

## Terms of Reference - UK School-based Longitudinal Research Study (Phase 1)

### Summary

Khulisa delivers intensive social and emotional skills development programmes for young people in schools, Pupil Referral Units, prisons and communities in the UK. We are seeking an experienced and innovative evaluator to help us set up a longitudinal research project focusing on our work in schools and Pupil Referral Units. We are seeking support to ensure that this study is as rigorous as possible, given resources and context, and has the potential to feed into a possible Social Return on Investment study as part of Phase 2.

### Background and Rationale

Khulisa has been delivering a unique social and emotional development programme ('Face It') in UK schools and Pupil Referral Units for 8 years. 'Face It' is designed for children aged 11-18 who have been excluded from school (or are at risk of exclusion) due to their disruptive/challenging behaviour. This programme is currently being delivered in 7 schools / Pupil Referral Units in the UK (across London and the North West). We aim to deliver the programme to at least 200 students per year.

We have recently revisited and adapted our theory of change and monitoring and evaluation framework. We look for positive changes in the following outcomes across all programmes:

- Perceived life satisfaction;
- Social and emotional wellbeing;
- Reduced negative mental wellbeing markers

We also attempt to monitor the following longer-term outcomes:

- In-school behaviour (attendance, punctuality, behaviour marks);
- Academic attainment;
- Return to mainstream schooling (where relevant)

Our goal is to improve our capacity for longitudinal follow up and attribution so that we can contribute to the emerging evidence base in this sector and influence policy.

### About Khulisa

Inspired by our South African sister charity (founded in 1997), Khulisa means 'to nurture' in Zulu. We have been working in the UK for over 10 years, making prisons and schools safer and more nurturing environments, and transforming the lives of over 3000 people, empowering them to make positive choices for a lifestyle that promotes wellbeing.

Khulisa provides:

- **Intensive support** to young people most at need, addressing root causes not symptoms;
- **Targeted** support for young people with complex needs;
- **A whole school / prison approach**, aspiring to create cultural change and embedding our services in an institution over a significant period of time (usually 3 years) until sustainable institutional-level change is achieved;
- Programmes run only by **highly qualified therapists** who are skilled enough to deliver our methodology via a flexible approach whilst guaranteeing safety and security;
- Methodology underpinned by a **Dramatherapy** process and built on a **strengths-based and trauma-informed approach** ([incorporating the Good Lives Model](#)) recognising the assets and abilities of the young people we work with, no matter what situation they are in;
- A strong commitment to **evidence-based approaches** with commitment to quality monitoring and evaluation to use data to influence policy as well as practice.

## Research Purpose and Objectives

**The Existing Evidence Base:** A convincing body of international evidence suggests that social and emotional learning (SEL) interventions can have long-term benefits, including improved wellbeing, educational attainments and the prevention of negative behaviour and social difficulties (Clarke et al., 2015; Durlak et al., 2011; Gutman et al., 2012). Evidence suggests positive impact of SEL interventions implemented specifically in the school setting (Clarke et al., 2015). There is convincing evidence that SEL interventions aimed at reducing problem behaviours are particularly effective with children who are most at risk of exclusion (Clarke et al., 2015).

**The Knowledge Gap:** A comprehensive review funded by the Early Intervention Foundation concludes that evidence currently available on UK-specific programmes is not yet of sufficient quality to demonstrate impact. There is also a paucity of information regarding the cost benefit ratio of schools-based SEL interventions in UK schools.

### Khulisa's Research:

To contribute to this emerging evidence base, Khulisa is planning a longitudinal research project, which will take place over 2 years. Our aim is to gather robust evidence to explore the longitudinal outcomes and, where possible, impact of 'Face It'. Depending on the data collected, we will potentially calculate the Social Return on Investment to strengthen the case at policy level for increased resources for Social and Emotional Learning in schools.

This study will be conducted across two phases. Phase-One will focus on collecting and analysing high quality longitudinal data from children participating in Khulisa's Face It programme (conducted between April 2019 - December 2020). Depending on this data, Phase-Two may involve economic modelling to establish the SROI of the programme (Dec

2020 - Mar 2021), with a final report published in early 2021. If positive impact is not identified, the study will focus solely on establishing lessons learned about what works, and - importantly - what doesn't work in this space. This ToR is for Phase 1.

