



## Access Blended Finance Invitation to Tender – February 2024

### Overview

Access – The Foundation for Social Investment (Access) are looking for an evaluation partner for our blended finance programmes. We welcome a range of proposed methodologies and approaches to this role, as long as they are participatory and inclusive. We are looking for an evaluation partner who ideally has an in-depth knowledge of social investment and the charity and social enterprise sector. They will work closely with us, gaining an in-depth understanding of programmes and ways of working. We would expect to contract the evaluation partner on a rolling basis, with review points, and the possibility of it being extended based on performance. The initial evaluation contract is anticipated to run for four years to the end of December 2027 and **the annual budget is £90,000 maximum including VAT, so £360,000 for the full duration of the initial evaluation. We are happy to accept proposals which split do not split the budget equally by year.** Please read all sections of this document for information on how to apply.

All proposals must be received by 26 March 2024 at 11:59pm

### Brief Overview of Access

Access was established in 2015 and works to make charities and social enterprises in England more financially resilient and self-reliant, so that they can sustain or increase their impact. Access works to enable the continued growth of blended finance, providing grants to social investment providers to blend with other forms of capital – this enables them to provide the kind of finance that most charities and social enterprises need. Alongside its work on blended finance, Access also funds work focused on enterprise development and investment readiness. For current operational data about all of our programmes, have a look at our latest [quarterly dashboard](#).

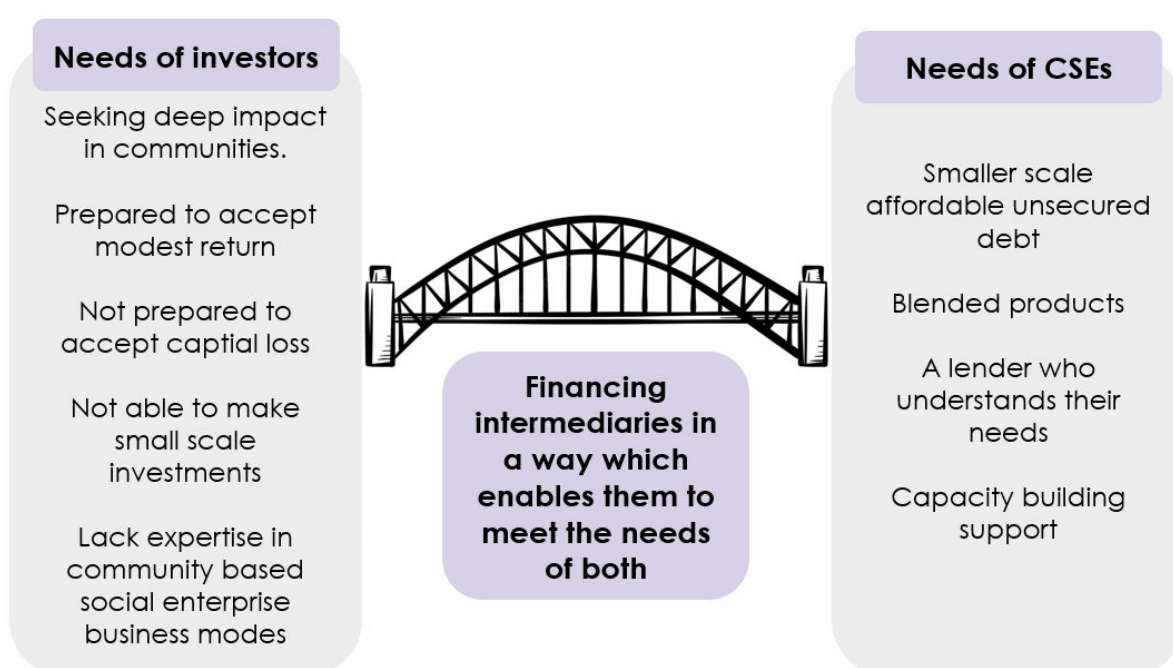
Access takes a Network Leadership approach, working through others to create partnerships which can outlive the organisation, test and learn from new approaches, and generate knowledge which improves the work of partners seeking the same goals.

