



Background

The EIF Guidebook provides independent reliable information about early intervention programmes that have at least preliminary evidence of achieving positive outcomes for children. It provides information based on EIF's assessment of the strength of evidence for a programme's effectiveness, and detail about programmes shared with us by those who design, run and deliver them. The Guidebook serves as an important starting point for commissioners to find out more about effective early interventions, and for programme providers to find out more about what good evidence of impact looks like and how it can be captured. Please find the EIF Guidebook [here](#).

Prior to being included in our Guidebook, a programme is assessed according to the strength of its evidence – the quality and quantity of data suggesting that a programme has had a positive impact on outcomes for children. We give each programme an evidence rating based on this assessment. This involves rating programmes using EIF's established standards of evidence – a scale with 5 levels. These standards were developed in consort with other What Works Centres to assess interventions in terms of their strength of evidence. They are broadly similar to the Maryland Scientific Methods Scale (SMS) and other critical appraisal systems that recognise stages of development and were formally approved by our Evidence Panel during the set-up phase of the organisation. The work of assessing programmes is overseen by a panel of evidence experts. For more information on the broad process of Programme Assessment, please see [here](#). For more information on the EIF Evidence Standards, please see [here](#).

Programmes that undergo assessment *and* receive a Level 2 rating or higher are included on the Guidebook. In addition to providing information on the strength of the evidence of an intervention, we also provide information about key programme characteristics including who the programme is designed for, how it is delivered, implementation requirements, key components of the programme and a cost rating.

We are inviting programme providers who are interested in being on our Guidebook to submit an expression of interest for EIF to assess their programme in 2018-2019. Below we provide information on the process involved in selecting the programmes that will undergo assessment.

Please note that all applicants who are selected for assessment will be required to consent to and comply with EIF's Terms of Reference before detailed assessment begins (please see Annex 1).

A link to the online submission form can be found [here](#). The deadline for all expressions of interest is 5pm, Thursday 14 June. We would welcome submissions before that date and will look at submissions as soon as they are received.

Selection of programmes for assessment: What the work will entail

To select programmes for assessment, we will:

- Open a call for programme assessment where programme providers of early intervention programmes are encouraged to express interest in being assessed by EIF for its online Guidebook. As part of this submission process, providers will be required to submit to an online form, providing some basic details on the delivery and implementation of their programme, as well as the evidence investigating its impact. The call will be:
 - Disseminated via EIF's Twitter, Website, Newsletter
 - Sent to providers who have previously expressed interest to EIF
 - Sent to umbrella organisations of providers known to EIF.
- Once the period to submit to the call has concluded, the submitted programmes will be scored according to a set of essential and desirable criteria, and on this basis EIF will select a subset of programmes to go through the EIF Programme Assessment process (see more on this below).
- The selected programmes will be assessed using EIF's established procedure, involving oversight by the Evidence Panel. Programmes that receive a Level 2 rating or higher will be included in the online Guidebook of programmes.

What sorts of programmes will EIF consider? What is the scope of this work?

Programmes will only be considered for assessment if they are **early intervention programmes, which are clearly designed to improve one or more EIF outcomes in children and young people, with at least some preliminary evidence of impact**. These are our **essential criteria** for programme selection. Further detail on these criteria:

- 1) **Early intervention** - Submitted programmes must be early intervention programmes, i.e. they must be preventative in nature and not qualify as 'late intervention', i.e. acute, statutory, essential services that are required when children and young people experience significant difficulties in life, which might have been prevented. Specifically, programmes should qualify as either primary, secondary or tertiary prevention, and fit into one of the following three categories:
 - *Universal*: This applies to interventions that are available to all young people and families. These activities may take place alongside or as part of other universal services, including health visiting, schools or children's centres. Note: universal support is not necessarily intended for all families – programmes may specify a target age range, for example.
 - *Targeted-Selective*: This applies to interventions that target or 'select' young people or families with characteristics that place them at greater risk of experiencing problems. These characteristics can include economic hardship, having single or young parents, and being ethnic minorities.
 - *Targeted-Indicated*: This applies to interventions that target a smaller percentage of the population of young people or families who have a pre-identified issue or detectable markers that warn of the onset of a diagnosed problem requiring more intensive support, e.g. programmes that target young people who are identified in pre-school or by parents as having behaviour problems.
- 2) **Programmes** - Services submitted to the Call must qualify as a programme, i.e. a 'well-structured and clearly

defined package of activity that is replicable, has clearly defined outcomes and costs, and the potential means to deliver the required quality of delivery either through fidelity to a manual or through other forms of workforce support, monitoring and evaluation'. Broader practices (i.e. specific skills, techniques and strategies which are used by practitioners), on their own and outside of the context of a programme, will not be accepted.

