



Q Exchange

Q Exchange 6 Application guidance

Q Exchange offers Q members the chance to develop improvement project ideas and apply for up to £40,000 of funding.



Q is led by the Health Foundation and supported by partners across the UK and Ireland



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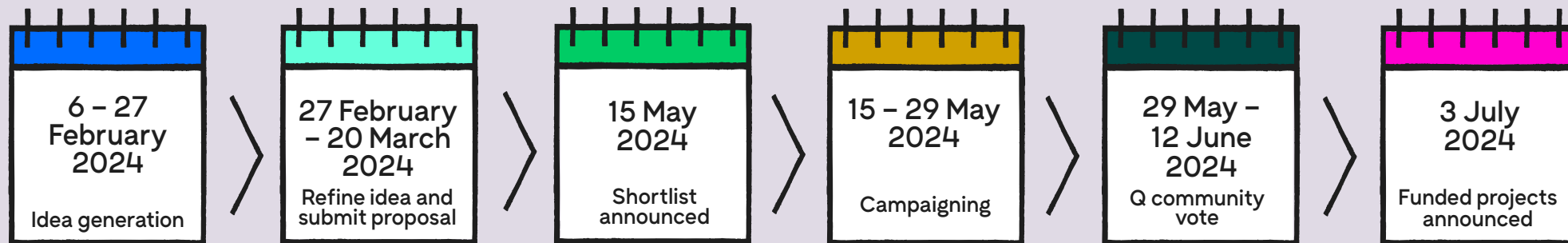
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Introduction

Q Exchange is Q's flagship funding programme. Through Q Exchange, members collaboratively develop improvement project ideas with the potential to create impact across the health and care system. The application process happens openly and transparently on the Q website, where members from across the UK and Ireland develop, refine, and submit their improvement ideas for funding.

The funding programme connects Q members across the community who can help champion, support, and boost ideas delivering benefits for patients and the health and care system.



The theme:

How can we improve across system boundaries?

We are looking for proposals that involve two or more parts of the health and care system and focus on improving the quality and efficiency of the interface between different sectors. For example: care at home, primary care and the community sector.

Projects should relate to one or more of the following areas:

- Reducing waits sustainably and equitably.
- Increasing productivity and reducing waste.
- Boosting the culture, capabilities and structures needed for learning and improvement.
- Embedding improvement into management systems and processes.

We are looking for projects with potential for insights or interventions that are scalable. We expect proposals to show proactive links to local or national priorities and structures, as well as making active use of the Q community.

Improving productivity is an especially difficult but pressing challenge for the sector. Connecting your ideas to the holistic benefits you can achieve and showing the potential to inspire productivity gains alongside other objectives will be important to sustaining and spreading the work.

Why we have chosen this theme

During the pandemic and throughout the recovery period, we've seen that the improvement ideas most likely to embed and scale are ones that bring together services.

With the move towards formalisation of integrated care and increased calls for productivity, improvement has a powerful role to play in supporting effective work across sectors. While it's crucial we continue action on specific service challenges, taking a wider systemic view is a critical strength of the approach this community can take on the productivity challenge. Through working together and drawing on improvement tools and approaches, we can build towards solutions that will have an impact at every level, from individual teams to system wide.

Q Exchange's open collaboration enables people to come together and develop strong ideas by building on what's already known. It allows us to pool our skills, energy and understanding from across the community and beyond, to support improvement across system boundaries. And ultimately, to bring about collaborative, meaningful change that can improve patient experience and outcomes.



How do I apply?

