

Redundancy & Retraining Project ITT Phase 2 Clarification Question Responses

15 July 2021

General

You state in the brief that you plan to sustain employment either by designing a new, or adapting an existing, redundancy and retraining support service using a co-design process. Have you conducted this kind of work in the past? If yes, can you provide some details of what worked well/not well?

Centre for Ageing Better is not a service delivery organisation and has not delivered employment support in the past.

Ageing Better's remit as a What Works Centre is to evidence best practice and approaches, one way we achieve this is to collaborate with partners to innovate new services and share our findings nationally. As these projects have multi-year timelines and Ageing Better is a young organisation we have not completed one of these new service design projects start to finish, but we are currently delivering an employment support design project in Greater Manchester. <https://www.ageing-better.org.uk/news/pilot-programme-announced-help-over-50s-back-work>

When you say that the aim of the project is to learn 'what works', do you have an idea of how you would like to measure this? For example, do you have key indicators or metrics that you would like to test for each solution concept? Or will this come from the assumptions testing?

At present, we do not have any agreed measures. However, the below are possible measures based on the insights gathered in Phase 1:

- People are able to find work within X timeframe after engaging with the service
- People report increased self-esteem after accessing the service
- People report feeling 'seen' and 'valued' due to engaging with the support service
- People broaden their job search (i.e. not only the same or similar work to before)
- People report knowing what works for finding work in a new job market
- People report lower levels of frustration when job hunting after accessing the service (in comparison to before using the service)
- People are likely to access the service
- People are more likely to see existing services as being appropriate for/target towards them
- People have an increased awareness about the support services available
- People report that they trust services to provide them the support they need
- People recognise the value in spending time and/or money on exploring their job options (i.e. in not making rash decisions)
- People report taking broader life decisions and circumstances into consideration when job hunting (e.g. pension, long term plans, changing health)
- People report feeling supported by their networks during the job hunting process (i.e. tapping into social support)
- People recognise the value in undertaking training to enhance their job search
- People report an increase in confidence in their ability to learn fast or enough to be useful, especially related to tech
- People report a shift in thinking regarding their relevance to employers

Regarding Objectives 3 and 5, can you please elaborate on your thinking behind the use of the terms 'solutions', 'service propositions' and 'prototype models'? When you say models do you mean concepts?

The hierarchy of ideas would be:

Opportunity area > Solution(s) > Service proposition(s) > Prototyping model(s)

Solutions = the “how could we do this” for an opportunity area. It can be seen as the category/grouping that a service proposition would sit under. For example, under the opportunity “design for aspirations” the solution could be “career coaching”.

Service propositions = is the specific service that could make this solution a reality. We anticipate that solutions would be services rather than specific products. For example, for the solution “career coaching”, the service proposition could be a ‘peer-coaching club’ with people of their age who have moved into new growing sectors.

Prototyping models = the specific ideas to be tested. For example, a specific element of the ‘peer-coaching club’ mentioned above to help us understand how it would work, who would be responsible for running it and how people would find out about it.

Given your intention for high fidelity prototyping to be conducted on up to 3 ideas, how do you define high fidelity in the context of this work? Do you anticipate digital design or app design, for example?

We don’t have set ideas on the how developed the latter stage prototypes would be as we aren’t yet certain of the services or products that we might want to test. We would work with the commissioned agency to figure out what was feasible.

Regarding Objective 9, when you say relevant materials and insight to support planning for piloting, are you expecting a pilot plan or just materials that can help shape this plan?

We do not anticipate a full pilot plan, rather materials and evidence from the prototyping phase to support shaping the plan. However, if the option to extend after the break clause is accepted then we would redefine our expectations of how involved the commissioned agency would be in developing the plan for the pilot.

Do you imagine narrowing the scope at the blueprint stage to just one model/ proposition/ concept?

Yes we would imagine just one model would be worked up for piloting (and certainly no more than two)

Given your work with Shift in Phase 1 of this project, is there a desire to continue working with this agency for continuity? Are there any considerations you would advise other bidders make in order to position themselves well?

This ITT is an open bidding process and has been shared directly with a number of agencies and made publicly available on Contracts Finder. All bids will be judged on their own merit through an open tendering process. All bids will be scored and assessed individually, except on pricing where bids will be scored comparatively.

