Suicide among LGBTQ+ communities: Invitation to Tender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commissioners</th>
<th>Policy team, Samaritans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>Up to £9,000 including VAT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposals submitted</td>
<td>By 04.11.2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applicant interviews</td>
<td>08.11.2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract duration</td>
<td>15 weeks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We are seeking an experienced researcher, lived experience practitioner, partnership or team to develop and deliver an exciting co-production process which is a first for Samaritans.

This document provides background to the project and information about Samaritans. It also includes requirements of the project, key milestones, budget, ethical considerations and how to apply.

Background and context

Samaritans is the UK and Ireland’s largest suicide prevention charity. Our listening service is always open – 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and we answer a call for help every 10 seconds. We also provide support in communities, prisons, schools, universities and workplaces, work with governments to change policy, strive to increase safety in high-risk locations, work with the media to ensure that suicide is reported responsibly, host coalitions, conduct research, and publish ground-breaking industry guidance.

Key
- LGBTQ+ is an umbrella term used to refer collectively to individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer and/or questioning. We include the ‘+’ to signify other minoritised sexual and gender identities not specifically included in these initials. Within these terms, we recognise there is significant diversity, fluidity, and overlap.
- Lived experience of ‘suicide and / or self-harm’ includes people who have experienced suicidal feelings, attempted suicide, or self-harmed.

This project is being commissioned by the Policy, Public Affairs and Campaigns team at Samaritans. Our team focuses on influencing local and national decision makers to do more to prevent suicide. We are currently pushing government to achieve the lowest suicide rate on record at a time when far too many people are dying by suicide in the UK and Ireland.

This project is seeking to develop a policy position on suicide risk among LGBTQ+ communities, including recommendations around policy and practice. Samaritans will use this position to push for positive change from all government departments, the NHS and community organisations to prevent suicide among people from LGBTQ+ communities. We are looking to co-produce our position alongside people who identify as LGBTQ+ and have lived experience of suicide and/or
self-harm, to make sure that our influencing work is informed directly by people’s personal experiences, and we are pushing for change which matters to the communities we support.

This project will break new ground in our influencing work. It will be Samaritans’ first policy position on suicide among LGBTQ+ communities and the first we will have co-produced with people with lived experience.

Evidence

There is an established (but incomplete) evidence base which suggests suicide rates are higher among LGBTQ+ people compared to heterosexual and cisgender people.\(^1\)\(^2\) Though we do not yet have a full picture, research suggests that the reasons for this could include discrimination and stigma, including in mental health services;\(^3\) victimisation and bullying;\(^4\) and lack of social support or isolation.\(^5\)

There is also some evidence that trans people are at particularly high risk of suicide compared to other LGBTQ+ people,\(^6\) and studies have linked this to factors such as barriers to accessing mental health or gender services.\(^7\) Alcohol use may also contribute to risk of suicide in LGBTQ+ communities, with LGBTQ+ people more likely to experience alcohol-related harms\(^8\) and a well-evidenced connection between these harms and suicidality.\(^9\)

In 2021, Samaritans received over 70,000 calls where sexuality or gender were recorded as caller concerns, though it is likely both that not all of these callers identify as LGBTQ+ and that we received many more calls from LGBTQ+ people with other concerns.

---

\(^1\) King, M. et al. (2008). ‘A Systematic Review of Mental Disorder, Suicide, and Deliberate Self Harm in Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People’, BMC Psychiatry, 8(1), 70.


Project remit: guidelines and requirements

Aims and objectives

The overall aim of the project is to produce and deliver a plan for co-producing a policy position alongside LGBTQ+ people with lived experience of suicide and/or self-harm. The exact process for co-production will be agreed between the successful applicant and Samaritans during project inception.

The ultimate output of this co-production process will be a policy position on suicide among LGBTQ+ communities used by Samaritans to influence policymakers in government at the local and national level. It will also be shared with other organisations and individuals to set out Samaritans’ position.

The position will make a clear and compelling case for policy action to address suicide among LGBTQ+ groups, harnessing the input of people with lived experience gathered via the co-production process we are commissioning. It will also draw on the existing evidence base around suicidality among LGBTQ+ people to inform the co-production process.

We have some minimum expectations, including that the process involves at least 10 individuals from the LGBTQ+ community with lived experience of suicidality. We require that the co-production work takes place over a minimum of five group or individual meetings.

Samaritans will be responsible for recruiting people with lived experience through our networks. We will look to the contractor to promote the opportunity through their networks. We hope, but can’t guarantee, to include a broad diversity in terms of representation of groups under the LGBTQ+ umbrella and as many different experiences of suicidality as possible, self-harm, suicide attempt survivor, suicidal ideation).

Project structure

Following appointment of the successful practitioner / team, an inception meeting will take place with the project team, including relevant representatives from Samaritans. This meeting will include discussion about methodology, timescales, milestones and reporting expectations.

The contractor will then be expected to provide details of proposed co-production methodology, schedule and topics of meetings, and reporting timescale, for approval. Activity to co-produce the output with people with lived experience will then be undertaken (to agreed methodology).