### Access' Blended Finance Work

One of Access' two strategic themes as an organisation has been demonstrating the value of blended finance. By combining grants with repayable finance into a blended package, we enable intermediaries to provide smaller scale, higher risk, more patient and flexible, and affordable finance that meets the needs of a broad range of charities and social enterprises, particularly smaller organisations or those working in disadvantaged areas.

We use the term blended finance to refer to a combination of grant funding and repayable finance. This may take a wide variety of forms, such as a loan fund which includes grant subsidy to allow the fund manager to make smaller loans and absorb more risk, or unsecured loans which are offered alongside a grant. We use the following terms interchangeably to refer to our delivery partners: 'social investor partners', 'investors', 'intermediaries', 'financing intermediaries'. We use the following terms interchangeably to refer to the frontline organisations who receive investment: 'charities and social enterprises', 'VCSEs', 'CSEs'.

The diagram below explains how blended finance helps to bridge the gaps between the needs of investors and the needs of charities and social enterprises:



We currently have six live blended finance programmes, more information about can be found [here](#). Our later blended finance programmes all build on the work of the Growth Fund (funded by Big Society Capital and The National Lottery Community Fund), which launched in 2015 and has now completed its deployment phase. You can read more about some of the results of the Growth Fund in the [latest evaluation](#) (funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and delivered by Ecorys).

This evaluation will take a crosscutting look at our blended finance work, and in addition will focus specifically on four of our current Blended Finance programmes, as we have separate evaluations being delivered on The Growth Fund and for Local Access, our place-based programme. Each of these programmes has a distinct purpose, and is using the grant portion of blended finance to address different problems. The evaluation will need to integrate data from these two other programmes in order to answer some of the more crosscutting questions.

It is also likely that it will include additional future programmes, and ad hoc research requests. If we change the scope of the evaluation, we will consider appropriate changes to the evaluation budget. The four current programmes are:

### **Flexible Finance:**

A blended finance programme to provide patient and flexible social investment for organisations post-Covid. In May 2020 Access received £30m of grant funding from dormant accounts to create new blended finance programmes in the social investment market. The programme aims to commit at least £22m, with all grant completely dispersed by 2027, with most being dispersed by 2025.

Covid-19 highlighted how vulnerable charities and social enterprises are to financial and economic shocks, and the need to find more ways to attract and provide unrestricted, flexible, long term (or even permanent) capital ("patient capital") into the system that enables these organisations to weather a storm, adapt, invest and grow. Currently, when patient capital is needed, VCSEs typically turn to unrestricted grants or donations; there are very limited alternatives to borrow such capital as an investment, [at speed] or at scale.

The goal is to stimulate the development of investment products that provide unrestricted, flexible, long term capital for VCSEs, that cannot be acquired elsewhere, that balance the needs of these organisations with investors acknowledging the specific features of the sector that make investment design challenging e.g. typical operating models offer low financial returns due to thin margins, the need for complex risk taking to achieve social outcomes, profit share restrictions, legal structures etc.

As set out in the [Investment Policy](#), there are three primary objectives for the programme:

- Delivering sources of finance to the market which are patient and/or flexible, and different to what is currently available
- Effectively facilitating the flow of capital, demonstrating efficient use of subsidy to ensure capital can flow from different sources or in a different way
- Reaching parts of the market still underserved, usually including diverse-led organisations, and committing to strong equalities practices within both the blended fund and the investor/partnership as a whole

### **Enterprise Growth for Communities**

Enterprise Growth for Communities (EGC) is a £20million programme launched in April 2022 that aims strengthen communities through building resilience in charities and social enterprises. All funding will be dispersed by 2027.

