# Costing for external evaluation support

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## Purpose

This document gives you an idea of the financial cost involved in obtaining external support for your evaluation.

## Background

In order to procure external support for evaluation you need a clear idea of;

1. What support you require, the 20.02.28 Evaluation tender - specification template.docx available on the [hub](https://intranet.bnssgccg.nhs.uk/index.php/resources/research-and-evidence) and [NHS Futures System Change Command page](https://future.nhs.uk/covid19BNSSGcontrolcentre/view?objectId=20875280). The Research and Evidence team can help you plan this
2. How much budget you have to pay for this support

There are many external organisations that will bid for evaluation Tenders. The South, Central and West Commissioning Support Unit (SCWCSU) can help with procurement of an evaluation using the In-Tend system. For smaller value tender you can post your evaluation tender on the Evaluation Online Network which will be seen by evaluators across the South West, EVALUATIONONLINENETWORK-WEST@JISCMAIL.AC.UK – don’t forget to include your contact details!

### University support

Universities will want to add 20% VAT to their fees, so you need to make it clear whether they can do this or whether they must bid within the budget you specify in the tender. The type of support you require will make a difference to the staff grade that will be required for the work and therefore the cost. Examples of cost per hour are shown in Table 1, remember VAT at 20% will need to be added. For example, a Health Economist at a minimum would cost £76.80 per/hr (£64 without VAT).

**Table 1. University support costs (excluding VAT)**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Staff type** | **UWE cost per/hr** | **University of Bristol per/hr** |
| Health Economist | £65 - £73 | £64 - £71 |
| Research Assistant | £65 - £73 | £64 - £71 |
| Professor | £89 - £TBC | £89 - £132 |

### SCWCSU

The SCWCSU can be commissioned to support with aspects of evaluation, e.g., support for qualitative survey design, which is likely to cost in the region of £804 per survey contact.scwcsu@nhs.net

### BNSSG Healthwatch

The BNSSG Healthwatch team can undertake focus groups and interviews with target groups for you. Examples of costs for different types of support are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Healthwatch support costs**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity type** | **Cost**  |
| 12 face to face interviews | £1562 |
| 12 telephone interviews | £660 |
| Setting up,  facilitation and write up of two focus groups | £825 |

### Freelance evaluators

There is a large freelance evaluator community in addition to the local organisations outlined above who charge varying rates (e.g., £25 ph/hr to day rates of £800+). Using the Evaluation Online Network is a good mechanism for getting in touch with this community. Alternatively typing ‘freelance evaluators’ into a search engine will give you a lot of results.

### Other costs

Remember there are other costs involved in engaging with service users such as;

* Travel costs, normally reimbursed at 45p per mile, or cost of bus fare.
* Refreshments, normally £5 per participant.
* Venue hire, this can start from £25.

## Key Points

**Evaluation planning is key to a useful output**:

* Be clear in the purpose of the evaluation. As the person or team procuring the evaluation: what is it you want to know? Is it an assessment, an objective evaluation or do you want to discover something you don’t already know? Ask yourself: ‘what would a successful product look like?’ How should the findings and recommendations presented?
* Ensure that the evaluation specification is clear and comprehensive. For example, agree on how the report will be presented and on content decisions such as whether the report will contain background on frameworks used, or a literature review. Time spent at this stage will lead to a more efficient process overall.
* For the procuring team, it can be helpful to hear ‘the art of the possible’. Research teams are experts in evaluation methods and are well placed to offer advice if they feel a requested evaluation will not meet the needs of the procurer, or if there might be a better way of meeting those needs. Guidance and steering from the CCG Research and Evidence team should be welcomed and encouraged.
* The procuring team should expect to be able to answer the question: how will this evaluation be used? Welcome this challenge as it helps to ensure the production of the evaluation provides high value learning to the organisation.
* Ensure that all stakeholders are clear on what can be realistically achieved in the timeframe and budget agreed.

You may want to procure some external aspects and keep other aspects internal e.g.,

* You may want someone to run focus groups for you and analyse this data, but you will also use existing data the CCGs’ BI hold
* If you want help with developing and administering a survey the CCGs’ Research and Evidence (R&E) (bnssg.research@nhs.net) and Insights teams (alex.ward-booth1@nhs.net) can assist you.

## Summary

Top tip on procuring a service evaluation are available on the CCGs’ [hub](https://intranet.bnssgccg.nhs.uk/index.php/resources/research-and-evidence). Contact the R&E team to talk through your evaluation plan to determine the level of support you may require.