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**About the Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) Coalition**

Making Every Adult Matter (MEAM) is a unique coalition of the national charities Clinks, Collective Voice, Homeless Link and Mind.

Since 2009 we have supported over 50 local areas across the country to transform services and systems and to directly improve the lives of people facing multiple disadvantage. We use our shared knowledge and practical experience from this work to influence policy at the national and local level.

People facing multiple disadvantage experience a combination of problems. For many, their current circumstances are shaped by long-term experiences of poverty, deprivation, trauma, abuse and neglect. Many also face racism, sexism and homophobia. These structural inequalities intersect in different ways, manifesting in a combination of experiences including homelessness, substance misuse, domestic violence, contact with the criminal justice system and mental ill health.

Multiple disadvantage is a systemic, not an individual issue. People facing multiple disadvantage live in every area of the country. They are often failed by services and systems that focus on singular issues. This makes it harder for individuals to address their problems, lead fulfilling lives and contribute fully to their communities.

**Racism, race equity and multiple disadvantage**

MEAM recognises that racism[[1]](#footnote-1) and white privilege[[2]](#footnote-2) are a systemic feature and failure of our society and that they are therefore present in our day-to-day work. We acknowledge that in how we act and frame our work we are likely to be, knowingly or otherwise, complicit in perpetuating everyday systems and practices that cause or fail to address racism and inequity. We are committed to better understanding and responding to racism in all our work and across the local areas we support, and we have taken a range of actions around this in recent years.

We have a particular interest in better understanding the ways in which experiences of racism intersect with and inform experiences of multiple disadvantage. As a coalition interested in systemic change, we acknowledge that addressing the impact of systemic racism on some people facing multiple disadvantage must be part of our work.

We are now seeking to further our understanding of how we and the local areas we support can counter systemic racism and improve racial equity in our/their work.

We have already begun some conversations with the MEAM Approach network on this topic and areas have expressed a desire to explore and change.

Therefore, we are seeking to commission a learning partner to engage with us and 2-4 of the local areas we support on this topic and to create findings, frameworks and tools that can benefit us, the network and a wider audience.

We are at the start of a journey and we do not have all the answers and we also recognise that the completion of this work will not end the journey. However, we are committed to learning, challenge and development as we progress this work.

**The starting point for this programme of work**

This work takes as a given that systemic racism exists in our society, our coalition, the local areas we support, and the policy environment we seek to influence.

We are not seeking to explore in depth how racism manifests within services as there is a significant body of evidence on this already. Instead of creating outputs that only re-problematise the issue, we wish to commission a solution-oriented programme of work, which will help local areas to explore the issues and develop practical, locally-owned actions for positive change. In this way, the work will complement our standard approach to supporting areas to address challenging systemic issues. The work will be developed in partnership with us and the local areas we support, and focus on what needs to change (and why) within local services, partnerships and systems to counter systemic racism and improve racial equity in local MEAM Approach work.

The primary focus for this work will be on racism and racial equity. However, as with all aspects of our work, we acknowledge that different forms of discrimination intersect and that these experiences can cause, amplify and prolong individuals’ experiences of multiple disadvantage. We expect therefore that there will be some exploration within the work of intersectionality[[3]](#footnote-3) and how class, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, religion and disability impact and inform the way people experience racial oppression and discrimination.

**What are we commissioning?**

We are seeking a provider to work with MEAM and c.2-4 [TBC] of the local areas we support to:

* Briefly explore how systemic racism manifests within partnerships, services and systems that support people facing multiple disadvantage.
* Identify already existing good / promising / emergent practice in local areas.
* Explore with local areas what needs to change in local partnerships, services and systems to counter systemic racism and white privilege and improve racial equity in local MEAM Approach work.
* Directly support local areas to develop specific responses/actions that they can implement and to create learning from this work for others.
* Produce resource(s) based on this work which can help others local areas across the MEAM Approach network in the future.

**Approach**

The successful bidder will work closely with the MEAM team and some of the [local MEAM Approach areas](http://meam.org.uk/network-areas/) we support.

Bidders are invited to set out a clear method in their tender response that would best suit the work, which will then be discussed and refined in consultation with MEAM staff at the beginning of the project.

It is likely that proposed methods will cover the following stages, however this is not intended to be a prescriptive or exhaustive list and providers may use their experience to propose alternatives as necessary:

* **Project set up stage:** Initial discussions with MEAM staff to plan the work and select the areas.
* **Area development stage:** Working with MEAM staff and each of the local areas to build a project group (with a wide range of views represented, including lived experience) and form the culture needed in the group to enable detailed discussion and action. MEAM staff will be able to support this, utilising their close links with local areas, but the work will be led by the provider.
* **Area engagement and discussion stage:** Engaging with local leads, commissioners, policy makers, service providers and people with lived experience in each of the areas to explore how systemic racism manifests in their partnership, services and systems and how racial equity could be improved in the local work. The majority of the focus should be on identifying solutions and may include work around leadership, commissioning, staffing, policies and procedures, cultures, outcome measurement, service models and offers etc. This stage will also explore emergent / existing good practice in the areas.
* **Responses/actions stage:** Supporting local areas to develop and implement a series of responses/actions to counter systemic racism and improve racial equity, drawing out learning and reflections.
* **Outputs:** Developing and publishing the project outputs in consultation with the local areas and MEAM (see the Outputs section, below).