When we worked with Shift we favoured an open collaborative approach, this has been included in the ITT under ways of working as a one team approach, we would seek for any bidder contracted to work in a similar manner.

Could you please elaborate on how the evaluator will be involved and what they will be evaluating? How much extra work might we anticipate in providing evidence to this evaluator throughout the prototyping phase?

The evaluator will not be 'evaluating' the prototype phase. Their role will be to evaluate the pilot phase (which follows this contract), in order to:

- Document how the pilot is being implemented in practice, any issues that arise, and any changes that are made
- Assess what impact the pilot has on participants

In order to do that, they need an understanding of the decisions that were made through the prototyping phase, in order to arrive at the final pilot design. That means the designers would need to provide their documentation, and be available for interviews. They may be asked to participate in workshops (max 1 day).

If the contract is extended so that the design agency commissioned is involved in the pilot phase, then there may be more overlap in your work. If the design agency are still actively engaging with participants to help improve/embed the project, they will need to work with the evaluators (who will also be engaging with participants) to ensure participants are not overburdened. This could mean collaboratively designing sessions/surveys which meet the needs of the design and evaluation processes. This would be worked through collaboratively with the design agency and evaluator if this is the case but is not to be taken into account in this bid.

In Appendix 3 – Written Return, does the 2,000 word limit include any words used in Section 0 (General Information) or is this limit only for Sections 1, 2, 3 and 4?

No the 2,000 words does not include section 0

Is the weighting for Experience & Skills 25% (shown in table titled Invitation to Tender evaluation criteria section) or 20% (shown in Appendix 3 - written response)?

Apologies there is an error in appendix 3, it is 25% for Experience and Skills as outlined in the ITT

How many agencies have you invited to respond?

We directly contacted 13 agencies and invited them to respond, this ITT has also been placed on contracts finder and so bids can come from anyone accessing that service.

Have Service Design agencies you have worked with previously also been invited to respond to this ITT?

Yes, we have invited service designers that Centre for Ageing Better have previously worked with to respond to this ITT

In the Schedule of Rates in Appendix 2 all costs appear to be linked to roles and days'. If we are thinking about costs that fall outside of people costs, can we adapt this table to reflect all costs for this project?

Ideally we would want a full table of costings which include people's time and other costings separately or embedded in this section, and this table is just for day rates and roles.

Outcomes

What are the most important outcomes you see for this project?

Centre for Ageing Better, supported by Barclays, are working in the West Midlands to support individuals over the age of 50, who are at risk of redundancy or have recently been made redundant, to find sustained employment through skills retraining.

Goal

To support people aged 50 – 67 years who have been recently (i.e. within 6 months) made redundant from the manufacturing or automotive industries in the West Midlands to find sustained employment through skills retraining or employment support.

Outcomes and objectives

1. To understand and develop clear evidence for what redundancy and retraining services work best for our target audience
 1. To understand what is currently working well and not so well in redundancy and retraining support for our target cohort (Phase 1)
 2. To co-design and test a new (or adapt existing) solution(s) for redundancy and retraining services for individuals in our target cohort to respond to the pain points and opportunities identified during Phase 1 (Phase 2)
2. To influence local organisations to improve their services in order to better support our target audience
 1. To share information about what works with local organisations to support them to adopt these learnings within their remit (ongoing)

Phase 2 (i.e. this contract):

- To have prototyped potential solutions and co-designed those prototypes with our target audience
- To have a clear understanding of the next steps for the Pilot Phase

Does your team already have some ideas on what this platform could be? Have any of these ideas progressed so far?

We have not progressed these ideas any further and the team are committed to the co-design and prototyping process to identify the best possible solution to take forward to the Pilot stage. We expect the “solution” that we take to piloting could be any kind of service- we are not committed to it being an online “platform” of any kind.

Delivery

We recommend running debrief workshops that are quite hands-on and enable stakeholders to get involved with the insights from the research. Do you anticipate there being any difficulty setting these up with your teams? How many people would be likely to attend?

Our project team is 6-8 people depending on the content of the sessions, there may be complications with diaries as in any team but with enough notice we see no problems getting those sessions planned. Interactive workshops are one method we currently use in this project and across Ageing Better so team members are used to working in this way. The team members who the contractor would be working with day to day are very familiar working in interactive workshops/ refining ideas. Other wider team members are less familiar with methodologies and processes involved in prototyping.

