
**STAGE 1: CALL FOR EVIDENCE.
BUILDING THE KNOWLEDGE BASE TO
HELP DEFINE THE SOCIAL VALUE OF
EQUESTRIANISM IN THE UK.**

February 2024



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Project Summary

1. British Equestrian have developed this Invitation to Tender (ITT) in support of our need to define the social value of equestrian activity in the UK.
 - 1.1. This ITT represents stage 1 of a 2-stage process that will collate evidence and define the social value associated with equestrian activity in the UK.
 - 1.2. The first stage will gather and collate evidence on the personal and societal health and wellbeing benefits of involvement in equestrian activity.
 - 1.3. The British Equestrian Federation on behalf of its [member bodies](#) seeks to appoint a suitably experienced individual or organisation to complete this project.
 - 1.4. We wish to develop our sector's understanding of the true benefits of our industry, to gather evidence of the benefits of equestrian activity in a broad sense, i.e. including but not limited to personal development, physical and mental health and wellbeing, in addition to community cohesion.
 - 1.5. The call for evidence will **inform** the second stage of this project: to define the social value of equestrian activity. The calculation of this value and quantifying the personal, community and societal impact of the unique horse-human interaction, will result from gathering a strong and robust evidence base in the first stage.
 - 1.6. It is anticipated that the contract for stage 1 of this project will commence in April 2024 and be completed by July 2024.

Background

2. British Equestrian is the National Governing Body for horse sports in the UK, affiliated to the Federation Equestre Internationale (FEI), the international governing body of equestrian sports. It exists to provide leadership, vision, and purpose in steering the direction of equestrianism. For more information on British Equestrian, please refer to our [website](#).
 - 2.1. British Equestrian is an umbrella organisation representing the interests of 18 independent member bodies (14 members and four associates) and their members. Established in 1972, it is the largest representative body within the equestrian industry. We acknowledge there are an estimated 3 million riders, vaulters and carriage drivers across Great Britain.
 - 2.2. As a National Governing Body, British Equestrian works on policy issues with the FEI. It coordinates the British calendar of international events, disciplinary procedures, and doping control, and oversees the training of British international judges, stewards, vets, and course designers.
 - 2.3. In the UK, British Equestrian plays an active role in representing the common interests of its member bodies to organisations such as the British Olympic Association, British Paralympic Association, SportsAid, the Sport and Recreation Alliance, DCMS and DEFRA.

- 2.4. British Equestrian is responsible for distributing government funding to the equestrian sports. Funding from UK Sport and Sport England supports British Equestrian's work, from developing elite riders aiming to win medals for Great Britain to encouraging complete beginners from a range of backgrounds to get involved. Funding support is also provided by Sport Scotland for HorseScotland, aligned to British Equestrian while support in Wales and Northern Ireland is currently provided through our member bodies.
- 2.5. British Equestrian continues to drive participation in equestrian sport as a result of the Olympic and Paralympic legacy, aiming to encourage more people to take up horse riding, driving, vaulting and volunteering. By connecting people to riding centres, schools, clubs and equestrian sporting organisations, British Equestrian is helping more people to discover horses, get fit and improve their wellbeing.
- 2.6. We remain a sport that is diverse in certain demographic criteria: by gender, age and disability, but people from ethnically diverse backgrounds or households with higher levels of deprivation are much less likely to enjoy equestrian activity. Despite this, the numbers of people enjoying being on or around horses and working or volunteering in the sector are significant (please see the appendix for more information on the size and scale of our industry).
- 2.7. There is a belief that the number of people benefitting from non-traditional equestrian off-the-horse activities is also growing, e.g. equine assisted learning and equine assisted therapy as well as other activities such as in-hand agility. We are keen to understand the social value that this broader base of participants, workforce and volunteers create for the UK.
3. We already know a lot about the benefits of sport and physical activity through a significant amount of work conducted and published over the past two decades. Please see the Appendix for the sources of information we already have knowledge of and have gathered in preparation for Stage 1.
 - 3.1. Those responding to this tender will need to conduct a literature review and gather information on those areas we do not have current knowledge of.

