

## 1. Purpose

Mission Australia seeks to engage a skilled and experienced evaluator/consultancy to collaboratively design and deliver a participatory evaluation of the **Person Led Approach to Tailored Support Coordination (PL-TSC)** being implemented 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 on 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.

**The Mission Australia Centre for Evidence and Insights** aims to inspire curiosity for evidence that leads to learning and action to increase the impact of Mission Australia Services.

## 3. About the PLS Program

### 3.1 Background

**The Person Led Approach to Tailored Support Coordination (PL-TSC)** is a three-year initiative (FY24-FY26) that will look at the power of relationships first. What impact can we have in person or families' life if we reverse the pattern of service delivery. 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 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 this work is to challenge some of those issues and see what is possible when you act as the antithesis to traditional, system led, approaches.

This service model is designed to challenge the way we interact with people in the community. Moving us away from a case management, fixing mentality, focused on problems in people's lives. Instead, we are looking to be led by the person we are working alongside, focusing on their strengths and abilities and brokering opportunities in the real world.

At present there is limited support for people living in Mission Australia Housing in this region nor for families who are in reduced financial circumstances and in need of accommodation or at risk of losing existing accommodation. We aim to build on the work of the Tailored Support Coordination Services (TSCS) Service Model and adapt to a more person-led and strengths-based approach. What is the power of relationships first? If the person feels they have more choice and control over their lives, what difference does that make? The person-led and strengths-based model is summarised in the visual below.

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



Opportunity to work alongside a PLS Coach will initially be offered to those living in Mission Australia Housing Properties.

*Initial contact will be made through direct marketing, casual interactions, and creative opportunities to build an initial relationship.*



The support will be Relationship First, Person Led and Strength Based.

*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.*



Connecting people to real world opportunities, brokering connections in the community

*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.*

Key adaptations to the traditional Tailored Support Coordination Services (TSCS) model include:

- ❖ There is no formal referral process. The aim is to attract people to work with us rather than one agency referring to another.
- ❖ There are no initial forms or 'assessments' – the first few interactions are simply to get to know each other and build a trusting relationship with as much power equity as possible.
- ❖ There is no set timeframe for the 'relationship' and, it is up to the person, not the service when it ends.
- ❖ The process is led by the person we are working alongside, focusing on their strengths and abilities and brokering opportunities in the real world.
- ❖ Mission Australia does not enter the relationship with an agenda to try and 'fix' things.
- ❖ There is a focus on building connections in the person's community, particularly outside of the 'system' wherever possible.

If successful, the adapted approach to TSCS, can be leveraged as an influencing tool to change the way systems function, particularly how they are funded.

Success for the adapted service model is in the demonstration of the impact. This is a challenge to what success looks like to the organisation as well as to the person involved. We will need to consider how we collect data, how we report on success and how we use the work to influence change.

### **3.2 Aim, Objectives and Outcomes of the PLS program**

Building on Mission Australia's Tailored Support Coordination Service the approach being used in Greater Western Sydney is being offered to two distinct cohorts (see 3.3 below). The aim of the TSCS in Greater Western Sydney:

- Investigate the power of relationships first and the impact on people's lives when they are provided access to personalised, strength-based support.

The objectives are to:

- Support people through positive and trusting relationships 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.

**Related outcomes:**

Although personal goals which will be unique to each person, the **broad outcomes** for the program, aligned to Mission Australia’s Organisational Outcomes Framework, are summarised below. These outcomes have been identified as being important by people who are 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>

**3.3 Client Target Groups**

TSCS in Greater Western Sydney has two funding streams, Mission Australia Funded Initiative (MAFI) & George Cato Trust. The parameters of who Mission Australia can support through George Cato and MAFI funding is clearly defined by the characteristic of the clients and their current financial and housing situation.

**George Cato Funding:** George Cato clients are required to either be **married or in a domestic or family relationship** as defined by the Property Relationships Act 1984 (NSW). Additionally, these clients need to be **experiencing financial hardship**. These families 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. George Cato funded clients do not have to be living in supported housing. A separate evaluation report is required for those clients funded through George Cato in Nov 2024.

**MAFI Funding:** Clients who are **currently living in Mission Australia Housing** and want to work with us are funded by the MAFI stream. Clients can be **individuals as well as families** and they **do not need to be experiencing financial hardship**. This includes people going through tough times for multiple reasons or in multiple ways. This could include people who need more than one thing, particularly if they are also experiencing societal inequalities such as poverty or racism, service systems can stop helping and start to harm people. We want to interact with those people, understanding, from them, what may or may not work

To ensure accurate targeting of the program, the financial and family status of families supported by this initiative will be included in our intake assessment process to eligibility. Eligible clients will then be allocated to the appropriate funding stream. All clients will receive the adapted model of tailored support.