3) Designed to improve one or more EIF outcomes in children and young people – Ultimately, submitted programmes must be designed to improve child outcomes (though the programme may seek to achieve this via mediating goals, for example, improving child outcomes via improving outcomes for the parent).

Particularly, EIF is interested in the following 7 domains of impact on child outcomes:

- *Supporting mental health & wellbeing* – includes, for example:
 - Improving children's self-esteem, self-confidence and self-efficacy.
 - Providing children with strategies for coping with depression and/or anxiety disorders
 - Preventing teen suicide and self-harming behaviour
 - Improving outcomes for children diagnosed with ADHD
- *Preventing child maltreatment* – includes, for example:
 - Increasing children's awareness of maltreating behaviours and methods for reporting it
 - Targeting specific risk and protective factors known to contribute to child maltreatment
 - Targeted interventions for children at the edge of care
 - Preventing children from entering the care system or reducing the time spent in out-of-home care.
- *Enhancing school achievement & future employment* – includes, for example:
 - Improving school achievement, including scores on standardised exams
 - Improving behaviour in school (including self-regulatory and prosocial behaviour)
 - Reducing rates of school exclusion and drop-out
 - Increasing completion of secondary school and entry into higher education or training
 - Increasing young people's success in finding a job or vocational skill.
- *Preventing crime, violence and antisocial behaviour* – includes, for example:
 - Improving children's behaviour at home or at school
 - Treating clinically diagnosed conduct or behavioural disorders
 - Preventing children from offending or re-offending.
- *Preventing substance abuse* – includes, for example:
 - Educating children about the risks associated with drinking and illegal drug use
 - Providing specific therapies for children with a drug or alcohol addiction.
- *Preventing risky sexual behaviour & teen pregnancy* – includes, for example:
 - Discouraging general risk-taking behaviours (such as binge drinking, antisocial behaviour, physically risky activities)
 - Providing specific information about contraception and safe sex
 - Targeting young women who are at risk of becoming pregnant and carrying their child to term before the age of 18.
- *Preventing obesity and promoting healthy physical development* – includes, for example:
 - Targeting children identified as being overweight
 - Preventing children from becoming overweight in the first place.

4) Preliminary evidence of impact on child outcomes - By 'preliminary' we mean meeting the requirements for an EIF Level 2 rating:

- A short-form of the Level 2 requirements are repeated at the end of Annex 2 of this Background

Paper. The long-form detailed list of Level 2 requirements can be found [here](#), along with more information on the EIF Evidence Standards.

- Importantly, Level 2 evidence must measure and identify impact on **child outcomes**. While mediating goals (such as improved parent outcomes) may be associated with child outcomes, they are not sufficient in and of themselves, as they do not guarantee them and do not constitute *direct* evidence of impact on the child, which is what is primarily described by an EIF Strength of Evidence Rating.
- The questionnaire will provide further information on how to submit evidence. Note that there is no limit on the number of evaluations that may be submitted, but we would discourage submitting large numbers of evaluations which do not meet the threshold for a Level 2 rating.

The following important points should also be borne in mind:

- We are expecting to receive more programme submissions than we have funding to assess in 2018-19. Therefore, EIF will need to prioritise a smaller number of programmes for full assessment this year.
- Submitting a programme which meets all of the essential criteria is **no guarantee** that EIF will be able to assess the programme in 2018-19.
- If many programmes meeting the essential criteria are identified, we will prioritise within that set on the basis of a set of **desirable criteria**, including:
 - Being implemented in the UK.
 - Impact evaluation/s conducted in the UK.
 - Number of impact evaluations.
- If a large number of submissions are received scoring highly on both essential and desirable criteria, EIF reserves the right to:
 - Prioritise on a first-come-first-serve basis (i.e. priority given to those who submit their expression of interest earlier).
 - Prioritise within the received programmes along thematic lines – i.e. we may prioritise certain *types* of programmes for assessment in this round, and return to others at a later date.