Through the provision of subsidy into fund structures, the programme aims to enable intermediaries to support charities and social enterprises which they would otherwise be unable to invest in due to barriers including risk and cost. At an ecosystem level

the programme builds upon the Growth Fund's legacy and aims to further demonstrate the efficiency of subsidy in small-scale investment.

The programme aims to hone the delivery models for this type of finance, building on the elements of the Growth Fund which worked well whilst incorporating a few changes based on Growth Fund learnings.

Access to appropriate finance should increase the financial resilience of charities and social enterprises in order to enable them to better serve their communities by sustaining or increasing their social impact. The programme serves those organisations which require small-scale, simple, subsidised finance products and for whom the larger, less subsidised or more complex products in the wider market are unsuitable. The programme also aims to strengthen the social investors who will deliver the programme.

### **Cost of Living Social Investment Support Fund**

The programme aims to enable social investors to offer a broader range of products to support charities and social enterprises in underserved parts of the country, most affected by long-term economic decline, to better meet the needs of their communities in relation to challenges caused by the rising cost of living.

Access had £11m of Dormant Assets to make available in 2023 to meet these goals, and the programme aims to disperse all grant by 2024. Access made this finance available to social investors to offer a range of products.

For the purposes of this programme, the term "social investor" refers to organisations which make available repayable finance or dedicated grant support which is focused on developing enterprise activity within charities and social enterprises.

The programme is focused exclusively on charities and social enterprises which have service delivery models based on enterprise activity. The grant provided through this programme will help them to sustain those enterprise models and where possible scale up their enterprise activity to meet increased demand.

### **Energy Efficiency Social Investment Programme (EESIP)**

In early 2023, Access was granted £12m from Dormant Assets (alongside £8m to Big Society Capital) to bolster the energy resilience of charities and social enterprises. All funding will be dispersed on EESIP by 2026.

After conducting an extensive consultation with stakeholders, we outlined our approach to deploying these funds. The objective is to reduce energy costs, improve energy efficiency, and promote a just transition towards a greener future.

The activity delivered by the programme will be retrofit and other energy efficiency measures, with an intention that most investments will be immediately cash-positive on completion (i.e. profile of investment repayments + energy bills should be lower than energy bills would have been without the work taking place).

The programme will particularly (but not necessarily exclusively) target community-owned buildings, and has an aspiration to deliver >50% of the projects by both number and investment amount into the bottom three deciles of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD1-3). We are also looking to target organisations led by individuals from underrepresented backgrounds. Both of these ambitions formed part of the assessment process for this programme.

The programme aims to address an issue that has become more acute in recent times due to rising energy costs but has actually needed addressing for many years. The direct aims of this funding are:

- To reduce energy use and energy costs of direct recipients of funding.
- To build up the knowledge and skills of intermediaries to deliver such activity into the future.
- To demonstrate the scale of demand and the effectiveness of different products to encourage further funding and activity in this space.

Access funds will be distributed across three main strands:

- Blended finance to support energy efficiency measures.
- Support to support social sector providers of energy advice and support, encouraging green employability and skills
- Grant funding for market-building initiatives to address non-financial barriers and promote a greener sector.

### **Blended Finance Monitoring & Learning**

We do not have a Theory of Change for our Blended Finance programmes, and would imagine that **this would be developed by the chosen evaluation team as part of the first phase of the work**. This will need to align closely with Access' overall [Theory of Change](#).

There are currently a range of monitoring and learning approaches across our different programmes. All relevant data and learning will be shared with the evaluators, and evaluators will need to ensure that they do not duplicate the monitoring systems already in place:

1. **Routine Monitoring:** Access has developed standardised monitoring templates for collecting data from the social investment intermediaries we work with. This data is usually collected quarterly and then at the end of the programme. Much of this data can be found in our [quarterly dashboards](#). This enables us to track changes in organisations as they make their way through our programmes. Although there are some shared metrics measured across our programmes, such as location (and therefore IMD), EDI metrics, income etc, we also have some more programme specific ones based on the design and aims of the programmes.
2. **Peer Learning and social investment partner data:** Access delivers all of our work through our social investment partners (intermediaries), and they all have their own systems for tracking the effectiveness of the work that they are doing.

