

Invitation to Tender: Old Kent Road Family Zone – Developmental Evaluation Partner

We are looking for an experienced evaluator with a passion for community-led, place-based initiatives to carry out a developmental evaluation of the Old Kent Road Family Zone.

If you have experience of supporting grassroots community-led approaches to learn, adapt, and do what they do best, please read on and apply. We would love to hear from you.

Submission deadline: 5pm Friday 27th October 2023

Who we are

[Impact on Urban Health](#) is part of Guy's & St Thomas' Foundation, a charitable foundation based in South London. We address health inequalities by focusing on a few complex health issues that disproportionately impact people living in cities – [children's health and food](#), [multiple long-term conditions](#), [the health effects of air pollution](#), and [children's mental health](#). Most of this work is specifically focused on the boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark, but we share what we learn both nationally and internationally to influence urban health around the world.

Children's mental health funding programme

All children should have the chance to feel happy and hopeful, no matter where they grow up. Our children's mental health programme is learning from the experiences and expertise of those most impacted by poverty, racism, and other forms of oppression. We work alongside them and trusted, community-led partners to understand how we can reduce the inequalities that cause so much distress and trauma for children and families. Our aim is to ensure that every child has access to the things they need to thrive.

The Old Kent Road Family Zone

[The Old Kent Road Family Zone](#) (OKRFZ) is a community-led initiative which is currently hosted by [Surrey Square Primary School](#). It aims to create the conditions for children and families living in the area to be physically and mentally healthy, happy, safe, and to achieve their potential, drawing on the community's existing strengths and solutions, rather than 'doing to'. The OKRFZ is designed and led by children and parents, working in partnership with local government, health services, schools, local businesses, the voluntary and community sector and the community. The long-term aims of the zone are to:

- offer a continuous pipeline of services and projects to improve the social, economic, and physical environment of the Old Kent Road area (in the context of the ongoing [Old Kent Road Regeneration](#))

- ensure children and families affected by systemic disadvantage have good physical and mental health and that health and social inequalities do not stand in the way of children and their families thriving.

OKRFZ is underpinned by four strands of recovery: self-efficacy, gratitude, connectedness and hope. These principles inform the zone's approach alongside the priorities of building, strengthening, or deepening relationships with individuals and organisations across the community, as a precondition for any meaningful work going forward.

The OKRFZ Community Board

The OKRFZ is governed by a Community Board with responsibility that ranges from strategy development to listening, understanding root causes and co-developing solutions with the wider community. The members that make up the Community Board include parents and representatives from local partner organisations including Burgess Sports, Pembroke House, London South Bank University, SSQ Parents, Southwark Law Centre, PACT, Citizens UK, Edible Rotherhithe, Big Education, Alvey Street TRA, and the Old Kent Road Mosque.

The Community Board meets every half term and has Terms of Reference in place which are regularly reviewed.

Five years of core funding for the OKRFZ

In 2022/23, Impact on Urban Health provided seed funding to Surrey Square Primary School to lead the early development of the OKRFZ, which involved: extensive community listening and engagement; setting up a Community Board; and implementing some early action projects, such as a Saturday Marketplace hosted at the school once a month as well as a new Friday youth club, open to both primary and secondary school students. In this time, the team benefitted from the support of UCL students who developed three key deliverables: research into Family Zones as an approach, a toolkit for organising the Marketplace, and an implementation plan for continuing to develop the Marketplace's impact. These documents will be made available to the developmental evaluation partner to build on as required.

We are now providing core funding for the next five years of the zone to support the following, interdependent OKRFZ-led activities:

- **Strengthen and build the team and governance structure:** including funding the OKRFZ manager post and small staff team; further develop the Community Board that oversees the programme of work; build capacity, skills, and expertise of existing and new local organisations that work with the OKRFZ.
- **Further develop the OKRFZ approach:** including, developing a deeper understanding of how to effectively support community engagement; embedding the voice of local people in the OKRFZ; continuing the development of community engagement and communication; understanding the root causes of issues within the OKRFZ that impact on local children and their families; learning from practice and codifying the process to make it accessible to other communities.