Next steps in detail

The indicative timetable for the work is as follows:

Key milestone	Provisional dates
Expression of interest period	14 th May – 14 th June 2018
Selection of programmes	June/July 2018
Detailed submission of programme information and evaluation evidence by providers	June/July 2018
Initial assessment by EIF Team	Throughout July-December 2018
Detailed submission of <i>cost information</i> by providers	Throughout July-December 2018
Sub-panel meetings and communication with provider	Throughout August-December 2018

Final moderation and confirmation of ratings	December 2018/January 2019
Programmes included in upgraded guidebook	Throughout August 2018-January 2019

Please find more details on the stages where input will be required from providers below:

Expressions of interest period

1. Interested providers will be asked to complete a short form, expressing their interest in having their programme assessed by EIF. This involves submitting details on the following features:
 - Details of the programme and its delivery.
 - Details of the evidence for the programme.
 - A description of how the programme meets the criteria above.

Selection of programmes

2. Once we have received a final set of interventions that have expressed an interest in being included in the review, we will use the selection criteria to choose a final set of programmes to assess.
3. We hope that this process reduces the burden on providers, ensuring that only programmes that will receive the full EIF assessment are asked to submit detailed information.

Submission of detailed programme information and evaluation evidence by providers

4. Providers selected for review will then be asked to submit more detailed information about the programme via an online questionnaire including:
 - The practitioners required to deliver the programme.
 - The supervision required to deliver the programme.
 - Details of the licensing, accreditation, booster training, programme materials,
 - Further details on the evidence for the programme.

Submission of detailed information on programme costs

5. Detailed submission of information on programme costs will now take place only once an initial strength of evidence assessment has been made by the EIF, which indicates that the programme has likely met the threshold for an EIF level 2 and is therefore eligible for inclusion in the guidebook.

Sub-panel meetings and communication with provider

6. The strength of evidence and cost rating for each reviewed programme will be communicated to the respective programme provider after the Panel meeting.
7. Following this, providers have an opportunity to request a reassessment of the strength of evidence rating if they consider that a reasonable case could be made that EIF has misapplied the detailed criteria underpinning the EIF Standards of Evidence when evaluating and assessing the programme.
8. Providers also have an opportunity to challenge their cost rating if they feel that there may have been a

misunderstanding or inaccuracy in the information originally given via EIF's online questionnaire.

Please find a more detailed description of the process, along with EIF's Programme Assessment Terms of Reference, below in Annex One.

Annex

Annex 1 - EIF Programme Assessment Terms of Reference

Purpose of the Early Intervention Foundation Guidebook.

The Early Intervention Guidebook is designed to provide information and tools to professionals implementing early intervention programmes and designing systems in their local areas. The Guidebook also assists commissioners of services, policy-makers and practitioners in informing their choices on the best available evidence, as well as more tacit considerations of circumstance and implementation. Each programme is evaluated by EIF using a rating scale with 5 levels, ranking programmes in terms of the *strength* of its evidence of improving a child outcome. These standards were developed in consort with other What Works Centres to assess interventions in terms of their strength of evidence. They are broadly similar to the Maryland Scale and other critical appraisal systems that recognise stages of development and were formally approved by our Evidence Panel during the set-up phase of the organisation. The focus of the refreshed Guidebook, which was launched in spring 2017, is on programmes that meet the threshold for an 'EIF level 2' rating.

Details on the Submission Process

Submission of detailed programme information and impact evaluation evidence by providers

- Programme developers, providers and evaluators (hereafter referred to as **"Providers"**) selected for review will be required to submit further detailed information about the programme by a date to be notified to the Providers. This information will be asked for in two parts through two separate online questionnaires. In the first questionnaire (the **"Programme Submission Form: Part 1"**) the information to be provided for each programme should include details of:
 - the theory of change of the programme
 - the outcomes and target population of the programme;
 - the delivery of the programme; and
 - the impact evaluation evidence underpinning the programme.
- Based on the information received from Providers, EIF will undertake a preliminary judgement to filter programmes that potentially meet the threshold for an 'EIF Level 2' rating as set out in Annex 2 and are, therefore, eligible to be considered for inclusion in the Guidebook (the **'preliminary judgement'**). This preliminary judgement is based on the initial strength of evidence assessment described below.

Submission of detailed information on programme requirements and cost

- Following the preliminary judgement, all eligible programme Providers will be notified and required to submit detailed information on programme requirements and cost. This information will be asked for in the second questionnaire (the **"Programme Submission Form: Part 2"**). The information provided for each programme should include details of:
 - the practitioners required to deliver the programme
 - the supervision required to deliver the programme; and

- details of the licensing, accreditation, booster training, programme materials.
- Following submission of the relevant programme requirements and cost information, the Providers will be eligible for inclusion in the Guidebook.

