

Savers Support Fund – Grantee Evaluation Specification

Organisation and programme name: OnSide Youth Zones

Contact name and role: Helen Taylor, Network Director

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Project contact phone number: 07802 883 530

Summary

Target level on Nesta's Standards of Evidence:

Level 1 Level 2 Level 3 Level 4 Level 5

Support type(s):

One-off evaluation Developing internal evaluation capacity

Evaluation type(s):

Impact evaluation Process evaluation
 Literature review

Methodology(s):

Quantitative Qualitative

Start date: February 2018

End date: February 2019

Maximum Budget (incl. VAT and travel): £20,000 inclusive of VAT

NOTE: This programme is being grant funded by Nesta and DCMS to commission this evaluation. It is a condition of funding, and any appointment under this evaluation request, that the evaluation is shared with Nesta and DCMS and may be published by Nesta and DCMS for the benefit of the wider sector.

1. Programme description

Introduction to OnSide

OnSide Youth Zones (hereafter referred to as "OnSide") is the contracting authority for this tender.

OnSide's vision is to give all young people somewhere safe and inspiring to go in their leisure time. We provide quality, safe and affordable facilities – Youth Zones – that allow young people to spend their leisure time engaging in fun but productive activities, supported by positive adult role models, which improve their life chances, choices and opportunities.

Established in 2008, OnSide was the creation of Bill Holroyd CBE DL, former Chair of Bolton Lads and Girls Club (BLGC) and Jerry Glover MBE who had been the Chief Executive at BLGC for 32 years. During his time as Chair, Bill realised that other towns and cities would clearly benefit from a first-class facility like BLGC. Bolton has now been joined by Youth Zones in Birkenhead, Blackburn, Carlisle, Manchester, Oldham, Wigan & Wolverhampton. We are a growing Network and are on track to reach our initial target of 20 Youth Zones by 2020, with more in the pipeline.

Our established Youth Zones currently serve 30,000 members and receive over 350,000 visits per annum across the network.

The defining characteristics of a Youth Zone are;

- To provide a safe, accessible and affordable place, where young people choose to go;
- Housed in an iconic, functional and inspiring building;
- In the right city/town centre location, that all young people from the community can share;
- An accessible and affordable service (£5 annual membership & 50p per visit); with a clear focus on disadvantaged groups;
- Purposed for young people only and fully inclusive – in terms of gender, ethnicity and ability;
- Open over 40 hours a week in term time and every day during school holidays
- Filled with committed, enthusiastic and inspiring staff and volunteers,
- An exciting, fun and inspiring sports, arts, outdoor and personal development offer;
- Delivering the highest level of quality in terms of the building, delivery, activities, staff and volunteers - sending a clear message to young people – we value you, you are important;

Programme Background

OnSide Youth Zone Network has secured funding from Nesta and DCMS through the Savers Support Fund to scale the Able to Manage social action programme to improve money management skills and reduce debt for 14-21 year olds (up to aged 25 for young people with a disability).