Role and responsibilities

Responsibility for the delivery of this project will lie with the Samaritans Policy Officer, who will manage the contract for Samaritans, and with whom the contractor will be expected to agree a programme of work and deadlines for deliverables. The Policy Officer will link the contractor with relevant colleagues internally as required.
The contractors will be expected to keep Samaritans informed on progress through regular project management meetings.

The contractor will be responsible for the co-production process design and promoting the opportunity to any networks they have which could involve people lived experience and suicidality from the LGBTQ+ community. The contractor will be responsible for facilitating co-production sessions and will also be expected to provide a final co-produced summary of the content that has come up during the sessions, including insights from the experience of group members as well as policy and practice recommendations.

Samaritans will attend co-production meetings as an equal partner and will be writing the final policy briefing on the basis of the findings and recommendations from the co-production process.

**Ethical considerations**

Whilst the methodology will need to be agreed with the commissioned practitioner / team, Samaritans Research Ethics Policy must be considered and adhered to (which may require submission to Samaritans Research Ethics Board (SREB)), or an equivalent alternative ethics policy followed. The commissioned practitioner / team will be required to develop clear inclusion/exclusion criteria to minimise the risk to participants as part of this process, as well screening and consent documentation. Ethical issues and safeguarding will therefore need full consideration, and approaches / policies should be summarised as part of proposals.

Samaritans also has a data protection policy and process for sign off which this project will need to adhere to at all times. A clear plan of how any relevant data will be processed and stored will need to form part of applications.

**Deliverables by the contractor**

The table below outlines the deliverables by the contractor. Alternative outputs can be proposed by the commissioned practitioner / team.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>• To facilitate the delivery of a genuinely co-produced policy position by Samaritans on suicide among LGBTQ+ communities.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outputs</td>
<td>• Co-produced workshops with people with lived experience of suicidality from the LGBTQ+ community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A written output which details the insights of group members and policy and practice recommendations based on the co-production work. This document will form the basis of an external policy output written by Samaritans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A summary of the co-production methodology followed to produce the main output.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign off</td>
<td>• The outputs will be signed off by Samaritans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dissemination

- Samaritans will be responsible for dissemination. Any publications or presentations linked to this work by the contractor can only be done in agreement with Samaritans.

Budget

The budget for this work is set at a maximum £9,000, including VAT (if you are VAT registered) and all expenses, including payment to participants (in line with Samaritans’ payment policy). Criteria for payments will be agreed via contracts.

Timeline

The completion date for this project is February 2023. The timescales outlined below are a broad guide for applicants, assuming the contractor can start immediately. Applicants will be expected to produce a more detailed plan as part of their application.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21.10.2022</td>
<td>ITT issued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04.11.2022</td>
<td>Deadline for submission of proposals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08.11.2022</td>
<td>Interviews with shortlisted applicants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.11.2022</td>
<td>Inception meeting followed by confirmation of methodology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.11.2022</td>
<td>Contract start date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.11.2022 - 12.01.2023</td>
<td>Samaritans’ ethics process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.01.23 - 26.01.23</td>
<td>Recruitment of people with lived experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.01.23 - 21.02.23</td>
<td>Co-production workshops/meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.02.23</td>
<td>Summary of final content, reporting and final deliverables submitted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Contract

The successful applicant(s) will be required to enter into a contract with Samaritans, within Samaritans’ standard terms and conditions. This will include conditions such as:

1. Completion of the services within the timeframe specified.
2. Reduction of payment or non-payment for work not completed.
3. The work cannot be sub-contract to a third party without the prior written consent of Samaritans.
4. Agreed input from Samaritans during reviewing and editing stages.
5. Terms related to intellectual property.

Once the contract is agreed and signed, the successful applicant(s) and Samaritans will be required to adhere to all terms and conditions.
How to apply

We encourage all interested parties to contact us prior to submitting their proposal. Please contact Naomi Graves (n.graves@samaritans.org), Policy Officer at Samaritans.

To be considered for this work, please submit a document outlining:

- Background of you/your organisation
- Previous experience and examples of lived experience activity, including specific examples relevant to this project such as work on suicide prevention and/or LGBTQ+ communities
- Proposed methodology
- Ethical considerations and practices
- A commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), including any experience of working with marginalised and disadvantaged groups and individuals
- Proposed timelines, including milestones to take account of the dates included above
- Breakdown of costs

All criteria listed above are weighted equally and must be addressed in the proposal submitted. While the proposals should be comprehensive, they should also be concise, and no more than 10 pages. A short summary of each member of the research team’s relevant experience should be included as part of the proposal. We may also request references.

All applications must be submitted in writing by 4 November 2022. Samaritans may contact the applicant to clarify aspects of the submission. Applications will be shortlisted, and shortlisted applicants invited to interview to discuss their proposals in detail. The successful candidate/organisation will be notified no later than 16 November 2022.

We will make every effort to ensure the application process and working relationship is as accessible as possible. If you require this invitation and any other documents and communications in a different format or have any other accessibility requirements for the tender process and work, please let us know.

Please apply to Naomi Graves by emailing: n.graves@samaritans.org

Further information

For any further information please contact Naomi Graves, Policy Officer, as above.