Further information on the Evaluation Process

Once a Provider has submitted all the required information (including information in relation to programme costs) by the set deadlines, EIF will undertake the following steps.

1. *Initial strength of evidence assessment by EIF team*

- The evaluations for each programme will be rank-ordered in terms of the strength of their design. The evidence then undergoes a detailed assessment against the EIF Standards of Evidence (the '**initial strength of evidence assessment**'). Please consult the attached documents for further details on the EIF Standards of Evidence.
- This work is undertaken by EIF's highly trained researchers with expertise in evaluation methods and statistics. The work is overseen by a designated project lead, along with other senior members of EIF's Evidence Team. Extensive training and quality checks are in place to ensure reliable assessment procedures.

2. *Initial cost score generation by EIF team*

- Based on information supplied by a Provider about the components and requirements of its programme in Programme Submission Form: Part 1 and Programme Submission Form: Part 2, EIF will generate a cost score based on how resource intensive the programme is per child supported. EIF will rate each programme on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 indicates the least resource-intensive programmes and 5 the most resource intensive based on EIF estimates¹.

3. *Sub-panel meetings and communication with provider*

- The initial assessments, evaluation reports and evidence underpinning each programme will be forwarded to an external expert for review.
- External experts will be selected by EIF on the basis of their relevant expertise within the specific focus of this review and expertise in evaluation design and statistics.
- Panel meetings will take place where the EIF Evidence Team and the external expert will together discuss the strength of evidence underpinning a set of interventions with a view to finalising the strength of evidence assessment and rating for each programme.
- Following the Panel meetings, the Panel will confirm the strength of evidence rating for each reviewed programme.

¹Each level is associated with an indicative unit cost range. These are not actual unit costs, but instead an indicative range based on the estimation methods set out in the full [Foundations for Life report](#). It shows the estimated relative cost of all of the inputs required to run and set up the programme. It is not the additional cost of commissioning if elements of the resources required are already being funded. For example a home visiting programme that draws on health visitors employed by a local authority will be included in the EIF cost rating. In practice that cost may not be additional to the commissioner but is part of the full resource cost and so is included here.

- The strength of evidence and cost rating for each reviewed programme will be communicated to the respective programme Provider after the Panel meeting.
- Following which the Providers will have an opportunity to request a reassessment of the strength of evidence rating if they consider that a reasonable case could be made that EIF has misapplied the detailed criteria underpinning the EIF Standards of Evidence when evaluating and assessing the programme.
- In some instances, EIF may communicate a Strength of Evidence rating to the Provider, but note that the rating could increase if additional information on details of the evaluation were to be submitted to EIF. In these cases, the Provider will have an opportunity to provide this information (in the same window of time as Providers are given an opportunity to request a reassessment, following the communication of the Strength of Evidence Rating, as described above). If the evaluation was conducted independently of the Provider, it will then be the Providers' responsibility to liaise with the evaluators and provide the additional information to EIF if possible. Any such additional information received will be scrutinised by EIF internally. If it is agreed that the information satisfies EIF's requirements, then the rating will be revised upwards. If not, then this will be discussed at a moderation meeting for a final decision on the rating (see below).
- Providers also have an opportunity to challenge their cost rating if they feel that there may have been a misunderstanding or inaccuracy in the information originally given in Programme Submission Form: Part 1 and Programme Submission Form: Part 2.

4. *Final moderation & confirmation of ratings*

- A moderation meeting involving a wider group of experts at EIF (the "Moderation Panel") will take place to address any requests for reassessment of ratings and decide if any assigned ratings should be revised. The Moderation Panel will necessarily include at least one person from EIF who was previously not involved with the assessment of the relevant programme.

5. *Programmes included in upgraded guidebook*

- EIF launched an upgraded Guidebook in spring 2017. Programmes appear on the Guidebook on a rolling basis. Only programmes which achieve an 'EIF level 2' rating or higher are included on the upgraded Guidebook. Only programmes which achieve an 'EIF level 2' rating or higher will have the information generated through the assessment process on the EIF website.