Phase 1 is the 'Set-Up' Phase. We are seeking an experienced evaluator / team of evaluators to assist Khulisa with the following:

1. **Initial review of our Theory of Change** - this has been developed based on workshops, literature reviews, external evidence and internal evaluation data;
2. **Devising a realistic approach to exploring attribution / causality in the absence of a control group.** We are open to options, for example using secondary literature, quasi experimental approaches - quantitative and / or qualitative and are looking for innovative and credible solutions given the context (working in a school environment with children with complex needs and minimal resources);
3. **Reviewing our existing data collection and analysis tools and processes** - these are based on validated frameworks. Are they fit for purpose and aligned with our Theory of Change? Can we make any improvements? To what extent can we integrate more participatory approaches?
4. **Improve our capacity for longitudinal follow-up in schools** - including a review of our existing follow-up tools and strategies;
5. **Ensuring that we are monitoring cost data** that would be required if we were to calculate SROI in phase 2.

#### To note:

- Khulisa plans to collect the majority of data as part of routine M&E processes, using data collection approaches refined with the Consultant. The Consultant may wish to involve young people in research 'set up' and may wish to conduct additional data collection to supplement our own;
- We use a combination of excel and Salesforce for data processing and analysis - we will continue to develop this in line with data needs and resources;
- Khulisa is a small organisation, with a small team of 14 core staff members, any approaches must take this into account;
- We work with young people who have experienced trauma, have low literacy and concentration levels and who have very complex needs. Any approaches must take these constraints into account - the wellbeing of participants is the priority at all times.
- We are open to suggestions / approaches / methodologies to ensure high quality research that makes the most of limited resources.

## Deliverables and Main Activities

| Activity   | Deliverable  |
|--|--|
| Theory of Change review workshop   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theory of Change Review Document - outlining findings / suggestions for improvements - may be brief as a lot of work has already gone into this;</li> <li>• Revised Theory of Change - if applicable.</li> </ul>                            |
| Devising a realistic approach to exploring attribution / causality in the absence of a control group.        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document outlining options and recommended approach to attribution / causality;</li> <li>• Any changes required to data collection tools to be implemented - in both paper and digital survey format (Khulisa uses FormAssembly)</li> </ul> |
| Data collection and analysis tools and process review  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final pre / post programme data collection tools - in both paper and digital survey format;</li> <li>• Data collection plan - detailing processes (if any changes to current plan)</li> </ul>   |
| Explore strategies and tools for longitudinal follow-up  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document outlining recommended options for improved longitudinal follow-up, including budget implications;</li> <li>• Final follow-up data collection tools - in both paper and digital survey format</li> </ul>                            |
| Ensuring that we are monitoring the cost data that would be required if we were to calculate SROI in phase 2 | A document outlining the cost data requirements for a potential SROI, should Khulisa decide to pursue this as part of Phase 2.   |

In addition to the above, we recommend direct observation of 'Face It' in at least one school / Pupil Referral Unit. There is also the option to attend a team meeting, which would add rich context to the intervention and Khulisa's methodology.

### Further Information to be Provided to the Successful Applicant

- Theory of Change narrative and visual
- Detailed Khulisa 'Face It' methodology
- Khulisa Core Outcomes / M&E Framework Document
- Current evaluation tools used by Khulisa
- Review of evaluation frameworks in the wellbeing space - undertaken by Khulisa

## Indicative Schedule

April - June: We aim to begin work by the end of April 2019. We anticipate that this work will require approximately 6-8 weeks to complete.

## Budget

Our maximum budget for Phase 1 is up to **£10,000 (including all expenses and taxes)** and needs to include all of the above, with a focus on making the most of our limited resources as a small organisation. There will be minimal direct data collection on the part of the Consultant, and travel will be restricted to London (optional to Manchester / Sheffield). Khulisa is based in Kings Cross, London.

Our budget for Phase 2 of this study (interpretation, analysis, validation, triangulation, reporting) is **£10,000**. The researcher implementing Phase 1 is encouraged to apply for Phase 2.

## Selection Process

We're looking for an evaluator / researcher (or a team) who is / are:

- Passionate about social justice;
- Pragmatic and realistic - respecting the constraints of working in a small organisation in a challenging delivery context;
- Innovative in their approach to evaluation;
- Experienced working with children and young people;
- Collaborative and happy to work as a team;
- Experienced with participatory approaches

The ideal evaluator / researcher will have advanced knowledge of:

- The UK school and education context;
- Innovative evaluation approaches, including qualitative, quantitative, quasi-experimental;
- Social and emotional skills interventions;
- Measuring social and emotional wellbeing;

Suitable candidates are invited to submit the following documents to [annie@khulisa.co.uk](mailto:annie@khulisa.co.uk) by 9am UK time on **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2019**:

1. CV – of **no more than 3 pages**;
2. Brief document (1-2 pages) outlining understanding of the ToR and initial approach for achieving deliverables;
3. Financial proposal and breakdown of time required;

4. Examples of previous work relating to evaluation design and implementation;
5. Details of 2 professional referees (Khulisa will not contact unless application is successful).