

Invitation to Tender (ITT) for an Independent Evaluation of the Recruitment and Retention of Now Teach STEM Career-Changers

Introduction to Now Teach

Now Teach is a UK charity founded to encourage and support people to change career into teaching, particularly individuals with significant experience in other professions. We work to recruit, support, and retain talented individuals who bring valuable knowledge and skills from diverse sectors into classrooms. By doing so, we aim to address teacher shortages in critical subjects, enrich education with real-world expertise, and improve outcomes for students.

A key objective of the Now Teach programme is to increase the number of career-changers entering and remaining in STEM teaching. Now Teach disproportionately attracts teachers in STEM subjects. Since our inception in 2017, 63% of Now Teach recruits have been in STEM subjects, adding almost 900 new teachers to the workforce in high-priority subjects. We are now seeking to commission a robust, independent evaluation to quantify the impact and value for money of our programme.

Background and Project Case

Recruiting and retaining secondary teachers in STEM subjects is a persistent challenge for the education sector. The Now Teach Programme aims to attract career changers who might not have otherwise considered teaching, providing tailored support to improve training completion and long-term retention.

Initial internal data suggests the programme is successful, but a rigorous, independent evaluation is required to assess the programme's additionality and cost-effectiveness. This evaluation will provide crucial evidence for Now Teach, its stakeholders, and the wider education sector.

Project Scope

We are seeking a research organisation to conduct a rigorous, independent evaluation of the Now Teach programme, focusing on three key areas:

Part 1: Retention Impact

- To evaluate the impact of Now Teach support on teacher retention by comparing the retention rates of Now Teach-supported teachers with a robust comparison group.
- The successful bidder will be expected to:
 - Use a combination of data (e.g., ITT Performance Profiles, School Workforce Census, and Now Teach in-house data) to track the careers of Now Teach trainees. **Note:** This may require access requests submitted to the Office of National Statistics for SWC subset data.
 - Create a statistically matched comparison group from trainees not supported by Now Teach (by age and career progression).
 - Employ robust statistical techniques to compare retention rates between the groups and determine if any differences are statistically significant.
 - Conduct sub-group analysis for STEM and Non-STEM teachers, and (if possible) by demographic makeup – i.e.- ethnicity, gender, previous industry, school type, etc.

Part 2: Recruitment Impact

- To assess the extent to which the Now Teach programme recruits teachers who would not otherwise have entered the profession.
- The successful bidder will be expected to:
 - Analyse existing Now Teach survey data on trainees' perceptions of whether they would have entered teaching without the programme.
 - Critically interpret this perceptual data and incorporate it into the overall assessment of impact.
 - Check the stability of our conclusions by testing how the results change under different plausible scenarios for recruitment impact – i.e. . sensitivity analysis.

Part 3: Cost and Value for Money Analysis

- To evaluate the cost-effectiveness of the Now Teach programme. The successful bidder will be expected to:
 1. Overall Programme Value for Money:
 - Summarise the average total programme cost per supported trainee.
 - Calculate the total number of additional 'teacher-years' generated by the programme (combining recruitment and retention effects).
 - Estimate the average cost per additional teacher-year for the programme as a whole.
 - Compare this overall cost-effectiveness against alternative policy options, such as bursaries and early-career payments.
 2. Recruitment-Specific Value for Money:
 - Isolate the costs associated with the recruitment and training phases of the candidate journey (e.g., marketing, selection, initial training support).
 - Estimate the number of additional teachers recruited specifically due to the Now Teach programme (the 'recruitment additionality').
 - Calculate a cost per additional recruit to understand the investment required to attract and place one career-changer who would not otherwise have entered teaching.
 - Where possible, analyse the value for money of key recruitment activities (e.g., specific marketing campaigns, partnership models, selection events) to identify particular strengths or inefficiencies.
 3. Retention-Specific Value for Money:
 - Isolate the costs associated with the post-qualification support and network engagement phases of the candidate journey (e.g., ongoing coaching, CPD, community events).

- Estimate the number of additional ‘teacher-years’ generated specifically through improved retention (the ‘retention additionality’).
- Calculate a cost per additional teacher-year retained to understand the investment required to keep a career-changer in the profession for an additional year.
- Where possible, analyse the value for money of key retention activities (e.g., early-career support, mentor programmes, network events) to identify which interventions are most effective at sustaining teachers in the classroom.

The ultimate goal of this segmented analysis is to determine if the programme's value for money is uniform across the candidate lifecycle or if there are significant peaks and troughs, thereby providing Now Teach with clear evidence to optimise future investment and programme design.

Key Deliverables

The successful supplier will be required to provide:

- A comprehensive and visually engaging written report, written in plain English, detailing the methodology, findings, caveats, and policy implications. A final spreadsheet(s) of data and calculations should also be included.
- An interim presentation of emerging findings to Now Teach stakeholders.
- Dissemination assets to accompany the report publication (e.g., a press release).

Data

Now Teach will provide the successful bidder with:

- Anonymised data on supported trainees (including characteristics and current status where available).
- Survey data relating to recruitment additionality.
- Information on average programme costs.

The bidder must outline their proposed approach to securely handling this data and demonstrate experience in applying for and utilising Department for Education (DfE) data sets (e.g., School Workforce Census), as this will be crucial for the evaluation.

Instructions for Tenderers

Please provide a written proposal addressing the scope of work outlined in this document. Your proposal should include the following sections:

1. Technical Proposal:

- Your understanding of the project's objectives.
- A detailed proposed methodology for addressing each part of the scope of work.
- Your approach to data management, security, and ethical considerations.
- Identification of potential risks and your proposed mitigation strategies.
- Any unique value add that you believe you could bring to this project.

2. Project Management:

- A proposed project plan and timeline.
- Project team structure, including CVs of key personnel (to be included as an appendix).
- The lead contact for the project.

3. Experience and Expertise:

- Details of your relevant experience, specifically in conducting impact evaluations and cost-effectiveness analyses in the education sector.
- Examples of at least two similar projects you have delivered, highlighting the impact and outcomes.
- References from at least two previous clients.

4. Budget and Cost Proposal:

- Proposals should be budgeted at no more than £40k including a detailed breakdown of costs, inclusive of all expenses and VAT.

Submission Requirements

- Proposals must be submitted electronically in PDF format.
- The technical (sections 1 – 3 above) and cost proposals (section 4 above) should be submitted as separate documents.
- The technical proposal should not exceed 12 pages.
- All submissions and any questions should be sent to: Adam Simmons – adam.simmons@nowteach.org.uk and Jim Riddiford – jim.riddiford@nowteach.org.uk

Timeline

- ITT issued: 22nd October
- Deadline for clarifications/questions: 31st October
- Submission deadline: 11th November (5pm BST)
- Shortlisting of suppliers: 12th November
- Supplier presentations/interviews: 19th and 20th November
- Final decision and appointment: 28th November
- Project commencement: w/c 1st December (ideally)