Providers will need to demonstrate throughout the stages how they will involve and work alongside people with lived experience of racism and multiple disadvantage.

**Outputs**

Providers are invited to suggest a range of project outputs, including but not limited to:

* Start-point, mid-point and end-point communications about the work, for example in the form of a blog for the MEAM website or internal webspace for MEAM Approach areas.
* A final project report detailing:
* A brief summary of how systemic racism is manifesting in partnerships, services and systems based on the views of the local areas.
* The important findings/considerations from doing the work - sharing learning from discussion fora, creating the culture and environment, and developing and implementing responses/actions
* Reflections on how and what solutions were identified in thematic areas such as leadership, commissioning, staffing, policies and procedures, cultures, outcome measurement, service models and offers.
* An overview of the practical responses/actions that the groups took to counter systemic racism and improve racial equity in their local work.
* A set of tools or practical frameworks that can help other local areas across the network undertake work on this topic.

**Experience and knowledge**

We are seeking a provider (or consortium of providers) who can bring the following attributes and experience to this work:

* A significant personal understanding or lived experience of systemic racism and its impacts on different groups of people.
* A strong knowledge of statutory and voluntary services and systems that support people facing multiple disadvantage including homelessness, mental health, substance misuse, criminal justice and domestic/sexual violence services.
* A firm commitment to involving and working alongside people with lived experience.
* A strong knowledge of MEAM – what we do, how we work, and our approach to supporting local areas and creating change.
* An ability to balance collaboration and challenge, bringing specific expertise to the work, while also recognising the experience, expertise and differing views of a wide range of partners in local areas and across MEAM.
* An ability to act as a trusted partner of MEAM in this work and to contribute to a reflective and learning culture in our team conversations.

**Application process and timescales**

We invite providers to set out a clear tender for the work on no more than six pages of A4 (including budget) (font size 11 or higher) by the deadline below to [Richard.lewis@meam.org.uk](mailto:Richard.lewis@meam.org.uk). This should detail:

* Why the provider is interested in this work and what they think they can bring to the team.
* How the provider meets the requirements in the Experience and Knowledge section, including detail of previous projects.
* A clear project plan setting out the proposed approach (see Approach section), timings, and how this will meet the aims set out in this document (see section on What are we commissioning?)
* A clear description of the final Outputs
* A budget showing the number of days against key tasks in the project plan and a day rate.

We anticipate identifying a provider and delivering the work according to the timetable below. We are open to flexibility depending on proposed methodology, this should be outlined in your bid, and may be further explored either at interview or on appointment.

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| **Item** | **Date** |
| Tender document published | 6 March 2023 |
| Conversations with potential partners | Until the submission deadline |
| Deadline for submission | Noon 12 April 2023 |
| Interviews (if required) | w/c April 24 2023 |
| Appointment | Early May 2023 |
| Delivery of work | Between May and November 2023 |
| Drafting and agreement of outputs | December 2023 |
| Presentation of final outputs | Early 2024 |

A contract will be agreed between Homeless Link (MEAM) and the successful provider, for the duration of the work.

Applications should be sent to [Richard.lewis@meam.org.uk](mailto:Richard.lewis@meam.org.uk) by **Noon** on **Wednesday 12 April**. Late submissions will not be considered.

**Budget**

We have allocated a budget of up to £20,000 for this work, inclusive of VAT.

**Assessment**

We will score each proposal against its approach to each of the following aspects with the following weighting:

* Experience and knowledge (20%)
* Quality and depth of understanding outlined in your approach/methodology (40%)
* Quality of proposed outputs (30%)
* Value for money (10%).

We may ask some, none or all bidders to interview, if this is necessary we will provide further detail in due course.

**Contacts**

To discuss any aspect of this invitation to tender please contact: [Richard.lewis@meam.org.uk](mailto:Richard.lewis@meam.org.uk)

1. **Racism** is the systemic disadvantaging of people of colour, and privileging of white people. Racism is built into and embedded in the systems, structures and institutions that shape our society and is rooted in a system of power hierarchies based on race resulting in racial inequities across the board. A systemic approach allows us to look beyond instances of interpersonal racism and examine the root causes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. **White privilege** describes the set of advantages that White people have as a result of their ‘race’. It is not used to suggest that all White people are privileged but to highlight that any disadvantages they experience have not come about as a direct result of being White. It is important to note that privilege and disadvantage are two sides of the same coin and one can hold both to differing degrees. White privilege is a result of systemic racism and it is White privilege that allows systemic racism to endure. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. **Intersectionality** is a concept that reveals the complex ways in which people’s social and political identities both flow into and deviate from each other, creating the unique cluster of privileges and disadvantages experienced by each individual. For example, racism as the disadvantaging of Black people and privileging of White people both impacts on and is impacted by other forms of disadvantage/privilege, including gender and sexual orientation. So, how racism is experienced by say a Black woman will in some ways be the same, in other ways differ from how racism is experienced by a Black man. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)