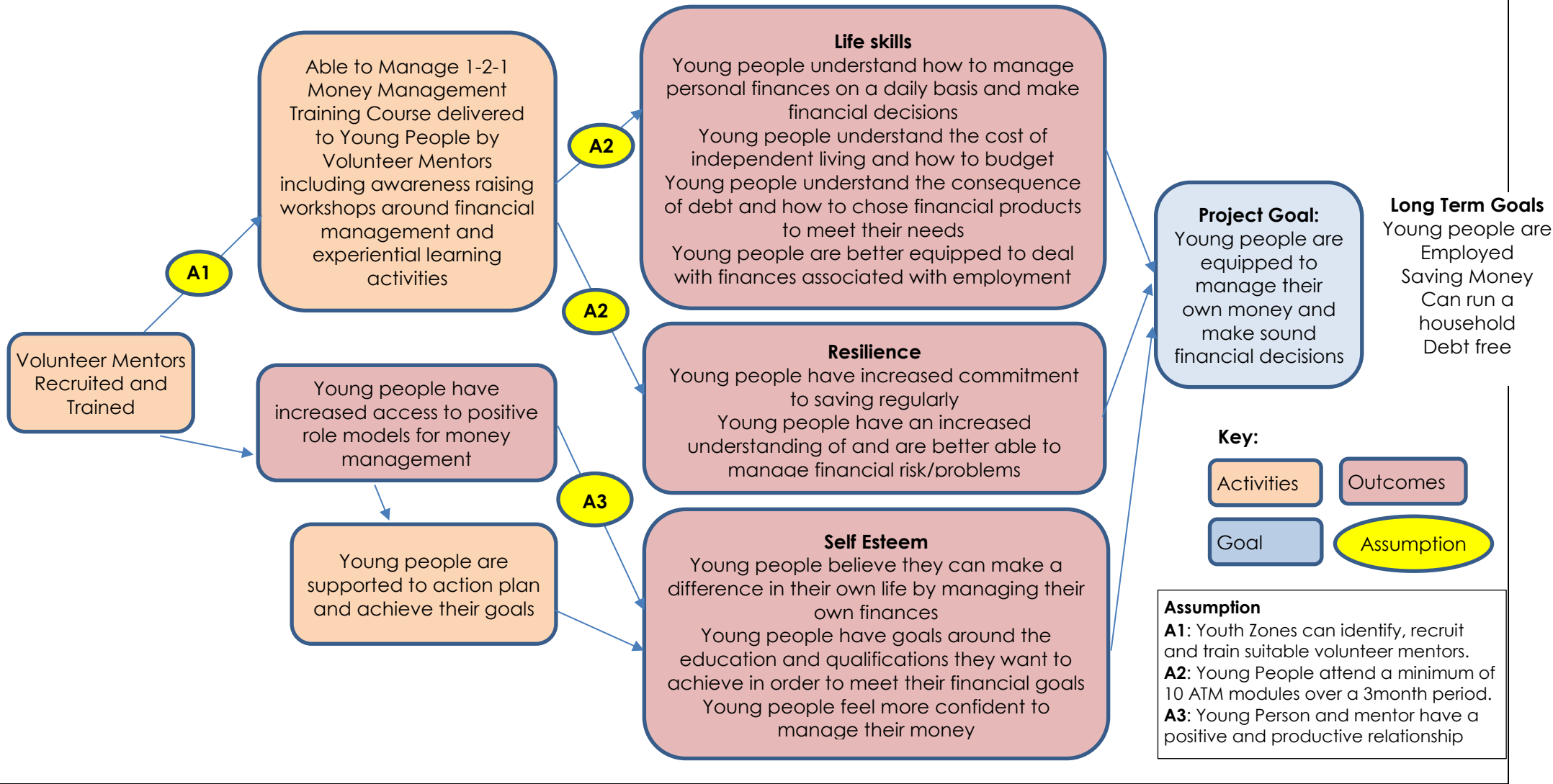
The initiative delivers one to one money management training through volunteer mentors, up to 2 hours a week over a 10-week period. 360 new volunteers will be mobilised to support 360 beneficiaries across 9 locations; Blackburn, Bolton, Carlisle, Manchester, Oldham, Warrington, Wigan, Wirral & Wolverhampton. The programme brings together the most effective proven elements from money management courses and mentoring schemes already run across the Youth Zones. This has now been codified to develop a delivery model that aims to increase the impact of the work and enable rapid scaling of the approach across the current and growing network. The course will target disadvantaged young people, many of whom are vulnerable and lack good role models.

As the network of Youth Zones grows, we are keen to develop standardised models that are proven effective and to be able to quantify and articulate the impact that these programmes have on young people. We will be looking to continue this programme beyond the life of this grant and so are looking to build a bank of independently verified evidence to present to potential funders at a local and national level as well as the funders of this programme. Future funders would likely include private sector patrons and philanthropists as well as potentially housing providers and trusts and grants. Programmes such as the 'Able to Manage' initiative form part of our targeted offer, to improve the life chances of those most disadvantaged or at risk. Youth Zones deliver a broad range of targeted programmes alongside their universal offer with young people moving fluidly between services and activities according to their needs and interests at different times in their life. As with our other targeted programmes young people will be referred on to this programme (they can self-refer) on the basis of a

number of risk factors including having poor role models around money management, displaying poor decision making or are concerned about their ability to manage money, moving into independent living or employment for the first time. They will be supported through 1-2-1 mentoring from a volunteer mentor for a minimum of 10 weeks to gain the necessary understanding and skills to increase their confidence resilience and life skills ultimately leading to them being better able to achieve in employment, education or training, successfully manage a home and have improved wellbeing.

Each of the 9 Youth Zones involved will work with 10 young people each quarter between January and December 2018 resulting in each having worked with 40 over the year.