3. **Use of Subsidy Reports:** These reports look at our use of subsidy across our blended finance programmes. You can see the one for the Growth Fund [here](#).
4. **Internal Management Reports:** All four of these blended finance programmes are overseen by the same Blended Finance Investment Committee, and data reports and learning papers on individual funds and programmes are produced for that Committee or the staff-based Blended Finance Management Group.

## Evaluation Purpose, Approach and Audiences

We are seeking an evaluation partner to work across our blended finance programmes to help us to assess the achievements and outcomes (both positive and unintended) of both the individual programmes, and our overall approach to blended finance. We would also hope that this partner would help us to fill some of the current gaps in the research around blended finance in the UK social investment and charitable sectors. We would also like the this partner to help us contextualise our work in terms of the wider economy, to help us understand our successes and challenges within a broader context.

Blended finance is at the core of what we do at Access and we think it is an essential tool for driving capital into the communities which need it most, and in creating a more diverse and equitable social investment sector in the UK. In order to do this we need a partner who can help us build on the evidence [we](#) and the wider sector already have about what does and doesn't work.

We are open to a variety of different evaluation approaches, and would expect those tendering to outline their proposed approach and methodology and why they believe it is appropriate. We'd also like to emphasise that we are looking for a partner that will work alongside us and really get to know how our programmes, and how Access as an organisation works, rather than simply delivering an evaluation at a distance. We imagine this may involve sitting in on internal meetings (such as our Blended Finance Investment Committee, Blended Finance Management Group etc), regular meetings with different staff members, and taking the time to truly understand our purpose and the role of blended finance within it.

Whatever evaluation approach is selected we would like it to include:

- Participatory Approaches

As outlined above, all of our blended finance work is delivered through our social investment partners. We want participation from these social investors to be at the centre of this evaluation work. They are the experts in their work, and are therefore uniquely placed to guide this. We imagine that our partners will be involved in all stages of the evaluation, and would anticipate forming some kind of steering group of those who are most interested in being closely involved in the evaluation. We would also welcome suggestions on other approaches to participation from those tendering, and ideas on how to include the voices of social enterprises and charities in the design and delivery of the evaluation, whilst avoiding placing undue burden on them.



Some of our partners are involved in just one of our blended finance programmes, but many are involved in multiple ones. One of the main benefits to our partners of having one single evaluation partner across our different programmes is that it will help us to avoid unnecessary duplication and burden on them. All tenders should therefore outline how they will avoid overburdening our social investment partners and make the most of the efficiencies provided by a cross programme evaluation approach.

- Partner-led research fund

In addition to involving our partners in the design of any evaluation, we would also like to find a way for them to work with the evaluation partner to fill some of the research gaps most relevant to them. We would propose to do this through the creation of a specific pot of funding within the evaluation's total budget to create a partner-led research fund. The social investors we partner with would be able to submit a proposal, either individually or collectively (preferably the latter) to deliver a relevant piece of research to fill a knowledge gap that is holding back the blended finance sector. This could be around how to reach specific demographics, how best to blend grant with investment in different funds, how to increase the demand for blended finance, or any other topic that is particularly relevant to them.

We imagine that this research could be delivered in a variety of ways – either conducted directly by the partners who proposed it, in collaboration with the evaluation partner, or by a third party. This would depend on the expertise required and the scope of the specific work.

We welcome suggestions from those tendering on the best way to develop this fund, and would work with the evaluation partner to design an approach that balanced the research interests of individual partners with the needs of the system as a whole. We would also be open to approaches in which the budget for the research fund is frontloaded earlier in the evaluation.