- **Deliver services in the community:** including, existing services and new projects; co-create solutions for long-lasting change (e.g., partnering with charities, food industry, retailers); build connections, share practice, and support other local schools to move towards taking a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

What do we want to learn?

We want to commission an evaluation partner with expertise in community-led place-based approaches to carry out a developmental evaluation of the OKRFZ. We would like the developmental evaluation to actively support the ongoing development of the OKRFZ, and to generate learning that will inform our children's mental health programme.

More specifically, we would like the developmental evaluation to address the following broad questions:

For the OKRFZ team and wider community:

- **Development:**
 - **Action learning:** How can the team take stock of their learning to guide the ongoing development of the initiative, and build towards a strategy for change?
 - **Influencing:** How can the team articulate and share their learning externally, to help attract further investment and engagement as well as communicate the value of this type of approach?
- **Impact:**
 - **Direct:** What are the direct impacts that the OKRFZ's work and approach has on the local community?
 - **Community:** What does this tell us about the role and potential value that schools can have in working with the wider community?
 - **System:** What is the impact of this work on the wider system in which it sits (linked to the development of future Family Zones)?

For Impact on Urban Health:

- **Community voice:** How can the Community Board be empowered to step back and think systemically about the changes they want to prioritise to achieve better outcomes for local families?
- **Shifting power:** What can we learn about how school communities can come together and transform themselves for the benefit of all children's and their families' mental health and wellbeing?
- **Our role:** What can we learn about our role as a funder in supporting grassroots, place-based community development initiatives, and their role in tackling urban health inequities?

Using these broad learning questions as a starting point, we expect the evaluation partner to work with the OKRFZ team and us to develop a more detailed set of questions and an evaluation plan to guide the approach.

What will the role of the developmental evaluation partner be?

We would like the OKRFZ evaluation partner to develop an approach that embeds the core principles of developmental evaluation, as originally described by Michael Quinn Patton (2011). The primary purpose of this role will be to support the OKRFZ team by asking evaluative questions and helping them to make sense of real-time information, data, feedback and experiences to inform ongoing decision-making and continually adapt their approach in response to changes in context.

The evaluation partner should offer challenge and facilitate critical thinking as well as support the initiative's learning and evolution. To do this they will need to appreciate the complexities of community-led work, understand how the Community Board works and develop a good relationship with the OKRFZ team, whilst also providing some structure to the learning process and acting as a sounding board to help the initiative develop.

The evaluation partner will also need to have the experience required to skilfully navigate the power dynamics involved in delivering a role whose primary purpose is to support the OKRFZ to learn and develop, whilst also generating learning that can be used to inform IOUH's work and future decision making.

The approach will need to be critically reflective at its core, combining theory and practice to enable community empowerment and critical awareness, and will need to involve:

- **Familiarising with the OKRFZ team** and community to gain an in-depth understanding of their work and plans in order to develop a suitable approach for the developmental evaluation.
- **Insights into key features of the OKRFZ approach**, including:
 - maintaining a focus on predictors of inequalities and how to tackle these with community resources and by testing new solutions
 - mechanisms for ensuring accountability and community engagement e.g. Community Board's composition, role and decision-making power; listening to the community, co-production
 - ensuring that, increasingly, children's voices are heard and centred in non-extractive ways, and a family lens is applied to decision-making locally.
- **Flexibility** to adapt to changing needs as the OKRFZ programme of work develops and grows.
- **Structured sense-making** that will enable the OKRFZ team to ground the zone's developments and activities in ongoing learning, and understand the implications of this learning for the Zone's future plans.

- **Informing the children's mental health programme**, supporting the Impact on Urban Health team to understand how this learning can inform our programme strategy, decision making, and future approach as a funder.
- **Sharing insights** - the evaluation partner must support the OKRFZ team to share relevant learning from the evaluation with stakeholders and facilitate learning conversations.