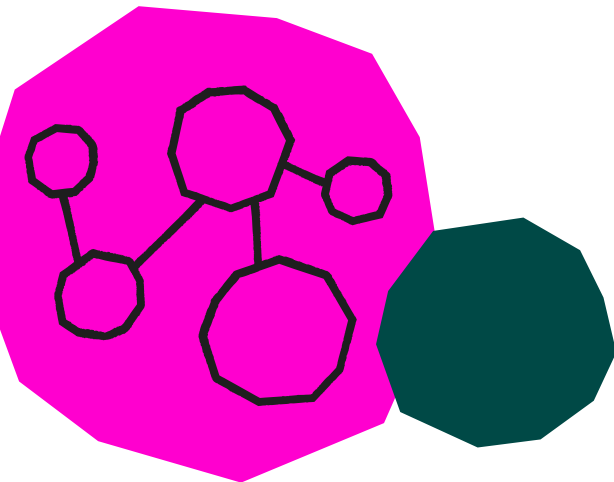
There are two stages to the application process:

1. Idea generation

(Tuesday 6 February – Tuesday 27 February 2024)

From Tuesday 6 February Q members can post their ideas on the Q website by creating online project pages.

Members can post as many ideas as they like, but they will only be able to submit one proposal during the next stage.



2. Refine and submit

(Tuesday 27 February – Wednesday 20 March 2024)

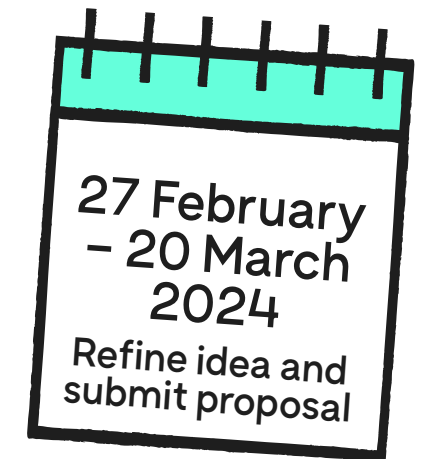
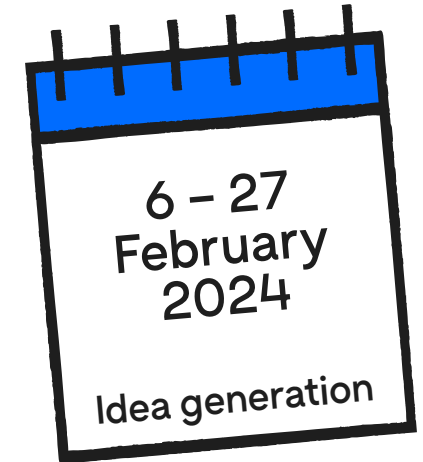
During this stage Q members across the community are encouraged to support applicants. They do this by providing feedback through comments on the project pages, enabling applicants to develop and refine their ideas.

Applicants then choose which of their ideas they will convert into a proposal. To convert an idea, the additional information must be completed and submitted (no later than 12.00 Wednesday 20 March) for it to be considered for shortlisting.

From Monday 25 March shortlisting panels will assess the proposals. We will announce the shortlist on Wednesday 15 May.

Up to 30 shortlisted ideas will go forward to the Q community vote. Q members will vote online to decide which projects receive funding.

Funded projects will be announced on Wednesday 3 July 2024.



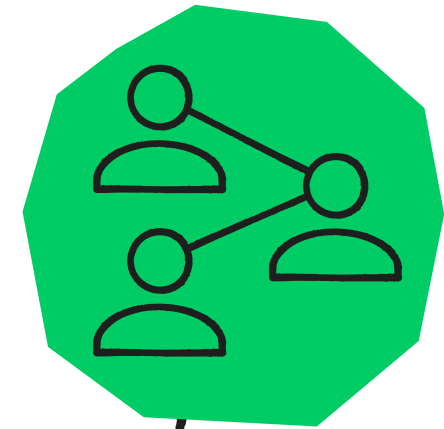
Creating your ideas

Start thinking about what you might want funding for. You can upload your ideas from Tuesday 6 February until 12.00 Tuesday 27 February 2024. Remember, the earlier you upload your idea, the more time you will have to develop and improve it with the help of the Q community.

To post your idea you will need to answer four key questions about your project. You will also need to provide general information including team members, organisation details and project location. We suggest that you spend some time reviewing these questions with your team before you add them to your idea page. Each answer must be no longer than 150 words.