**We imagine that £15,000 per year would be earmarked for this fund**, with the costs for managing the fund included in the remaining annual evaluation budget. We are open to discussing this part of the call for tenders with any prospective evaluation teams in advance of them submitting a tender, and discussing how much of the budget will be allocated to this.

- A balance of programme insights and overall blended finance lessons

Although we want to gain a cross-cutting understanding of our blended finance work by working with an evaluation partner, we also need to assess the effectiveness of our individual programmes, which have different mandates, outcomes and approaches (which can be found in the investment policy for each programme on [our website](#)). Those tendering for this role will need to detail how they will balance these two competing demands, as well as connecting the evaluation work to other Access programmes (such as the Enterprise Development Programme and Local Access).

- Learning-led

We need an evaluation partner to produce actionable and useful lessons from their work throughout the evaluation, rather than simply at the end of each separate blended finance programme. These will be used by us and by our partners in our ongoing blended finance programmes and in the design of new ones, but should also be of use to the charities and social enterprises that receive blended finance, and the wider sector.

- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

We would expect equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) to be considered at all stages of the evaluation process, from the design and sampling, to the delivery. As a funder, we recognise our own power and influence, both over our partners and the wider sector. We also recognise the inherent power imbalance in any evaluation or research piece of this kind, and would expect any evaluation approach to acknowledge this imbalance, and seek to mitigate it wherever possible. We would therefore expect our evaluation partner to clearly demonstrate their own approach to EDI, how they will apply it in this evaluation, and any risks they foresee around it in their tender.

### **Methodology**

It is anticipated that a range of qualitative and quantitative methods will be used by the evaluation partner, and we would expect the evaluators to define key terms as part of the first stage of the evaluation. We would also expect existing datasets (either publicly available or purchased) to play a role and there may be the need for direct conversations and engagement with front line organisations (including more in-depth case studies or interviews) in order to get under the skin of real changes on the ground for organisations at all levels. The exact approach will be determined during the design phase in collaboration with us and with our social investment partners. As stated above, we are open to a range of different methodological approaches.

### **Timeline:**

We anticipate that the final evaluation timeline will be determined in the inception phase. However, we would expect the approach in the tender to include a broad proposed timeline balancing the differing timelines of the programmes, with wider cross blended finance programme learning.

We see the evaluation beginning with an inception phase, in which the approach proposed in the successful tender will be adapted and developed.

Collaborative/ consortium bids are welcomed, particularly where they bring different expertise to research, evaluation and participatory techniques (for example quantitative experts versus more qualitative experts). We would also expect bidders to explain how they will ensure that they have the right expertise to deliver the programme level evaluations, specifically the Energy Efficiency Social Investment Programme. This expertise could either be in house, or provided by short-term experts. We are aware that this evaluation will require a lot of different types of expertise and we are happy to discuss team composition in advance with potential tenderers.

The primary audiences for the evaluation are:



- Internally for Access decision making
- Our Social Investment Intermediary partners
- The social enterprises and charities funded using blended finance
- Government, specifically the Department of Culture, Media and Sport
- Mainstream and impact investors who may participate in blended finance structures
- Foundations and other potential providers of concessional capital
- Other stakeholders currently working on, or interested in delivering blended finance programmes (other social investment wholesalers, charitable foundations, social investment funds)

Although we are keen for this evaluation to reach all the audiences above, it is essential that it can demonstrate the impact of blended finance to our funders, and that it is useful to our social investor partners.