Strategic Rationale

4. Why is this project important to the BEF? By conducting a call for evidence, this work aligns to the BEF's strategic goals as follows:
 - 4.1. Builds innovative new insights that inform our future strategic direction and operational planning, through understanding the breadth of impact it has on people's lives across the UK
 - 4.2. Shows leadership in building a strong evidence base and gathering high quality case studies of the health and wellbeing benefits of equestrian activities and programmes, to inform future marketing, communication and fundraising plans and share across the sector

- 4.3. Supports the rationale for investment into equestrian activities at national, regional and local level, informing future conversations with strategic partners, sponsors, the health sector, funding organisations and government
- 4.4. Informs discussions around the unique benefits of horse-human interaction to further influence societal perceptions and therefore acceptance of equestrianism.

Key Requirements for the project

Research Objectives

- 5. To understand the equestrian sector's contribution to the nation's health and wellbeing there is a need to define the benefits of the significant numbers of people enjoying equestrian on- and off-the horse activities on a regular basis.
 - 5.1. We know there are significant numbers of children and adults from a variety of backgrounds who also enjoy learning to ride and take part in a variety of equestrian activities.
 - 5.2. It is time we defined the benefits of equestrian activity to build on British Equestrian Trade Association's economic review of the worth of the industry to the economy, with a social value.
 - 5.3. The launch of the government's strategy: [Get Active](#), seeks to encourage significantly greater levels of activity across the nation. Within the strategy, DCMS clearly focus on the following outcomes as its core areas/benefits of sport and physical activity:
 - 5.3.1. Physical health. For example, relating to: metrics and qualitative testimonies of improved overall physical health, stamina and fitness; reduced risk of slips, trips and falls, or lower dependency on medication
 - 5.3.2. Mental wellbeing. For example, relating to: measures or examples of improved life satisfaction, happiness or lower anxiety and levels of stress
 - 5.3.3. Personal development. For example, relating to: self-esteem, ability to tackle everyday challenges, self-efficacy in achieving goals; educational attainment
 - 5.3.4. Community engagement. For example, relating to: how 'active' people are in their communities, the quality of friendships and the sense of connection they feel to their communities
 - 5.3.5. Social cohesion. This could include: equine-assisted rehabilitation programmes for young offenders; equine-assisted therapy and learning programmes
 - 5.4. The areas listed above are not exhaustive and there will be other aspects that equine activity helps to provide positive individual and/or community level

- outcomes that would help contribute to the social value of equestrian activity, whether this takes place 'on the horse' or in the growing body of off-horse activities provided by equestrian centres, yards, and groups.
- 5.5. Whether it's the wider benefits to volunteers and the paid equestrian workforce; utilising equestrian activity as a means of improving the physical literacy of children and helping them connect with other people and/or animals; providing adults with an enjoyable activity they can experience across their life; helping people feel more connected to their local communities or improving the mental wellbeing and reducing anxiety levels for people who may find the uniqueness of the human-horse interaction particularly beneficial, we are keen to hear how equestrian adds social value, however this occurs.
 - 5.6. There is also growing evidence of the benefits of equestrian activity in areas that could be considered quite surprising to those not involved in regular equestrian activity:
 - 5.6.1. A couple of examples from across the BEF include: [RDAs Tea with a Pony](#) and [BHS' Changing Lives Through Horses](#)
 - 5.6.2. Examples from beyond the federation include: [Key4Life](#), a programme that utilises equine therapy (amongst a range of options) to rehabilitate young men in prison or at risk of going to prison.
 - 5.6.3. There are other examples that are available and responding organisations are also asked to consider the Federation of Horses in Education and Therapy International (HETI) which publishes an [annual journal](#) of peer-reviewed research.
 - 5.7. As such, capturing evidence aligned to these areas should guide the proposals developed in response to this tender opportunity.
 - 5.8. Overall, we will eventually want to define the social value of who is involved in equestrian activity in terms of estimating how many £'s it saves the NHS in terms of prevention/reduction in disease risk and self-management of disease, keeping people in work and/or helping them feel more productive and engaged at school, work or in training.
 - 5.9. Impact of equestrian on the EDI agenda. It is important that the report allows us to explore the unique benefits of equestrianism given the higher proportions of people involved who are women and girls, are older (35+ years old) and have long-term health conditions or impairments (compared to many other activities).
 - 5.10. The insights generated by this project will also form the basis of future communications to raise the profile of equestrianism at a national level, including in conversation with funders, government, and existing or potential sponsors.
 - 5.11. It should be noted that the evidence gathered in stage 1 should enable the calculation of the social value of equestrianism using methods consistent with [HM Treasury 2022 Green Book](#) in stage 2.
 - 5.12. **Please note that the following are out of scope for this tender:**