The four key questions are:

- 1. What is the challenge your project is going to address and how does it connect to the theme?**
- 2. What does your project aim to achieve?**
Include the objectives of your project, explain how the project will result in improvement for the intended beneficiaries and, where relevant, how it might contribute to reducing health inequalities.
- 3. How will the project be delivered?**
Demonstrate that your project has a well-considered approach, including involving relevant people and skills, measuring impact, delivering value for money, and managing risk.
- 4. How is your project going to share learning?**
Demonstrate the project's potential to generate valuable learning for Q members and the wider system across the UK and Ireland.



How do I add my idea?

Visit q.health.org.uk/qexchange

- Click the 'Your Ideas' tab. You will be asked to log in with your Q website account. If you have never logged in before, use the email address you provided when you joined Q and you will be asked to create a password.
- If you have forgotten your password, you can reset it using the 'Lost your password?' link.
- Click the 'Add Idea' button: You'll now be able to start your first idea. Try and be clear and think about what you might want to convey to a Q member without any knowledge of your project.
- Complete the form: You only need to complete fields where it says '(required to publish)' during the idea generation phase.



Idea title: Try to distil your idea into a short, key, sentence. Don't use acronyms or jargon.

Amount of funding requested: If you don't know what the cost will be, don't worry you can fill this in as the idea develops.

Image: If you have an image that visualises your project well, you can add one here.

Lead organisation: You must apply on behalf of an organisation. Funding will be paid to this organisation if your idea is successful. This organisation must be a charity/public body or CIC company and not a commercial company.

Short description of the idea: This should help people understand what your idea is and what you hope intended beneficiaries will get out of it. You can then answer the four questions identified on page 6.

- There's also an opportunity to think about what contributions you want from Q members. This can be added to over time as your idea develops.
- Click 'Publish': Once you have completed all the required fields you can publish your idea and share it with the community. If you are not quite ready to share your idea you can save it as a draft and return to it later, but you need to publish it by **12.00 on Tuesday 27 February 2024.**



To edit your idea

Visit q.health.org.uk/qexchange

- Click the 'Your ideas' tab: Navigate to the idea you want to edit and click 'Edit this idea'.
- Once you have made changes click 'Update' at the bottom of the page to save your changes.



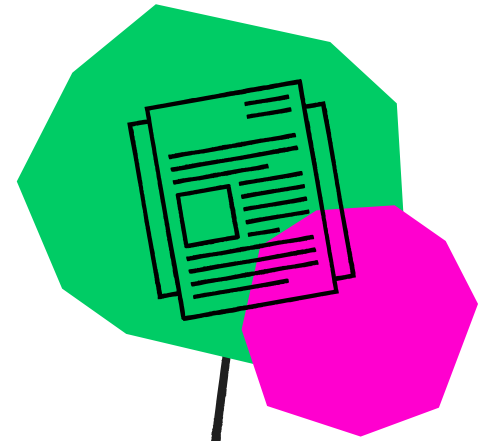
To convert your idea into a proposal

You must convert your idea into a proposal for it to be considered by the shortlisting panels. To convert your idea, you will need to complete **all** mandatory fields **by 12.00 on Wednesday 20 March 2024**.

Visit q.health.org.uk/qexchange

1. Click the 'Your ideas' tab: Navigate to the idea you want to submit and click 'Edit this idea'.
2. Update the form and complete all the fields with the prompt '(required to submit as a proposal)'.
3. Once you have made your changes click 'Submit as proposal' at the bottom of the form and you will be directed to a confirmation page.

Once you convert your idea into a proposal you can continue to make changes until **12.00 on Wednesday 20 March 2024**. After this you will no longer be able to make changes. The information you provide will be used by the shortlisting panels to decide which projects will go forward to the Q community vote. Remember, you can only submit one proposal for the shortlisting panels to consider.