2. Theory of Change



3. Key Outcomes – Impact Evaluation

Outcome name (in order of priority)	Further description	Impact / process / economic evaluation
Increased financial management life skills	Young people have increased understanding of how to manage daily finances and make financial decisions, they understand the costs of independent living and consequences of debt. They are more equipped to deal with financial issues associated with employment and are better equipped to make financial decisions	Impact
Increased resilience	Young people have increased commitment to saving regularly. Young people have increased understanding of and are better able to manage financial risk and problems	Impact
Increased self esteem	Young people believe they can make a difference in their own life by managing their own finances. Young people have goals around the education and qualifications they want to achieve in order to meet their financial goals. Young people feel more confident to manage their money	Impact
Process Evaluation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In what circumstances and with whom does the programme have greatest value • What are the key factors influencing this success 		

4. Evaluation Request

Scope

We are seeking to appoint an evaluator to carry out an impact evaluation as we scale this programme. Alongside this we would like the evaluator to support with some elements of process or formative evaluation, to help us understand in what circumstances and with whom the programme has greatest value, and where we could particularly benefit from improving our approaches to enable greater impact. This is primarily to understand our impact and continue to improve the model based on the learning of the nine youth zones as it grows.

We would like to ensure are well considered in the design of the evaluation work, namely:

1. **Beneficiaries:** We work with a range of different young people from age 14 - 25. What they learn from the programme, and how they are able to practically implement this learning, will vary. As a result we would also see variation in outcomes and impact. This needs to be considered in the design and analysis. It would also be useful to know more about for whom the programme is of most value.
2. **Measures and tools:** we have a great track record of engagement with young people in the Youth Zones, have a common evaluation tool and a robust system for recording and analysing data. We would want to ensure that any recommendations around improving data collection aligned with our existing systems and support their growing.
3. **Implementation of pre-and post data measures:** We are keen to understand how we might improve the collection of pre and post participation data to better ensure a robust evaluation. Included in this is a recommendation around the data collection points to aid understanding of the sustainability of outcomes.

4. **Robustness and attribution of outcomes:** We want to ensure that any analysis looks at the statistical significance of findings, and clearly communicates this information with robustness. It will provide validated evidence and although we recognise we are not, at this time, in a position to carry out comparison group methodologies, we would be keen for evaluators to share any insights on this in terms of next steps for our evaluation beyond this work.

We would specifically like a number of key elements to be included in the evaluation, however alternative or additional methods can be suggested by evaluators in their proposal:

1. **Review of theory of change:** We have recently updated our theory of change, but want to review this in more depth. We work with young people aged between 14-25yrs, with a variety of different life circumstances. We recognise that some aspects of our theory of change may be well evidenced elsewhere and would expect reference to be made as appropriate. The Money Advice Service have been doing work to particularly understand 'what works in this field'.
2. **Review of data collection methods:** We have put in place a number of measures to evaluate the impact of the programme. We would like to review how these align with the refined theory of change and review the evaluation questions being asked and the tools being used to ensure we are able to robustly understand the impact of the programme. We also want to explore the right methodology, and timing of follow up with young people at the appropriate point after the programme. We have currently scheduled this at 26 weeks after the programme, but are open to recommendations and approaches that evaluators may suggest. We would like the evaluator to advise whether a sampling approach to follow up would be most effective, or where other approaches would be better to meet our needs.
3. **Primary survey quantitative and qualitative research:** We would like some primary research taking a sample of the participants and independently assessing the outcomes achieved to help us to assess the validity of our own evaluation processes (considering issues such as bias and attribution) but also to gather participant qualitative information to add depth and context to the evaluation results aiding a better understanding of the impact and to contribute to the process evaluation. We recognise this may also highlight some unexpected outcomes which we would be interested to learn about. We foresee this could be a mixture of group sessions and 1-1 interviews, and would like the evaluator to outline a methodology for this work, the number of sessions/interviews that will be possible, and the approach to sampling or alternative methods. We are also potentially interested in whether it is suitable, useful and robust, to involve parents and carers in these processes.
4. **Process evaluation:** We would be interested in incorporating some process evaluation insights and methods, to help us understand whether we are delivering and scaling effectively. We would aim to get these process insights early on through the evaluation, so that any learning can be incorporated into the second half of the programme where possible. We would expect this to include high level insights from across the Youth Zones with a more in-depth interrogation at a sample of Youth Zones. We are looking for evaluators to propose a methodology for this including the number of Youth Zones they would undertake the more in-depth analysis with.
5. **Analysis and reporting:** We would like the evaluators to analyse the quantitative and qualitative data collected, analysing outcomes and findings for statistical significance. We would also like process insights, and recommendations of how we improve the model, before potentially scaling to other Youth Zones. We are open to the approach the evaluator may wish to do this, but require support around ensuring sufficient data is collected, a mid term evaluation report, and a final evaluation report.