## **Evaluation Questions**

Below are some examples of questions we would like our evaluation partner to help us answer. Given the nature of this piece of work, these are likely to evolve:

### **Design and Coherence**

- Did we design the right blended finance (BF) programmes and interventions to solve the problems in the social investment sector?
- When we designed our more recent programmes we sought to build in the learnings from our earlier programmes (specifically the Growth Fund) by keeping some things the same and doing other things differently. How successful has this been?
- To what extent are our BF programmes coherent and context appropriate? To what extent have we prioritised the right areas of intervention given our overall Theory of Change?
- What would have been the efficiencies of a less programme-based model of delivery? To what extent would a partner-based model of delivery have resulted in better blended finance outcomes?
- To what extent are our partners aligned with us around their expectations and understanding of programmes' aims, and how does this flow into their decision making?
- How effectively have we used grant/subsidy across our different programmes, in terms of each of the main ways that we apply subsidy in blended finance structures (as operating cost subsidy to social investors, as first loss subsidy, and as grant which flows to charities and social enterprises as grant (often alongside investment)?)
- How coherent is our Investment Readiness work (the Reach Fund and some other interventions) s reached the intended organisations?
- Have Access' BF programmes reached the most marginalised communities and deprived parts of the country? Where they have not, why is this?

- Have our BF programmes individually and collectively led to any negative impact?

#### Process:

- Are Access Blended Finance programmes fit for purpose?
  - o Do our processes (including design, consulting the sector, our Investment Committee) support our ambitions or could they be more effective?

#### Value for Money/Effectiveness

- Do Access BF programmes provide good value for money (VfM)?
  - o How has our grant been leveraged?
  - o Does the structuring of our partnerships on our BF programmes provide VfM? How does it differ between and across different partnership and programmes?
- Do we have effective processes in place for measuring the VfM offered by our partners on these programmes?

#### Sustainability

- To what extent will the impact of Access BF programmes be sustained beyond the end of their funding period?
  - o Are the charities and social enterprises funded through them more resilient over time?
  - o What longer term impact do the BF programmes have on our partners?

#### Individual programme questions (mostly to follow):

- Did the design and implementation of the Enterprise Growth for Communities programme effectively implement the lessons emerging from Growth Fund (to which it was a successor programme), and what were the results of this?
- Did including Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) as one of the three pillars lead to better results on reach in the Flexible Finance Programme than on Access' other programmes?
- Did the Technical Assistance (pre/post-investment support built into funds) offered as part of some Flexible Finance funds deliver on its objectives?

The full and final set of research questions will be agreed between Access and the appointed evaluator/s. We also anticipate the need to add evaluation questions as we go along, specifically in reference to individual programmes.

#### **Timescales and Deliverables**

The specific nature of analysis and reporting will be agreed with the appointed evaluation partner and we welcome a broad range of approaches to answering the questions and delivering on the evaluation purpose.

We anticipate the evaluation will begin in early 2024, with all work completed by December 2027. As mentioned above, there is also scope for the evaluation partner

to continue working with us beyond this point if we believe the partnership is working and if budget allows.

We would expect all bids to include an outline of how their approach will appropriately deal with the nature of our blended finance programmes, particularly how to balance programme level insights with cross programme ones, and how their team will offer the right levels of expertise to deliver the evaluation.

We anticipate that key deliverables will include some of the list below:

- Some kind of inception/approach document. This does not need to take the form of a long report, but will need to outline the revised approach to the evaluation based on the review of the available data and documentation, risks, sampling approach, revised evaluation questions, data collection tools, revised workplan and a proposal for feedback and learning.
- Programme level learning/evaluation reports. We would expect the evaluation partner to deliver programme level learning at relevant moments on each specific blended finance programme. The format of these reports/documents will depend on the specific programme.
- Cross-cutting products blended finance learning programmes. As with the interim reports, we are flexible around the approach to this.
- Appropriate learning and reflection sessions with the key stakeholders. We would anticipate that there will be feedback and learning sessions throughout the evaluation partnership. Access hold partner/networking meetings once or twice a year for our blended finance partners, which may provide a useful forum for sessions on occasions.
- Regular debriefs with Access.
- We would also expect the evaluation partner to sit in at some of our regular internal meetings, including our Blended Finance Management Group and possibly our Blended Finance Investment Committee. This will be essential for gaining an understanding of how our blended finance programmes work day to day.