## 4. About the evaluation

Mission Australia seeks to engage a skilled and experienced evaluator or organisation to collaboratively design and deliver a participatory evaluation of the Person-led Approach to Tailored support coordination in Greater Western Sydney.

The evaluator will work collaboratively with an 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 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 PL-TSC program. The objectives are to:

- Assess the implementation of the Person led Tailored Support Coordination program, including the appropriateness of providing access to person led, strengths-based support focused on relationships.
- Explore the client journey and what they value about the approach.
- Understand and evidence the impact of the program, 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.
- Identify any barriers, enablers and service model components that are critical to establish, implement, and expand the approach, as well as integration with Mission Australia Housing.

### Evaluation use

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

- Leveraging the pilot findings to advocate and influence systems change, particularly for how support coordination services are funded.
- Inform the decision to expand the approach across Mission Australia sites.
- Continuously improve the delivery of the 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 Person Led Tailored Support Coordination Program in Greater Western Sydney between Jan 2024-Jun 2026. Evaluation stakeholders will include a range of diverse people who will be engaged in the program, coaches (x2), Mission Australia managers and staff, partner organisations, government, and other stakeholders in each location. The evaluation focus can be divided into three phases:

Phase 1: Establishment and early implementation

Phase 2: Approach in practice, emerging outcomes and learnings

Phase 3: Appropriateness, effectiveness, and scalability

#### **4.3 Evaluation design**

We are seeking a mixed-methods evaluation design to assess the appropriateness and effectiveness of the PL-TSC program. It is expected that the evaluation will include:

- Participatory and developmental approach that reflect the voices, experiences and outcomes for people accessing the PL-TSC program (such as audio, or visual, or narrative methods) \*
- A learning focus to refine and adapt the project as new insights emerge.
- 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.
- Utilisation and adaptation of existing quantitative data on outputs and outcomes routinely collected by Mission Australia, as well as developing new data collection tools as required. A draft evaluation framework and summary of quantitative data available from Mission Australia are attached.

\*Alignment with ethical principles and guidelines is important. The evaluation plan will be subject to internal Mission Australia ethics considerations before data collection commences.

#### **4.4 Governance and oversight of the evaluation**

An evaluation reference group has been established to provide oversight of the evaluation. The group will meet quarterly to understand progress and provide reflection on key learnings, enablers and barriers.

### 4.5 Deliverables and timeframes

The timeframe for delivering the evaluation is 18 months from the date of contract commencement (estimated May 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
<b>Manage</b>	1. Commencement of the evaluation contract.
<b>Design</b>	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> , that aligns to the draft evaluation framework including evaluation questions, methodology, timeframes, data collection plan, analysis approach, ethical and cultural considerations and evidence sharing approach.
<b>Discover</b>	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.
<b>Synthesise and reflect</b>	7. Conduct primary analysis according to the data analysis section outlined in the Evaluation Plan. 8. Facilitate <b>reflection workshops</b> to assess progress and identify key learnings for phases one and two, in 2024 at the midpoint in June 2025 9. Facilitate a <b>Validation Workshop</b> , in Apr/May 2026 before the 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>	10. Produce a high quality and succinct <b>Initial Evaluation Report for George Cato clients in Nov 2024</b> focused on program design, and implementation. Early outcomes may also be able to be reporting, pending sample size. 11. Produce a Summary Interim findings report to reflect key insights and outcomes at emerging from the phase 2 (mid-point 2025) 12. Facilitation of <b>Key Findings Presentation</b> with the Evaluation Reference Group and key organisational stakeholders in <b>May 2026</b> prior to the final evaluation report has been produced. Produce a high quality and succinct 13. <b>Final Evaluation Report for the overall PL-TSC initiative by Jun 2026 and separate sub reports for George Cato and MAFI funded clients</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.

#### 4.6 Budget

The maximum budget for this project is \$50,000 (excluding GST).

### 5. About your proposal

Please provide a proposal **by 5:00 pm (EST) on Wednesday the 15th of May** 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.
- A timeline that outlines key project milestones
- Capacity to deliver to the timeframes and milestones.
- 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 evaluation and methods experience</b>	Experience in delivering similar evaluation projects, including qualitative and innovative evaluation methods and evaluation of pilot initiatives
<b>Content knowledge</b>	An understanding of 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:

Samantha Abbato, Impact Measurement and Evaluation Manager, Centre for Evidence & Insights, Mission Australia: [abbatos@missionaustralia.com.au](mailto:abbatos@missionaustralia.com.au)