



Diversity and Inclusion Review

Request for Proposals

1. About the SW AHSN

Health and care systems around the world are facing an unprecedented challenge. Even before the emergence of COVID-19, increasing demand on health and care services required us to rethink how we help people to stay healthy and support them to manage health conditions.

The South West has been stepping up to that challenge – and with an ageing population spread over three large counties, with considerable variation in life expectancy, it is a significant one. Nearly a quarter of people living across Somerset, Devon and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly are aged 65 and over and, despite numerous thriving communities, the region includes some of the most deprived areas in the country.

What is clear is that tackling this challenge will require us to innovate, improve and evolve how we deliver health and care services. That is where we come in. Established by NHS England in 2013 as one of 15 Academic Health Science Networks (AHSNs), we help health and care partners across the South West to develop and spread innovative practice.

Our existing programme portfolio is broad. Current commissions include programmes to spread proven innovation in partnership with NHS England, improve patient safety through our commission with NHS Improvement, and to support the uptake of innovation from the life science sector in the health and care system with the Office for Life Sciences.

We are an ambitious, forward-thinking organisation. Over the next five years we are aiming to build our reputation as experts in spreading innovation in health and care.

Find out more about the SW AHSN by visiting our [website](#) or reading our latest [Annual Review](#).

2. Background and Context

We believe creating a diverse and inclusive organisation will help us achieve greater impact. Our ambition is to harness the knowledge, expertise and experiences of a diverse range of perspectives to help us better understand the challenges facing the health of people in the South West and identify proven innovation to spread across the region.

In the last few months we have started to put the foundations in place to realise our ambition of becoming a diverse and inclusive organisation. We have committed to the [AHSN Network's Diversity Pledges](#), established a cross-organisational Diversity and Inclusion Working Group (led by our Chief Executive) and appointed a Diversity and Inclusion Lead.

We have also started to test approaches to increasing inclusivity and enabling greater diversity through our work – including reducing bias in our recruitment process using the [Applied](#) platform, strengthening our focus on public and patient engagement within our programmes and improving the inclusivity of decision-making within the organisation.

We want to build on these foundations by carrying out a rapid review of how we could improve diversity and inclusion across our organisation and throughout all our work. Our aim is to complete the review in late 2020/2021 to inform the development of an action plan to take forward into implementation in 2021/22 and beyond.

3. Project Scope

The aim of the review is to identify opportunities for improving diversity and inclusion across our organisation and through our work. We expect the review to include a summary assessment of how we currently approach diversity and inclusion across areas such as governance, culture, organisational processes and decision-making, alongside a review of how we incorporate diversity and inclusion into the way we approach and deliver our work.

The recommendations from the review should set out clear and tangible actions we can take forward into our action plan for 2021/22 and beyond. We would also like the review to provide us with a set of metrics and baseline measures that we can use to track progress with our diversity and inclusion action plan.

We are currently reviewing our approach to Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) to ensure that we work in an inclusive way with our local community. Findings from the PPIE review will be available to inform the diversity and inclusion review process.

4. Supplier Requirements

We are looking for an experienced supplier with a background in supporting organisations to improve their approach to diversity and inclusion. The successful agency will have:

- A track record assessing organisational approaches to diversity and inclusion and supporting organisations to improve.
- A deep knowledge of rigorous, evidenced-based methods for assessing an organisation's approach to diversity and inclusion and an understanding of the appropriate tools and techniques to surface opportunities for improvement.
- A demonstrable understanding of the complexities and sensitivities of leading organisations through a review process in a collaborative way, but with the confidence to challenge the organisation at all levels.
- The ability to translate analysis and insight into tangible actions and improvements that improve diversity and inclusion.

Proposals should include the following information:

- Supplier's details – including corporate form proposed for contracting with the South West AHSN.
- Summary of experience – including short case studies/ examples of previous work and bios of the project team.
- Understanding of the brief.
- Proposed approach to delivering the work – including expectations of what you will require from us.
- Project plan – including project timescales.
- Availability and proposed start date.
- Costed proposal and budget – including expenses and VAT if applicable.

5. Deliverables

The main deliverable is an accessible, easy to read report setting out the opportunity areas for improving diversity and inclusion and a clear set of tangible actions we can take forward into our action plan for 2021/22 and beyond.

The report should also provide us with a set of baseline metrics and measures that can be used to track our progress with the action plan.

6. Timing and Submission of Proposals

The deadline for submission of proposals is 12pm on 28 January 2021. Please email your proposal to liz.shaw@swahsn.com

Interviews with suppliers will be held on 2 and 3 February 2021. The interview panel will consist of our Chief Executive, our Diversity and Inclusion Lead and one other representative from our Diversity and Inclusion Working Group.

The anticipated start date for the project is mid-late February 2021. The anticipated final draft report deadline is 31 March 2021.

7. Further Information:

The diversity and inclusion review project will be overseen by our Chief Executive and our Diversity & Inclusion Working Group. Our Diversity & Inclusion Lead will be the day to day contact for the supplier.

For more information or to arrange a discussion about the project, please contact Hannah Girvan - our Diversity and Inclusion Lead: Hannah.girvan@swahsn.com