If we felt that there was need for representation from our external stakeholders this would need additional planning time

Which device do you intend to focus on for the creation of the prototype? (If mobile is mentioned, the project is leaning to a mature audience so do we need to consider any technical implications?)

It is impossible to say at this stage which platform the prototype would be developed on as the possible solutions include a variety of digital and in person options. We would expect recommendations to come out of this phase of work. We would expect the bidder to take considerations such as the digital literacy of our target audience in to account when designing solutions, and test assumptions around this out.

Should any travel costs or 3rd party costs e.g. recruitment, incentives, venue hire be identified separately? Should expenses be included as part of the £80,000+VAT budget, or are these to be billed separately?

All project costs including travel, room hire, incentives etc must be included in the allocated budget.

Do you have any formats in mind for reports and other deliverables e.g. powerpoint, inDesign, Sketch, word, excel, Google docs etc.?

We are open to what format the deliverables of this project will take and because of the variety of deliverables we would expect some of these might take multiple forms. We would like access to as much of the raw data/ planning materials as possible as well as the final deliverables. Successful ways we have done this in the past included a joint Google Drive folder and a shared Miro board.

How will the service blueprints and associated documents live on e.g. are Centre for Ageing Better looking to be able to update these in house and if so are there preferred design tools or ways of working?

Ageing Better has not previously commissioned service blueprints so would value working with the commissioned organisation to understand the best tools to use. Please note, we will be working with partners to deliver the pilot stage of this project so will need to consider the tools they use if they are looking to manage and refine these during piloting.

Would the deliverables be in the Centre for Ageing Better brand? Will you be able to provide any brand guidelines for digital for this if so?

Yes we would anticipate deliverables being produced in the Centre for Ageing Better Brand. Guidelines will be shared with the appointed organisation.

Stakeholders/ Audiences/ Participants

You state in the brief that the project focuses on people aged 50 to state pension age who have recently been made redundant. (Specifically the last 6 months) Are there other sectors you would be open to considering or is it primarily the automotive and manufacturing industry?

This project, in particular this phase is specifically targeted at the aforementioned sectors. We hope that this work can provide the basis for further scaled work in the future but for this contract we remain focused on manufacturing and automotive.

We would be open to engaging with other sectors in terms of recruitment/ prototyping who are facing high levels of redundancy locally. We would do this if we struggled

to recruit enough participants from the automotive and manufacturing sectors, or we might decide it would be valuable to test higher fidelity prototypes with a wider range of sectors to test for potential scalability before deciding on which to take to the pilot stage, dependent on what the solution is.

What kinds of job roles would you expect your audiences to have? (this will help us understand how difficult they may be to recruit for research)

The manufacturing and automotive sector within the region is vast and varied we would anticipate any level of job roles from manual/ shop floor, to executives to come through this programme. In the research we accessed a variety of manufacturing including automotive supply chain, food industry and newspaper ink manufacturing in addition to automotive industry. We anticipate working with a variety of roles throughout the prototyping, but we are happy to balance recruiting for diversity of experience with pragmatism, as some roles may be harder to recruit.

The brief states the following four stakeholders involved in the project: West Midlands Combined Authority, Barclays, External evaluator, Ageing Better project team. Are there others we need to be aware of? How do you imagine they would like to be involved?

In addition to these key stakeholders Ageing Better is well networked in the region and has access to numerous service providers, local authorities, working groups, unions and statutory bodies, it is the role of the Project Manager to manage those external relationships and through the one-team approach manage introductions as necessary. Many of these organisations could provide useful feedback when prototyping and Ageing Better can help to identify who these would be at what stages.

During the latter stages of phase 2 as we move into high fidelity prototyping, we anticipate that we may need to work closely with partners to test the feasibility and viability of these solutions as Ageing Better is not a service delivery organisation and we will need to work with a partner to create a new service. For example, if the solution we were prototyping was designing a new service to be embedded within recruitment agencies we would liaise with relevant local recruitment agencies to test this. The Ageing Better Project Manager would be the main point of contact for any external partners involved in this way.

To what extent will we have access to key stakeholders to understand the feasibility and viability of the prototypes? Can you provide information on who these stakeholders might be and how many so we can account for involving them?