Who are the audiences for this learning?

We anticipate that audiences for this learning will include:

- The OKRFZ team and the Community Board, as learning from the evaluation will support the development of the zone's approach and its activities.
- Local children and parents as learning from the evaluation will be key to ensuring that their voices are heard and they remain at the centre of the zone's development and implementation.
- OKRFZ's partners including the local authority, health services, schools, local businesses, the voluntary and community sector.
- Our Children's Mental Health team, other funding programme teams, our newly established Parent's Panel and Core Partner Advisory group.

What outputs are expected from the evaluation?

We expect the evaluation to generate formative and actionable learning. Formal outputs should include:

- An evaluation plan developed in consultation with the OKRFZ team, to be reviewed and iterated on a regular basis.
- Regular updates i.e. every 8-10 weeks. We suggest power point presentations of progress with the evaluation and emerging findings (when these become available) to the OKRFZ and IoUH teams to provide an opportunity to inform the evaluation activities, interrogate the data, validate the findings and discuss their implications.
- An accessible and user-friendly output, designed in collaboration with the OKRFZ team and wider community to share insights from the developmental evaluation with external audiences.

In addition to the deliverables listed above, we expect the evaluation partner to support the

OKRFZ team to produce updates and briefings to communicate insights from the evaluation to the audiences listed above as and when required.

What we are looking for

We would like to work with an evaluation partner who:

- Is able to be authentic, sensitive and aware of their own positionality within this initiative.
- Is reflective and able to support other people's reflective practice without judgement.
- Can adjust their approach to respond to the needs and preferences of the different people involved in this initiative.

The evaluation partner will need experience of:

- Working with community-led place-based initiatives, with a strong understanding and enthusiasm for working with communities in this way.
- Developmental evaluation approaches, and using a range of qualitative, quantitative and creative methods to actively support the development of new social initiatives.
- Working directly with communities, ideally in Lambeth and/or Southwark or other areas of South London.

We would like to work with an evaluation partner who has the following skills:

- Able to build positive and trusting relationships to support the learning process, but not afraid to challenge and be a critical friend when needed.
- Able to ask good questions and support others in making sense of complex information.
- Be responsive, adaptable and flexible – able to explore and adapt to the best way of working for this initiative.
- Strong emotional intelligence, able to understand what different people need to feel part of the process, and to take on feedback from others.

Budgets and Timelines

There is a budget of up to £120,000 including VAT available to fund the evaluation partner role from December 2023 for 24 months.

For administrative reasons, your contract will be with IOUH. However, it is essential that you develop a close working relationship with the key people involved in the OKRFZ, and that the developmental evaluation primarily serves their needs and interests.

How to tender for this work

Please send your proposal to **Jen Durrant** (Evaluation and Learning Manager) at jen.durrant@urbanhealth.org.uk by **5pm on Friday 27th October**. We will then invite shortlisted

applicants for a 45-minute interview w/c 20th November to explore their proposals in more depth.

Your proposal should include the following:

- Details of your organisation(s), the people who would be working directly on this project, and the experience and personal qualities they would bring to this role – noting our requirements listed under ‘What we are looking for’.
- What approach you would take to respond to this brief.
- How you will work with the OKRFZ team, Community Board and wider communities to ensure that the developmental evaluation adds value to their work.
- How your work will comply with good ethical practices. For example:
 - how you will ensure that participants are aware of what information you are collecting and for what purpose
 - how you will ensure participants can give informed consent and are not harmed
 - how you will comply with data protection legislation
 - what systems you have in place to address any safeguarding issues that may arise.
- A clear breakdown of indicative costs (including number of days, day rates and VAT if applicable) to fulfil the requirements of this role.

If you have any questions, please do ask. Questions can be sent to Alice Thornton at alice.thornton@urbanhealth.org.uk before 16th October, and to Jen Durrant at jen.durrant@urbanhealth.org.uk between 16th and 26th October.