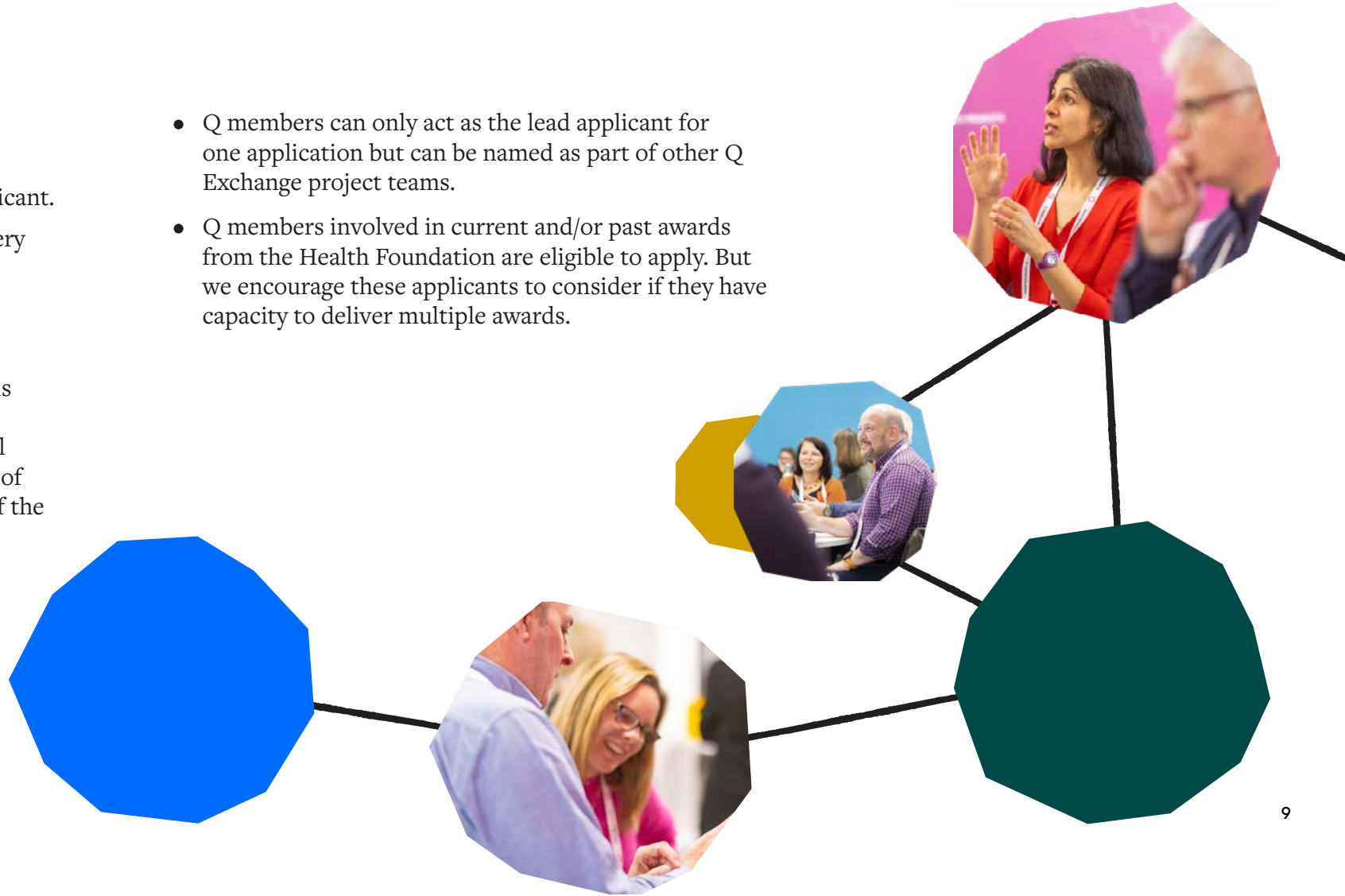


Funding criteria

Please consider the following criteria before applying. We will not be able to shortlist applications that do not meet these requirements.