Centre for Ageing Better have a database of warm key stakeholders, these contacts can be shared with our contracted service design agency. We don't have a definitive number of stakeholders that must be involved in this project, which stakeholders are involved and how many will be driven by the prototyping needs rather than specific obligations to potential partners but is likely to include statutory agencies, service providers, local authorities etc.

So we can identify funding sources, will relevant stakeholders be available to be interviewed to understand this or would you expect the agency to do their own investigations?

We will put the contracted service design agency in touch with any relevant stakeholders that we have contacts with for interviews. If relevant stakeholders emerge that we do not have relationships with, we anticipate working together with the commissioned agency to identify routes to this stakeholder. We would expect to be the main point of contact for any new stakeholders. We are also happy for the contracted agency to suggest possible funding sources we have not considered through our contacts to date.

Do you have an existing cohort of older adults in the West Midlands that we can pool or do we need to conduct recruitment from scratch? If yes, how many do you have in the cohort?

We currently do not have a pool of people, but we do have a number of potential avenues to recruit older adults for the prototyping phase:

- A number of the participants we engaged in the Phase 1 research agreed to be contacted again about taking part in this phase. There is no obligation for them to engage in prototyping.
- We are hoping to complete a small piece of research in the next few months with a local employer who is making large scale redundancies to understand more about the experiences of pre-redundancy consultation. If this goes ahead, we anticipate identifying up to 10 more older adults who we could ask to participate in the prototyping.
- Most significantly we have wide range of project stakeholders who would support the recruitment process such as service providers, community groups and the combined authority.

We would anticipate that bidders would include recruitment of the majority of participants in their responses but Ageing Better is happy to support with identifying routes and opportunities for recruitment.

Do you have a focus within the West Midlands, or are you interested in an even spread geographically and by way of rurality?

For this project we are specifically working within the Central West Midlands Conurbation, including the Black Country (the colloquial name for the local authority areas of the Wolverhampton, Walsall, Dudley, Sandwell), Birmingham, Solihull and Coventry for further information please see the Target Audience section in 3.1 of the ITT

Is there anything we need to be mindful of during recruitment/ user testing? Is the location focused across the UK or just the West Midlands?

For this project we are specifically working within the Central West Midlands Conurbation, including the Black Country (the colloquial name for the local authority areas of the Wolverhampton, Walsall, Dudley, Sandwell), Birmingham, Solihull and Coventry for further information please see the Target Audience section in 3.1 of the ITT

Are we responsible for finding and incentivising all participants that take part in the activities or will Centre for Ageing Better be supporting in this process?

This will be a joint effort, Centre for Ageing Better can provide warm local leads, and provide support such as sharing out contact, the exact amount to be negotiated. Incentives for participants should be included in the bid.

Ways of Working

Regarding 'one team' collaboration, how much of your team's time and how many team members might we be able to involve? And how experienced would this team be in prototyping and testing?

We would anticipate that the Project Manager and Innovation and Change team representative would be available for weekly meetings with the commissioned organisation.

The Project Manager will be able to give approximately 1 day a week to be involved in service design activities and the Innovation and Change team representative will be able to give up to half a day a week.

The wider project team which includes evidence and communications colleagues and sector experts who would be involved in larger workshops. The Project Manager and Innovation and Change team are familiar with methodologies used in prototyping and piloting but are not service design practitioners. This side of the work would be led by the contracted agency where Ageing Better's value would be more to help refine the scope of the testing, who should be involved and ensuring we are achieving the wider goals of the project.

What are the expectations around ways of working in terms of virtual vs. face to face? Is there an allowance for expenses?

We would expect a majority of team working to be virtual as our team are based in the Midlands and London. We would expect some co-design and prototyping sessions to take place face to face in line with current covid-19 guidance and participants preferences. Expenses such as travel and room hire should be included in the overall cost of the bid

Given this project is in September, should we consider this to be in person/face to face rather than remote where possible?

It would be prudent to prepare for a mixed delivery approach as Covid-19 guidelines are subject to change. The project team are based across multiple locations so any one-team working should be anticipated to be virtual. However, if circumstances allow co-design sessions could happen in person, although it should be noted that travel and sessions should remain as cost effective and sustainable as possible.

