonable expenses in line with the Q's [Expenses policy](#).

What we will not fund

- Activity that does not demonstrate a clear link to [Q's Theory of change](#).
- Organisational overheads such as costs of premises, management and HR.
- Core staff costs.
- Capital expenditure such as for vehicles or buildings or major items of equipment.
- Staff time for the writing and submission of articles, publications or journals.
- VAT - the project will be supported as a charitable grant and as such is not liable for VAT.

4. Proposal Timescale

We will fund proposals for a maximum of 12 months (we understand that timescales will vary depending on what is being proposed). We expect the work to conclude by March 2021.

5. Assessment process

5.1 Proposal

Those applying will need to complete an online application form and provide detailed budgetary information on the total cost of the initiative, what the funds will cover, and details of any co-funding or matched funding.

5.2 Assessment

An assessment of proposals will be carried out against the criteria laid out in section 5.3 below. Each proposal will be assessed by people who are also Q members. We will let applicants know of our decision as per the timeline in section 5.4. If we require any further information on proposals we will contact applicants directly.

5.3 Assessment criteria

Proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:

- Demonstration that the proposed activity will achieve one or more of the following desired outcomes:
 - Support the growth of Q membership locally.
 - Provide opportunities for Q members to connect and collaborate either locally or around a particular theme.
- A clear case for the activity/methods chosen with indicators of anticipated impact and benefits.
- Demonstration of a clear mechanism of change, ie how will the proposed activity lead to the change that is hoped to be achieved?
- Demonstration that the host organisation is supportive of the work and has a commitment to sustainability post-funding.
- Demonstration of value for money.

5.4 Key dates

Open for applications	Wednesday 4 December 2019 – Tuesday 28 January 2020
First information call	Tuesday 17 December (12.15 – 13.00)
Second information call	Thursday 9 January (12.45 – 13.30)
Deadline for Connecting Q locally proposals to be submitted using the online application system (AIMS)	Tuesday 28 January 2020
Applicants informed of decision	By Monday 2 March 2020
Award agreements finalised	By Tuesday 31 March 2020
Work to be completed	By Wednesday 31 March 2021

6. What we expect from successful teams

6.1 Capture and share knowledge

Q / The Health Foundation wishes to capture learning on how to best reach out to new audiences and build the Q community. Successful applicants will be expected to:

- Produce a final report covering the approach, context, results, impact and learning as well as a summary financial statement (the format for these will be agreed with successful award holders with Q / the Health Foundation).
- Share any outward facing materials that are produced, eg patient information or tools for health care professionals.
- Share anything of value or interest emanating from the activities to the wider Q community using media such as blogs, Twitter, Q-municate etc (support will be provided by the Q team to do this).

6.2 Reporting

- Depending on the timescale/nature of activity we would expect regular updates between the grant holder and the Health Foundation to update on progress, either by phone or email.
- These will include an update on activities to date, spend against budget, impact, issues and upcoming activities.
- A final report is to be submitted by the agreed deadline.

We will offer advice and constructive challenge. We expect grant holders to adhere to delivery of the agreed activity and keep us informed, but we will not get involved with the day-to-day management of the awards.

If you have any questions or need help with your application please [email the Q team](#).