

# Request for Proposal

## Evaluation of the Person Led Strength-Based Coaching Program

Issue Date: 11 September 2023

Proposal Due: 29 September 2023

### 1. RFP Purpose

Mission Australia seeks to engage a skilled and experienced evaluator/consultancy to collaboratively design and deliver a participatory evaluation of the Person Led, Strength-Based Coaching Program (PLS) pilot in Greater Western Sydney.

### 2. About Us

**Mission Australia** is a national non-denominational Christian organisation, with more than 160 years' experience in standing together with Australians in need on their journey to independence. Our evidence-based, client-centred community services are focused toward our goal of ending homelessness and ensure people and communities in need can thrive. In the 2019-20 financial year, we supported over 167,268 Australians through 483 programs and services including: programs targeting homelessness; services providing integrated family support; parenting programs; early childhood education; mental health services; residential drug and alcohol programs; youth programs; access to safe and secure housing; and programs to build capacity, resilience and opportunity for local communities.

### 3. About the PLS Program

#### 3.1 Background

When seeking help through a tough time people often become trapped in services and face barriers created by the systems set up to help. Support systems can leave people feeling forced to sacrifice their dignity or revisit trauma in order to evidence need or access help, sometimes feeling controlled by services trying to 'fix' things instead of being met on a human level. The purpose of PLS is to challenge some of those barriers and see what is possible when you act as the antithesis to traditional, system led approaches. This service was developed in the UK and has been operational since 2016 in various iterations.

#### 3.2 Objectives of the PLS program

Building on Mission Australia's Tailored Support Coordination Service the PLS program will be piloted in Greater Western Sydney and offered to people who are tenants of Mission Australia Housing. The objectives of the PLS are to:

- Pilot the PLS program to look at the power of relationships first and the impact on people's lives when they are provided access to personalised, strength-based support.
- Support people to sustain safe and stable housing and prevent homeless.
- Support people to be empowered to make progress towards their personal goals.

- Provide people opportunities to connect to their community of choice, building strong and lasting relationships.

The PLS will support people to achieve their personal goals which will be unique to everyone. However, broad outcomes for the program, aligned to Mission Australia’s Organisational Outcomes Framework, are outlined below. These outcomes were identified as being important by people who were experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

 <p><b>SAFE AND SECURE HOUSING</b></p>	 <p><b>HEALTH AND WELLBEING</b></p>	 <p><b>SUPPORT AND CONNECTIONS</b></p>	 <p><b>INDEPENDENCE</b></p>
<p>People have a long-term affordable home, enough money to meet their needs and the skills and resources to keep their housing.</p>	<p>People feel safe at home and in the community, have healthy relationships and good physical health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>People have access to supports when they need it and are happy with their connections to the community.</p>	<p>People feel in control of their lives, set and achieve their own goals and have the opportunity to connect with education and employment.</p>

### 3.2 The PLS pilot

The PLS program is a three year ‘test and learn’ piece of work that will look at the power of relationships first and person led, strengths-based coaching. This response attempts to put the person in control, providing access to personalised, strength-based support and connecting people to real world opportunities and lasting, meaningful relationships.

Each person’s experience will be unique. People will reach different stages at different times, finding what works for them, at a time that works for them, as described in the figure below.

*For those that wish to work with us during this response, they will be offered:*

 <p>Opportunity to work alongside a PLS Coach will initially be offered to those living in Mission Australia Housing Properties.</p> <p><i>Initial contact will be made through direct marketing, casual interactions, and creative opportunities to build an initial relationship.</i></p>	 <p>The support will be Relationship First, Person Led and Strength Based.</p> <p><i>Coaches will walk alongside the person, listening deeply and responding to the person. There is no agenda and no power, the coach will not know the person until they meet and build a relationship.</i></p>	 <p>Connecting people to real world opportunities, brokering connections in the community</p> <p><i>Connecting people to opportunities in a community of their choice, building strong and lasting relationships, allowing for ongoing support once the coaching relationship comes to an end.</i></p>
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PLS Coaches will support two main groups of people who are living in Mission Australia Housing.

Target Group	Description
<p><b>Tenants living in Mission Australia Housing</b></p>	<p>PLS will be available to all tenants who want support. It is for people going through tough times for multiple reasons, for example social inequalities, reduced financial difficulties or challenges to sustain housing to prevent them from becoming homeless.</p>

<p><b>People who are in a family relationship</b></p>	<p>PLS will be available to people who are married or in a domestic or family relationship and who are in reduced financial circumstances. These families often need accommodation or are at risk of losing existing accommodation due to underlying factors in addition to financial hardship such as mental ill health, substance abuse and family violence. This initiative will not address these underlying issues but will refer to other services who specialise in these programs.</p>
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## 4. About the evaluation

Mission Australia seeks to engage a skilled and experienced evaluator/organisation to collaboratively design and deliver a participatory evaluation of the Person Led, Strength-Based Coaching Program (PLS) pilot in Greater Western Sydney.

The evaluator will work collaboratively with the PLS Evaluation Reference Group, who will meet regularly to provide oversight and feedback on the evaluation design, management, and reporting. It is critical that the evaluation design and delivery is informed by the voices and lived experience of people who are engaged in the PLS program. This will occur through either representation on the Evaluation Reference Group or an Advisory Group.

### 4.1 Evaluation objectives

The purpose of the evaluation is to examine the appropriateness and effectiveness of the PLS program. The objectives are to:

- Assess the implementation of the PLS program, including the appropriateness of providing access to person led, strengths-based support focused on relationships.
- Identify any barriers, enablers and service model components that are critical to establish, implement, and expand the PLS, as well as integration with Mission Australia Housing.
- Understand and evidence the impact of PLS, including increased independence, health and wellbeing, community connections and sustaining safe housing.
- Assess the value proposition of providing person-led support in comparison to other support coordination/case management service models.