6. *Guidebook Maintenance*

- Periodically, EIF will update existing Guidebook entries to ensure that the information provided there is fully up-to-date, and that our Strength of Evidence ratings incorporate all newly published and relevant evidence.
- Providers will be selected for Maintenance on the basis of EIF having identified new studies (published since EIF's last review of the programme) evaluating the relevant programme. When selecting programmes for Maintenance, priority is given to Providers for which there is new evidence from the UK, and to Providers whose evidence currently listed on the Guidebook is dated, with more recent evidence having been published.

- EIF will ask the Provider to submit any additional studies that may have been published since the previous EIF review. However, the process of maintenance and updating the assessment will continue on the basis of the identified studies regardless of whether any additional studies are submitted by the Provider.
- It is possible that as a result of maintenance, programme ratings will change. EIF will assess these additional studies (a similar process as described above under points 1 and 3) and communicate the EIF judgement of the newly identified studies as well as any change to the overall strength of evidence rating to the respective programme Provider after the Panel meeting. The Provider will then have an opportunity to request a reassessment of the strength of evidence rating if they consider that a reasonable case could be made that EIF has misapplied the detailed criteria underpinning the EIF Standards of Evidence when evaluating and assessing the programme. A moderation meeting involving a wider group of experts at EIF (the “Moderation Panel”) will take place to address any requests for reassessment of ratings (a similar process as described above under point 4).
- The programme’s Guidebook page will be amended correspondingly to reflect the newly assessed evidence, and with any possible changes to the overall strength of evidence rating. EIF reserves the right to remove programmes from the Guidebook if it is judged that the programme is no longer eligible for inclusion once the assessment has been updated as part of Maintenance.
- If a Provider does not comply with Maintenance work, EIF reserves the right to remove programmes from the Guidebook.

Terms and Conditions

The submission process

1. In submitting programme details for inclusion in the Guidebook, programme developers, providers and evaluators (together “Providers”) agree to the EIF Evidence Team independently evaluating the programme or approach and acceptance of the ratings.
2. Programme Providers agree to accept the rating assigned to their respective Programmes by the EIF Panel or, in the case of ratings for which reassessments have been requested, by the Moderation Panel.
3. Providers agree to accept that EIF will periodically update existing Guidebook entries to ensure that the information provided there is fully up-to-date, and to acceptance of EIF’s assessment of any studies published since the initial review, and any change in rating which may or may not result.
4. No requests for reassessments of assigned ratings can be made outside of the process set out in these Terms of Reference.
5. Information supplied by Providers about programmes/approaches will be stored according to the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998. It will be published electronically and available to the public on the Guidebook but will not be passed to any third party without their consent.

6. The information supplied via Programme Submission Form: Part 1 and Programme Submission Form: Part 2 will be used for the purpose stated on the Guidebook and any information supplied by a Provider in emails to EIF relating to the Provider's submission will be used for the explicit purpose for which it was supplied/ requested.
7. EIF will not collect any information about individual users except as requested on Programme Submission Form Part: 1 and Programme Submission Form: Part 2. Information provided in respect of individual users will not be published in a way which enables individual users to be identified other than for the stated purposes.

The nature of the evidence submitted

8. The Guidebook only includes programmes which achieve an 'EIF level 2', 'EIF level 3', 'EIF level 4' or 'NE' rating' (see Appendix 1). Only these programmes will be included on the EIF Guidebook.
9. The category of NE - 'Found not to be effective in at least one rigorously conducted study' - is reserved for programmes where there is evidence from a high-quality evaluation of the programme achieving the threshold of 'EIF level 3' suggesting it did not provide significant benefits for children.
10. Although the EIF Evidence Team has made a preliminary judgement about the likely chance of each programme achieving an EIF level 2 rating or higher, meaning there is at least preliminary evidence of improving outcomes for children and families, EIF does not guarantee that every programme assessed will meet this threshold.
11. Programmes that are ultimately rated as 'No evidence yet at Level 2' will receive a detailed Assessment Report, but will not be included on the EIF Guidebook.
12. In the interest of transparency, the fact that a programme has been rated by EIF as 'No evidence yet at level 2' rating will be displayed on a supporting page to the EIF Guidebook. However, no other information generated through the EIF Programme Assessment Process will be displayed on the Guidebook.

The rating process

13. After the stipulated deadline for providing submissions has expired no further materials, resources or evidence submitted by Providers will be accepted or considered by EIF.
14. The decision as to which evaluation studies can contribute to the strength of evidence rating is taken by the EIF Evidence Team.
15. The EIF Evidence Team may need to communicate with Providers in order to clarify points made in their submissions.
16. Once the strength of evidence rating has been communicated to Providers, each Provider will receive a detailed Assessment Report, that describes the strength of evidence rating, as well as the detailed work that underpins that judgement.
17. Each Provider has the opportunity to request a reassessment of their strength of evidence rating on the grounds that EIF has misapplied its evidence standards (the "**Reassessment Request**").
18. Any Reassessment Request should be made promptly and in any event within 21 days from when the strength of evidence rating was communicated to the Provider.