- 5.12.1. Economic (or market) value of equestrianism (this has already been estimated at £5 billion per annum by BETA's National Equestrian Survey)
- 5.12.2. the generation of a social value figure for equestrianism in the UK. This is required in stage 2 instead. Naturally, the more comprehensive our evidence base is after stage 1, the more accurate our social value figure will be. **However, responding organisations are asked to confirm if they could undertake both stages when responding to this tender.**

Methodology

- 6. It is recommended that responding individuals /organisations propose the most appropriate methodological approach to meet the objectives of this tender.
 - 6.1. In their proposals, organisations are invited to include a detailed explanation of why their approach is suitable and their track record in utilising similar approaches in gathering evidence of the benefits of equestrian or, at least, activity.
 - 6.2. In responding to this tender opportunity, please identify the skills and experience you have aligned to the tender requirements shown below.

Partnership working

- 7. This project is expected to receive a lot of attention from other partners involved in the delivery of equestrian experiences across the UK, who would also benefit from the findings and recommendations. As such, a workshop approach to sharing the findings at the end of the project is recommended.

Key Deliverables

- 8. The main deliverables for this project are:
 - 8.1. weekly project/progress updates to the project lead at BEF
 - 8.2. an interim project update including emerging statistics and case studies demonstrating the breadth of evidence collected
 - 8.3. a final detailed report including key findings and recommendations that will be published on the BEF webpage
 - 8.4. a summary presentation, including key themes, learnings and recommendations for stage 2 of this project
 - 8.5. a half-day workshop with British Equestrian and partners to bring to life the evidence to life

Timescales

9. The timescales for this project are as follows:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| • Invitation to Tender process begins | 27th February 2024 |
| • Deadline for questions of clarification | 14 th March |
| • Deadline for proposals to BEF | 22 nd March |
| • Shortlisting | By 29 th March |
| • Shortlisted organisations: virtual presentations | 10 th April |
| • Appointment of winning organisation | 19 th April |
| • Kick off meeting to finalise approach | 24 th April |
| • Evidence gathering period | April – June |
| • Interim presentation: learnings & case studies | w/c 3 rd June |
| • Presentation and workshop with BEF & partners | w/c 1st July |

Tender Requirements

10. The written tender proposal should include the following:

- 10.1. 1-page summary of your proposal
- 10.2. How you would approach delivery of the project, including details on your methodology
- 10.3. Why the BEF should select you for this project
- 10.4. What experience you have of conducting literature reviews of the benefits of sport and/or physical activities (or a similar sector)
- 10.5. What experience you have of gathering evidence to generate social value calculations
- 10.6. How you create high quality, insightful deliverables that maximise the benefits of this project, helping BEF influence the wider sector and 'change the narrative' for who can benefit from equestrian activity
- 10.7. Detailed breakdown and explanation of costs
- 10.8. Company expertise with relevant case studies, including breakdown of project team credentials
- 10.9. Risk register (see below)

Budget

11. The budget available for this work is £17,500, which includes VAT and project costs, e.g. travel expenses.
 - 11.1. Proposals should not go above this amount, but if they do, then a clear rationale for a slight overspend against this budget is required.
 - 11.2. Proposals should include a full break down of their costs, to show how resource is being allocated across the project.

Risk register

12. Organisations responding to this ITT are encouraged to provide a risk register for this project, outlining:
 - 12.1. the risks that may affect their ability to deliver the project
 - 12.2. scores for the likelihood and impact of each risk
 - 12.3. against the risks, a series of mitigating actions should be included in the proposal, demonstrating the ways in which the organisation seek to reduce the impact and/or likelihood of each risk

Proposal Selection Criteria

13. For this project, proposals will be scored against the following criteria:

Criteria	Weighting
Understanding of the BEF's project requirements, including strategic importance	15%
Proposed approach and demonstrable expertise in it	25%
Project team	20%
Demonstrable expertise in providing actionable insights	15%
Risk register and mitigating actions	5%
Value for money	20%

- 13.1. Proposals will be reviewed by 5 people, including 3 BEF members of staff, a BEF board member, and a representative from one of our member bodies.
- 13.2. If shortlisted, the potential supplier will be invited to attend a virtual interview on 10th April 2024.