The evaluation findings will be used to for both formative and summative purposes:

- Leverage the pilot findings to advocate and influence systems change, particularly how support coordination services are funded.
- Inform the decision to expand the PLS program across Mission Australia sites.
- Continuously improve the delivery of the PLS program to ensure the best possible services are being provided.
- Share best practice and evidence within Mission Australia and the broader sector to improve knowledge of what works when working alongside people to achieve their goals.

Specific evaluation questions to meet these objectives and purposes will be developed in collaboration with the Evaluation Reference Group.

## 4.2 Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation will assess the pilot of the PLS program in Greater Western Sydney. Evaluation stakeholders will include a range of diverse people who will be engaged in the PLS program, PLS coaches (x2), Mission Australia staff, partner organisations, government, and other stakeholders in each location.

## 4.3 Evaluation design

We are seeking a mixed methods evaluation design to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of the PLS program. It should include:

- Participatory approaches to capture the voices, experiences and outcomes for people accessing the PLS program.
- Utilisation and adaptation of existing quantitative data collected by Mission Australia, as well as developing new data collection tools as required.

Access to comparative data from other Mission Australia support coordination services will be provided to assess the value proposition of providing person-led support in comparison to other support coordination/case management service models.

## 4.4 Deliverables and timeframes

The timeframe for delivering the evaluation is 2 years from the date of contract commencement (estimated October 2023). The specific deliverables required are outlined in bold under the key phases of Mission Australia's Evaluation Project Management approach.

Evaluation Stage	Key tasks and deliverables
Manage	1. Commencement of the evaluation contract.
Design	2. <b>Initiation Workshop</b> with the Evaluation Reference Group to provide an overview of the initiative, introduce the proposed evaluation approach, develop key evaluation questions and establish shared ways of working, including involvement of people who are engaged with the PLS program. 3. Develop an <b>Evaluation Plan</b> , including questions, methodology, timeframes, data collection plan, analysis approach, ethical and cultural considerations and evidence sharing approach.
Measure	4. <b>Establish any additional data collection systems, procedures and templates</b> to support data collection and monitoring, including training of staff in data collection tools if needed. 5. Meet regularly with the Evaluation Reference Group to discuss data collection and address any challenges that may arise. 6. Undertake any additional data collection, as per the Evaluation Plan.
Analyse	7. Conduct analysis according to the data analysis section outlined in the Evaluation Plan. 8. Facilitate a <b>Validation Workshop</b> , before the interim and final evaluation report, with the Evaluation Reference Group to present early findings and to seek clarification, interpretation and synthesis of data sources for each evaluation question.

<b>Report</b>	<p>9. Produce a high quality and succinct <b>Interim Evaluation Report</b> focused on program design, implementation and appropriateness of providing person led, strengths-based support. Early outcomes may also be able to be reporting, pending sample size.</p> <p>10. Produce a high quality and succinct <b>Final Evaluation Report</b> which clearly answers the key evaluation questions and provides recommendation based on the key findings. The report will include implementation, outcomes and the value proposition compared to other service models.</p>
<b>Action</b>	11. Facilitation of <b>Key Findings Presentation</b> with the Evaluation Reference Group and key organisational stakeholders after the final evaluation report has been produced.

#### 4.5 Budget

The costs will be guided by the evaluation design; however, payment will be made in accordance with the following milestones.

Timeframe	Indicative budget	Deliverables
October 2023	\$10,000	Milestone 1: Commencement of contract
November 2023	\$20,000	Milestone 2: Acceptance of Evaluation Plan
November 2024	\$15,000	Milestone 3: Acceptance of Interim Evaluation Report
November 2025	\$15,000	Milestone 4: Acceptance of Final Evaluation Report
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$60,000</b>	

### 5. About your proposal

Please provide a proposal **by 5:00 pm (EST) on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023** outlining your demonstrated experience and capacity to complete the evaluation. Proposals should not exceed 10 pages and should include a concise description of:

- The proposed evaluation approach and methodology.
- Content knowledge and previous experience, including key personnel who would be involved in the evaluation team.
- Capacity to deliver to the timeframes and milestones listed above.
- A quotation with the breakdown of costs for each deliverable/milestone.
- Overview of insurances held by the provider.
- Key contact for the proposal – name, position, telephone, and email address;
- An example of previous work and two referees.

The following selection criteria will be used to compare and evaluate all proposals. A shortlist of Applicants will be invited for a short virtual interview. The successful applicant will be based on the strength of the proposal against the selection criteria and the additional information provided in the interview.

Criteria	Description
<b>Appropriateness of the proposed approach</b>	The proposed approach and evaluation design is appropriate to the requirements of the RFP. All aspects of the service design, cohorts, locations and ethical considerations have been considered and addressed.
<b>Demonstrated experience and content knowledge</b>	Experience in delivering similar evaluation projects. Demonstrated content knowledge about integrated housing and support service models.
<b>Organisational capacity</b>	Ability to deliver the project on time and within budget. The evaluation team includes technical skills, suitable experience and the ability to respectfully engage with local staff, people with a lived experience and other key stakeholders.
<b>Value for money</b>	Demonstrated value for money through careful considerations of the evaluation design costs, benefits, options and risks.

Selection of the successful applicant will be subject to negotiation and execution of a contract by Mission Australia.

All enquiries and submitted proposals should be sent by email to:

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