## **Budget**

The bidder's total costs must not exceed **£90,000/year including VAT, so £360,000 for the full duration of the evaluation (2024-2027). As outlined above, we would expect £15,000/year of this to be earmarked for the partner-led research fund, with the cost of managing this coming out of the remaining £75,000/year. We are open to budget proposals which do not spread the budget out equally across the four years of the contract.**

Value for money will be considered when reviewing the tenders (see below for more detail on the scoring process).

## **Evaluation Management**

The evaluation will be managed by Access, although we plan for our social investment partners to play a key role in evaluation design and delivery. We also imagine that Big Society Capital, who we work with on a number of our blended finance programmes, would play a role in the design and delivery of the evaluation.

Day to day administration of the evaluation will be led by the Head of Impact and Evaluation at Access, with support from the Senior Programme Manager responsible for Blended Finance and the Director of Programmes.

## Application Process

### Essential Information

This will be a three-stage tendering process (a Pass/Fail Stage, a full review stage and an interview stage) – full details of which are explained below.

### The tender will be live until 23.59 on 26 March 2024

The submission route is emailed responses to [applications@access-si.org.uk](mailto:applications@access-si.org.uk)

Any queries about this process or questions about the tender should also be directed towards Lydia Levy, Head of Impact and Evaluation: [lydia.levy@access-si.org.uk](mailto:lydia.levy@access-si.org.uk)

Access actively welcomes collaborative/ consortium bids.

### Responding to the tender

If you are interested in applying to deliver this evaluation, please provide a response to this document (10 pages of A4 max plus annexes). The tender will be evaluated based on two tests.

The first is a simple Pass/ Fail test and the second is a more in-depth response to the stated evaluation criteria.

### Pass/Fail Test

In order for submissions to be considered they first must pass two PASS/FAIL CRITERIA set out below. Tenders which do not pass all three Pass/Fail criteria will not be evaluated further and will be excluded from the competition.

#### 1. Cost PASS/FAIL TEST

The Bidder's total costs must not exceed £360,000 total (including VAT and expenses).

A **Fail** will be allocated to those responses whose costs exceed £360,000 (including VAT and expenses).

#### 2. Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion PASS/FAIL TEST (Where the bidder is a consortium, this test will be carried out on the lead organisation)

Access is committed to equity, equality, diversity and inclusion. We aim to build accountability through meaningful collaborations and co-production with diverse networks and communities. We are working towards an inclusive culture. We require our trustees, employees and partners to act with integrity and to invest time, energy and resources in equitable representation.

Please describe your organisation's commitment to promoting equity, equality, diversity and inclusion and how that commitment is operationalised (please include links to or attachments of any Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies or equivalent documents if relevant)

A **Fail** will be allocated to those responses that are not able to demonstrate clear evidence of their organisation's commitment to equity, equality, diversity and inclusion, and how that commitment is operationalised.

### **Tender Evaluation Criteria**

Those applicants who pass the PASS/FAIL CRITERIA will be further evaluated on their responses to the following 5 criteria below. Please submit written responses to these criteria. Provide examples and links (or attachments) to documents where it supports your submission (we would highly recommend attaching examples of similar work). Please keep your responses succinct and relevant to the five criteria.

Responses to the five criteria will be scored based on the process outlined in Annex 1. Please ensure you read this.

If the final scores are close, the top scorers (up to 3) may be asked to attend an in-person interview.