What is the Centre for Ageing Better's current (and expected) working situation? There will likely be several workshops and debriefs in this project - should we plan for these to be in-person or online?

The project team are based across multiple locations so any one-team working should be anticipated to be virtual, however with notice, there would be scope for some workshops or debriefs to be in person should covid-19 guidance allow.

Does the Centre for Ageing Better use any other collaboration tools such as Slack?

The Centre for Ageing Better team use a variety of collaborative tools including but not limited to, Zoom, Slack, Teams, Miro etc

Could you please elaborate on what role the Centre for Ageing Better project manager will play?

The role of the project manager includes but is not limited to:

- Being the main point of contact for appointed contractor and monitoring contract.
- Stakeholder relationship manager
- Liaising with the funder
- Sign off on any materials produced
- Working in a one-team approach with the appointed contractor including providing agreed extra capacity and being involved in delivering and recruiting for co-design sessions
- Testing further assumptions
- Main contact point for the rest of Ageing Better on this project

Research

What customer research have you done already that you could share as part of this project? (Design agency, Shift previously designed part of the product earlier this year)

- Do you have any existing customer feedback? Would we have access to this as part of the project?

The research we have is included in the insights section of Appendix 8. The 7 potential solutions designed by Shift remain untested and therefore no customer feedback on them exists currently. We would expect that this would form part of the prototyping and codesign phase.

Are certain redundancy products/tools used more by one audience more than the other?

To date there hasn't been enough research into which redundancy and retraining services work best for our target audience (50-SPA). The aim of this project is to find out what works best for our target audience. The insights from our phase 1 research (including how are target audience access services) can be found in appendix 8

You specify desk research for Phase 2 of the project, who would you consider to be your main competitors and why?

As we are not a service delivery organisation, we do not view ourselves as a competitor within the employment support landscape, we will be working alongside/ in partnership with service providers throughout this project

The desk research specified relates to internal work around testing the assumptions from phase 1 research ahead of the prototyping phase.

The brief states you commissioned the design agency, Shift to design the current redundancy support landscape between January and May 2021. Were the designs tested and are there any key insights we need to be aware of?

The initial research outlined 12 key insights around this project which were translated into 6 opportunity areas with 7 potential solutions (appendix 8), the prototyping phase is about testing those solutions

Can you clarify what the 7 possible solutions are please (we can only see 6 opportunities listed in the research outputs document)?

In Design to fill Market gaps there are 2 potential solutions creating 7 in total; see appendix 8

Is there any additional evidence or user needs to share from the research phase, for example user needs, user stories or example user journey map?

The user journeys produced as part of phase 1 informed the insights and opportunities contained within Appendix 8 and as such we chose to not include them in the ITT pack due to the level of detail and the sensitive and confidential information contained within the stories.

We have linked some example user stories as requested, as highlighted the information contained in these stories is sensitive and confidential and is not to be shared outside of this

ITT process. The full pack of stories and research detail will be shared with the appointed service designer.

[John's Story](#)

[Alison's Story](#)

[Lisa's Story](#)

[Michael's Story](#)

When you say you will be testing assumptions, is there a list of assumptions already compiled for each opportunity space that we could see? Or is this an expected output from your work over the summer?

A list of assumptions has already been compiled from the Phase 1 research. We have decided not to include them in appendices due to organisations being named whom we have not yet spoken to. In addition, we anticipate these assumptions will change over the coming months as we work through them.

Ageing Better will work through these and others that are identified throughout the summer, the results of this work will be shared with the contractor as part of the induction sessions.

Do you anticipate refining opportunity spaces and solutions internally prior to the commencement of Phase 2? Can we propose further testing of assumptions through the prototyping stage?

We do not anticipate refining or removing any opportunity spaces ahead of the start of this contract. What is more likely is we collect data under different assumptions for each opportunity that the contracted design agency could use to refine the opportunities themselves. This may lead us to prioritise certain opportunities more than others. The commissioned organisation is welcome to propose new assumptions to test through the prototyping phase and we would probably expect this.

Are we able to access the six opportunity areas and seven proposed ideas? e.g. 'Designing for self-serve' and 'designing to fill market gaps?'

All 6 opportunity areas and the 7 potential solutions are within the ITT in appendix 8 slides 40-58 (linked in the final page of the original ITT and also here for ease [Appendix 8](#))