1. Who can apply:

- Only Q members can apply.
 - A project team can be made up of Q and non-Q members, but a Q member must be the lead applicant.
- The lead applicant must be part of the project delivery team.
- The lead applicant must submit on behalf of a lead organisation.
 - Funding will be paid to the lead organisation. This organisation must be a charity/public body or CIC company and not a commercial company. All arrangements for subcontracting and/or transfer of funds to other parties will be the responsibility of the lead organisation.
- Q members can only act as the lead applicant for one application but can be named as part of other Q Exchange project teams.
- Q members involved in current and/or past awards from the Health Foundation are eligible to apply. But we encourage these applicants to consider if they have capacity to deliver multiple awards.

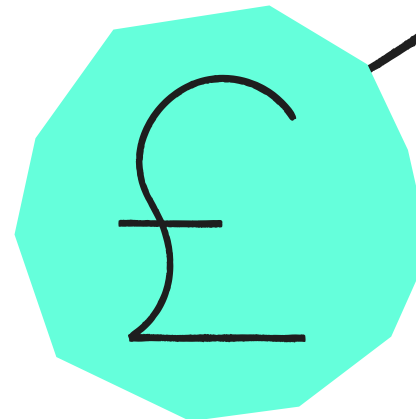
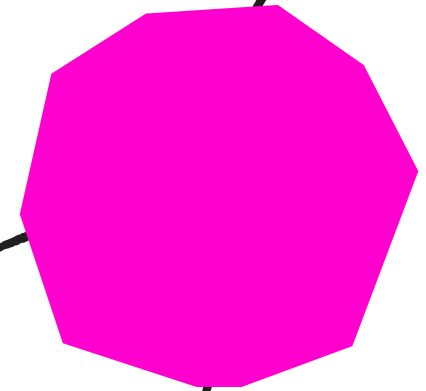


2. What type of projects or costs will be considered?

- Improvement projects (either stand-alone or as part of a larger programme of work) that either test a new idea or adopt and adapt an existing one.
- Development and delivery of learning events, training, toolkits or resources.
- Evaluations or data gathering and analysis of improvement projects.
- The development of applications and digital tools. User testing must be part of the project and the product must be released under an open license.
- Design work with patients, service users, staff or local communities.
- Research projects.
- Developing a communications campaign or materials that relate to improvement.

3. Who should the project benefit?

- Projects must have wider benefit for the Q community across the UK and Ireland (eg direct impact or shareable learning).
- One or more of the following groups should directly benefit as individuals, groups and/or communities:
 - patients, carers and/or service users of health and care services in the UK and Ireland.
 - those employed in organisations supporting health and care in the UK and Ireland (NHS staff, local authority care staff, charities etc).
 - Q community members.

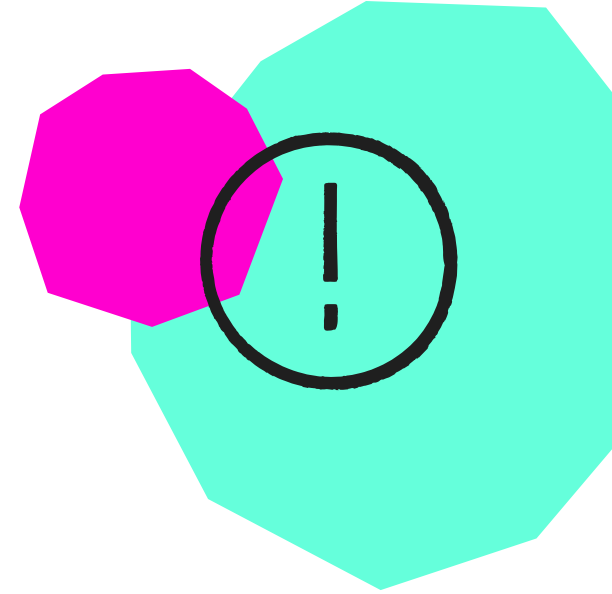


4. What projects or costs are not eligible?

- Projects that introduce unsafe practice or increase risk to patients or vulnerable groups. Where appropriate, we require proof that relevant ethics approval or other organisational requirements have been sought or met.
- Projects that do not relate to the Q Exchange 6 theme.
- Projects that rely on another funding application (projects must be independent from other funding applications).