The 5 assessment criteria are as follows:

1. The breadth, capacity and depth of relevant experience and expertise of the proposed team members (30%)
2. The methodology the bidder proposes to deliver the evaluation (40%) distributed equally across the following criteria:
  - a. *Adequacy of Practice*, proposed data collection and learning activities the bidders will carry out
  - b. *Adequacy of Analysis*, how bidders propose to analyse the material they collect drawing together the strands of evaluative activity over the contract period, into a coherent narrative of the impact (or lack of it) our blended finance programmes have delivered
  - c. *Innovative and participatory capability*, i.e., the know-how that enables bidders to introduce new practice and participation, e.g., use of social media in data collection or data visualisation for dissemination, that generate additional value into the work and evaluation approach
3. The adequacy of the risk analysis presented in terms of its completeness, the quality of proposed mitigation and management arrangements in relation to the identified risks, 10%;
4. The extent to which the bidder presents credible and inclusive proposals with regard to engagement with the social investors and other key stakeholders, 10%;

We will assess bidders on criteria 1 through 4 above using the scoring matrix found in Annex 1.

5. The 5th criteria accounting for the remaining 10% of the score is related to Value for Money. Bidders should provide in their responses:
- A breakdown of costs
  - Day rates for all individuals working on the evaluation
  - Roles/ organisation level of individuals working on the evaluation

We will assess bidders on this 5<sup>th</sup> criteria using the “value for money” scoring matrix found in Annex 1





## Annex 1

### Scoring Matrix Criteria 1-4.

Score	Comment	Detail
0	Poor	No response or partial response and inadequate evidence provided in support of it. Does not give Access confidence in the bidder's capability to deliver the contract.
1	Weak	Response is supported by a limited / narrow statement of evidence in several areas giving rise to concern for Access about the bidder's capability to deliver the contract.
2	Satisfactory	Response is supported by a sufficient statement of evidence and {in relation to Criteria 2} proposes credible actions on at least one of participatory orientation; innovative capability or complexity awareness. In a few instances is lacking sufficient detail giving rise to some concerns about the capability to deliver the contract.
3	Good	Response is comprehensive and supported by a sufficient standard of evidence and {in relation to Criteria 2} proposes credible actions on at least two of participatory orientation; innovative capability or complexity awareness. Gives Access a high level of confidence in the ability of the bidder to deliver the contract.
4	Excellent	Response is very comprehensive and supported by a sufficient standard of evidence {in relation to Criteria 2} and proposes credible actions on all three of participatory orientation, innovative capability or complexity awareness. Gives Access full confidence the ability of the bidder to deliver the contract.

### Scoring Matrix Criteria 5 "Value for Money".

Score	Comment	Detail
0	Poor	The bid represents poor value for money. The day rates are higher than other submissions and/or there is very limited project delivery represented in the costs and/or overly inexperienced staff are proposed to undertake the majority of the work.
1	Weak	The bid represents weak value for money. The day rates are towards the higher end compared with other submissions and/or there is insufficient project delivery represented in the costs and/or inexperienced staff are proposed to undertake large elements of the work.
2	Satisfactory	The bid represents reasonable value for money. The day rates are comparable to other submissions and/or there is sufficient project delivery represented in the costs and/or sufficiently experienced staff are proposed to undertake a number of elements of the work.
3	Good	The bid represents good value for money. The day rates are comparable to other submissions and/or there is a good level of project delivery represented in the costs and/or experienced staff are proposed to undertake the majority of the work.
4	Excellent	The bid represents excellent value for money. The day rates are lower or comparable to other submissions and/or there is extensive project delivery represented in the costs and/or experienced staff are proposed to undertake the majority of the work.

### Scoring Process

The submissions will be scored by Access who will:

- Assess what each bidder offers as evidence on each criterion, with each member of the review group carrying out this task independently of other members, maintaining notes on their thinking as they do so, and after discussion, reaching consensus on the score that should be recorded for that bidder's submission in relation to the criterion in question (averaging scores will not be done);
- Weight the review group's agreed score for each bidder on each criterion by the percentages noted against the 5 criteria

- Adding up these weighted scores to provide a final score.
- We reserve the right to reject any proposal which scores a zero on any individual criterion.

Where final scores are close, the top scorers (up to 5) may be asked to attend an in-person interview to verbally discuss their written submissions in more detail. Access reserves the right to request references prior to appointment.