- 13.3. The interview will comprise a 40-minute presentation, covering the main elements of the potential supplier's response to this ITT, and 20 minutes for questions from the panel, with interviews lasting no more than one hour.
- 13.4. Potential suppliers should indicate in their tender response whether they are available to attend on this date. If unavailable, an alternative date may be agreed with BEF for w/c 15th April.
- 13.5. On appointment, the successful organisation will be expected to attend a kick off meeting with the project team on 24th April 2024.
- 13.6. The BEF reserves the right to change the tender process including the timetable, to reject any or all the proposals received, not to invite any tenderer to proceed further and not to provide any tenderer with additional information. Each potential supplier should identify any conflict of interest that would affect their submission.

Contact Details

14. The project will be managed for the BEF by Abbie Bevan, the Research and Insight Manager. Please direct any enquiries and questions on this tender and process to Abbie, whose contact details are: abigail.bevan@bef.co.uk

Appendix A – Current Sources of Information

15. We know a lot about the benefits of sport and physical activity through a significant amount of work that's been conducted and published over the past two decades.
 - 15.1. This includes:
 - 15.1.1. an overall social value of £85.5bn as defined through [Sport England's work in 2020](#), which equates to a four-fold benefit for investing in physical activity (this focused on England and not the UK, as this project requires)
 - 15.1.2. [Sport Wales' SROI Study of Sport](#) for 2023, highlighted a contribution of £5.89bn, finding that for every £1 invested in sport in Wales, there is a £4.44 social value return.
 - 15.1.3. [UK Active highlighting the social benefits of physical activity in leisure facilities](#)
 - 15.1.4. [State of Life](#) have conducted a significant amount of work in this area, including Levelling Up the Playing Field (policy evaluation for sport and physical activity), parkrun, adult grassroots football (England) and the value of parks and green spaces (for Fields in Trust)
 - 15.1.5. Sheffield Hallam University has also been involved in many key projects, including: [the benefits of outdoor sport for society](#) and other projects, some of which are highlighted in this report for Sport England, amongst others
16. There has also been a plethora of other social value projects, aimed at defining these per sport, including:
 - 16.1.1. [The Value of Swimming](#) (launched Sept 23) – England only
 - 16.1.2. [The Social Value of Movement and Dance](#) (launched Sept 23) – England only
 - 16.1.3. [Impact of EFL clubs in the community](#) (launched Jan 23) – England & Wales only
17. Other relevant sources of information on the benefits of being active, include:
 - [The NHS](#)
 - [Sport England](#)
 - [Sport Wales](#)
 - [Scottish Government](#)
 - [Sport Scotland](#) – Feel Your Personal Best campaign
 - [Sport Ireland](#)
 - [The UN](#) – in context of sustainable development goals
18. We have already gathered information on many large-scale data sets including:
 - 18.1. [Active Lives adult and children/young people surveys in England.](#)
 - 18.2. the [School Sports Survey](#) and [Sport and Active Lifestyle Survey](#) in Wales
 - 18.3. DCMS' Taking Part Survey
19. We have our own research and datasets that will be put forward, including:
 - 19.1. Member Bodies' membership data across the federation. BEF can help coordinate data/evidence requests from across the federation (a summary is included in the State of Nation report link below).

- 19.2. [Health of Riding Establishments](#)
 - 19.3. [Urban Equestrian Centres](#)
 - 19.4. [#HorsesForAll](#)
 - 19.5. [State of the Nation report](#)
20. There has also already been some research focusing on areas of social value. This is the research we are aware of and has already been put forward:
- 20.1.1. The [British Horse Society's report](#) (with University of Brighton) into the health benefits of horse riding in the UK
 - 20.1.2. The [Riding for the Disabled Association's report](#) into Horses, Health and Happiness through volunteering
21. We are also aware that there might be a huge wealth of research conducted in the Further and Higher Education communities, although BEF is only just starting to develop partnerships in this area. As such, this project would need to utilise this information in a way that helps to add value to this tender.