We will not fund:

- Substantive posts that will not be continued after the funding period eg hiring an additional Health Care Assistant for six months.
- Projects that are solely for IT infrastructure.
- Capital expenditure eg vehicles, building acquisition or refurbishment.
- Organisational overheads eg rent, HR.
- Procuring day-to-day consumables or office equipment.
- Projects that are solely to pay for attendance to conferences or external training for individuals eg to part fund an MBA.
- Activities to promote or enhance profit-making services. Non-NHS providers must be able to demonstrate that the proposed project has a direct impact on the provision or commissioning of NHS services, services provided by the voluntary sector or publicly funded social care services, and that charitable funds will not be used to promote or enhance profit-making services.
- Project outputs where there are costs or charges for the end user; project outputs must remain free of charge for users and beneficiaries.
- Salaries that are lower than the living wage.

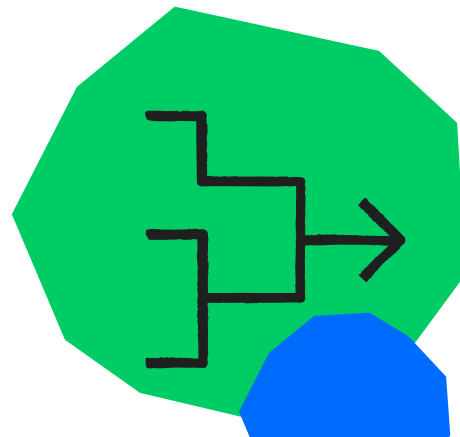


5. What are the funding terms?

- We will fund up to £40,000 per award.
 - This can be either the total cost of the project or part funding for a larger project (eg if this is an add-on to a larger project where you already have funding from other sources).
 - You must secure any additional funding required for your project before your idea will be considered by the Q Exchange shortlisting panels.
- The award is valid for 12 months. We will monitor and ask you to report on the funding during the 12 months. The project timescale can be shorter or longer than 12 months.

Award holders must:

- be ready to start the project, or the funded aspect of it, within three months of securing the funding.
- be able to commit and have capacity to deliver the project. You must have any necessary sign off from line managers/senior team, as appropriate.
- share a project update at a future Q event if requested.
- submit a mid-project update detailing project progress when prompted.
- submit a final budget and report to the Health Foundation at the end of the project or within one year (whichever is first).
- provide regular updates to the Q community about project progress.
- be willing to participate in a minimum of two Q Exchange activities (eg virtual meetings) in the 12 months after the funds are awarded.



How your application will be assessed

From Monday 25 March 2024, the shortlisting panels will assess all completed proposals. They will select 30 proposals to put forward to the Q community vote. The shortlist will be announced on Wednesday 15 May 2024.