Research audience

- Potential funders – public sector, third sector and private sector
- Local Authorities; both those regions which already have a youth zone, and those who may in the future

- OnSide & Youth Zones Board members

The geography

For the purpose of this research, we are focusing on nine sites. These are;

- Bolton Lads & Girls Club
- Blackburn Youth Zone
- Carlisle Youth Zone
- The Factory Youth Zone (Manchester)
- Mahdlo Youth Zone (Oldham)
- Warrington Youth Club
- Wigan Youth Zone
- Wirral Youth Zone
- Wolverhampton Youth Zone

5. Evaluation Outputs and Timelines

Outputs required

The following outputs will be required:

- An interim report sharing any early outcome findings from the first cohorts completing the course, and initial insights from the process evaluation, to enable learning to be incorporated into the second half of the programme delivery.
- A draft final report;
- A final written report with a short standalone executive summary; an electronic version in both Word and PDF format
- A slide deck on key findings;

The report will involve collating the findings in a clear and informative document which presents compelling evidence-based conclusions on the impact of the ATM programme on young people. Practical recommendations on how to improve the programme going forwards – either in the existing Youth Zones, or by informing the model for future Youth Zones – should also be made.

Proposed Timescales

w/c 8 th January 2017	Tender responses invited
5.00pm, Friday 2 nd February 2018	Closing date for receipt of tenders
Thursday 8 th February 2018	Interviews
Friday 9 th February 2018	Contract awarded
w/c 26 th February 2018	Project commencement
Friday 13 th July 2018	Interim report due
Friday 11 th January 2019	Draft final report due
Friday 1 st February 2019	Final report due

6. Practicalities

Data Availability

Youth Zones already collect standard data that will be made available to the evaluators subject to data sharing agreements and protocols. This includes participants' demographic details and attendance data both on this provision and their frequency of accessing wider Youth Zone sessions and services, alongside our own pre and post intervention evaluation data.

Travel

The evaluators will be expected to travel to the Youth Zones to meet the young people with whom primary research is being undertaken. OnSide and the Youth Zones can organise these meetings but all costs incurred should be included as part of the tender price. The 4 youth Zones where primary research is being undertaken will be agreed with the evaluators at the contract negotiation stage.

Access to participants

The local Youth Zones will organise access to the young people being interviewed/part of focus groups. Although the evaluators will be able to request young people to interview to ensure validity of evaluation results, the young people will need to give their consent to participate and therefore flexibility will be required.

Support from OnSide

Support from OnSide will be provided by
 Helen Taylor – Network Director
 Rachel Morton – Network Systems Manager
 Fiona Norcross – Head of Finance and Systems

7. Criteria for Judging Evaluator Proposals

Tender Submissions

OnSide requires a bidder with strong evaluation experience and familiarity with social impact analysis, specifically where the National Government has been the primary audience.

Bidders should provide details within their proposals of:

- Proposed model for delivery which will meet the required specification requirements and will achieve the required outputs detailed.
 This should include proposed timetable and milestones, number of man hours involved at each stage, named individuals, attendance at meetings, deliverables e.g. reports etc., contingency plans;
- Tenders should include the complete price for this work, inclusive of VAT and all expenses. This should be appended by a full cost breakdown of the proposal. This should include details of the numbers and status of staff involved, their time and associated costs. VAT and expenses should be identified separately;
- Past relevant experience – identifying similar social evaluations and experience of undertaking evaluations that have National Government as an intended audience;
- Details of any external services, which you may call upon in executing the contract;
- Methodology for data collection & consultation, including sizes of sample groups.

Proposals should be a maximum of 10 pages in length, including appendices. We would expect the research to be completed in the region of £20,000 (inc VAT).

Decision Criteria

Tenders will be evaluated against the award criteria below, bidders should demonstrate:

- Quality of tender and suitability of proposed approach and methodology for the evaluation

- Innovation and flexibility in approach to the evaluation (particularly amongst given sources – young people and government bodies) including compelling presentation of research findings
- Expert knowledge and experience of evaluations focused on money management and supporting young people to develop financial resilience.
- Expert knowledge and track record of delivering similar work
- Price, including cost competitiveness and value for money and ability to complete to timescales

All tenders should be submitted to Fiona.norcross@onsideyouthzones.org by 5.00pm, Friday 2nd February 2018.