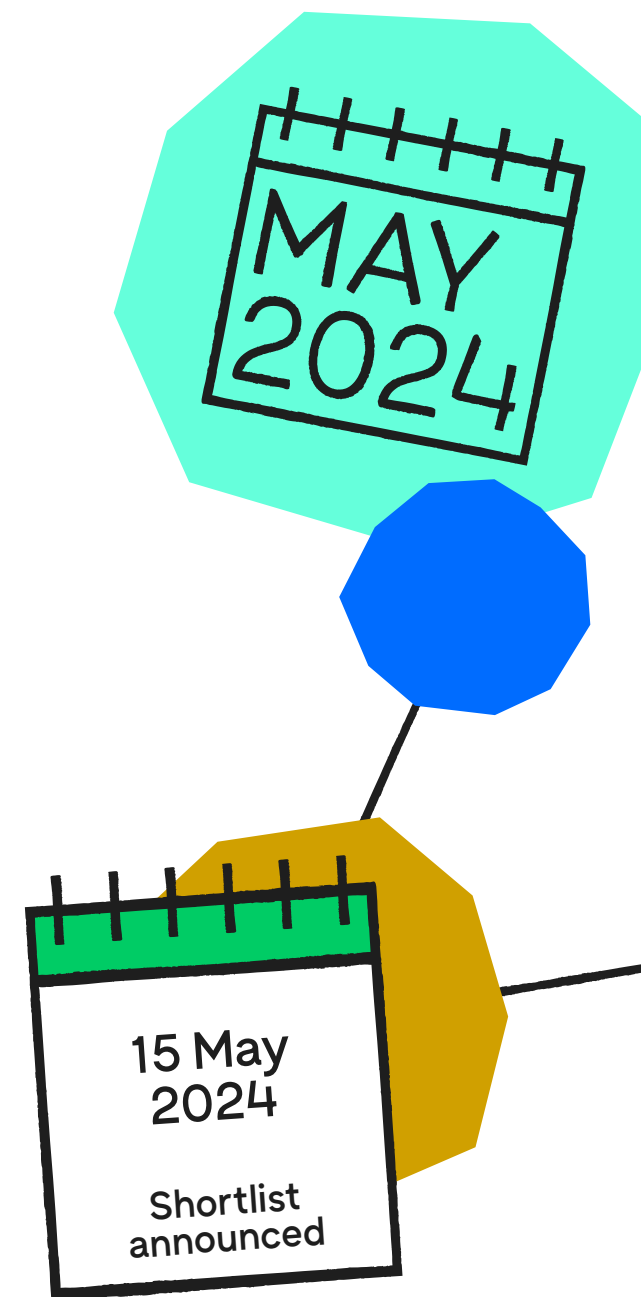
This guidance sets out what the shortlisting panels will be looking for when assessing your proposal.

1. Is the idea well defined?

- The project idea should be relevant to the theme.
- Your proposal needs to clearly define the problem you are trying to solve. It should explain the impact this has on people and the current system/service. You should then explain how the change proposed could play a part in improving service delivery.
- Your proposal needs to be grounded in evidence (existing literature, policies) and informed by key people in the field (stakeholders, patients, staff etc).
- You need to demonstrate that you, or your project team, have engaged with the Q community. This could include connecting and interacting with members and other Q Exchange projects, responding to comments on your proposal, or engaging in group discussions etc.

2. Is the idea compelling?

- You should clearly explain what your project will do and the impact it will have.
- You need to set out clear objectives and describe how they will be measured.
- You need to specify who will benefit from your project or intervention.
- Your project needs to align with the core values of Q (co-creation, collaboration, open to feedback, creating links across boundaries ie sectors/professions/geographies etc).
- You should demonstrate how you will use the budget and resources appropriately and effectively to deliver your project objectives.



3. Is the project deliverable?

- Your proposal should detail the relevant people and skill sets involved (staff, patients, stakeholders etc) who are available to support the planning and delivery on an ongoing basis.
- You should show how the project team will involve the Q community (Q members, special interest groups etc), partners and other stakeholders throughout the project.
- Your project will be assessed on whether the proposed approach is well considered and clear with attention to managing risks and project delivery.
- Your proposal should consider the projects sustainability and/or opportunities for longer-term funding or support from others where appropriate.



4. Is there ongoing learning and sharing?

- Your project should show how you will generate valuable learning for the community and the wider system.
- You should clearly explain how you will share learning and progress during the period of funding and beyond.
- You should show how you will evaluate your project, demonstrating its impact.

In addition to the four criteria above, the other factors that will be considered for the final shortlist are the:

- geographical spread of ideas.
- number of ideas from different sectors/professional groups/clinical specialities.
- variety and diversity of the projects. Visit q.health.org.uk/qexchange



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