19. A Reassessment Request will only be considered by EIF if a clear case can be made that EIF has misapplied its standards against the evaluation evidence previously provided to EIF. A Reassessment Request will not be considered on any other basis, including on the basis of information not previously provided to EIF, or on EIF's evidence standards more generally.
20. The Reassessment Request must be submitted in writing and should be no longer than 500 words. It must clearly state why the Provider considers the standards have been misapplied or if there are important and germane inaccuracies that clearly mean the rating should be revised. Brief supporting materials can be annexed but the core challenge should be expressed in 500 words or fewer.
21. Any requests for reassessment will be discussed by the Moderation Panel and the outcome of the decision will be communicated to Provider in writing. The decision of the Moderation Panel represents the final stage in EIF's assessment process.
22. In some instances, EIF may communicate a Strength of Evidence rating to the Provider, but note that the rating could increase if additional information on details of the evaluation was submitted to EIF.
23. In these cases, the Provider will have an opportunity to provide this information (in the same window of time as Providers are given an opportunity to request a reassessment, following the communication of the Strength of Evidence Rating, as described above).
24. If the evaluation was conducted independently of the Provider, it will then be the Providers' responsibility to liaise with the evaluators and provide the additional information to EIF if possible.
25. Any such additional information received will be scrutinised by EIF internally. If it is agreed that the information satisfies EIF's requirements, then the rating will be revised upwards and this will be communicated to the Provider. If not, then this will be discussed at a moderation meeting for a final decision on the rating.
26. Broadly the same rating process as described above will be followed with respect to any Guidebook Maintenance activity (i.e. the subsequent assessment of any studies published after EIF's initial or prior review of a programme's evidence). However, when the results of Maintenance work are communicated to Providers, requests for reassessment can only be made with reference to the rating of the *newly* published evidence, and correspondingly the judgement of whether this results in any change of the overall Strength of Evidence Rating. Providers may not request a reassessment of any of the originally assessed evidence as part of this process.
27. EIF ultimately retains full and final discretion with regards to deciding whether a programme is eligible for review, what rating should be assigned to the programme, and whether the programme is included in the Guidebook.

General terms and conditions

28. Once Programme Submission Form: Part 1 and Programme Submission Form: Part 2 are submitted to the EIF team, they become read-only and can only be amended by a member of EIF staff. EIF is unable to accept large number of alternations to submissions nor new

evaluation studies [and EIF will accept no such alternations or new evaluation studies after the stipulated deadline for submissions has expired].

29. EIF reserves the right to amend and/or edit any information submitted in the free text fields in regard to details to be published in the Guidebook.
30. Limitation of liability – EIF will under no circumstance be liable for indirect, special or consequential damages including any loss of business, revenue, profits or data in relation to any programme information or rating included in the Guidebook.
31. The information in the Guidebook is a tool to support professional judgement, not a substitute for it. Evidence about what has worked in the past offers no guarantee that an approach will work in all circumstances.
32. We reserve the right to revise these terms and conditions if necessary.

In submitting a programme to the Early Intervention Foundation Programme Assessment, you confirm that you have read and understand the information above and agree to the terms and conditions stated.

Annex 2 - EIF's Level 2 threshold and evaluation reporting standards

- Our threshold for a Level 2 rating includes four criteria to ensure a minimum level of representativeness and validity. Specifically, the evaluation must:
 - 1) have observed a statistically significant positive child outcome
 - 2) use independently validated measures
 - 3) have a minimum of 20 participants in its sample
 - 4) not exceed certain thresholds of study attrition (attrition cannot exceed 40% for pre-post studies, and cannot exceed 65% for comparison group studies)
- While these are the core elements of a Level 2 rating, please note that a range of other requirements are required of Level 2. The long-form detailed list of Level 2 requirements can be found [here](#), along with more information on the EIF Evidence Standards.
- Examples of evaluation designs falling into the Level 2 category include pre/post observational studies involving a single sample, cross-sectional designs comparing two carefully matched samples at a single point in time and comparison group studies not meeting our Level 3 threshold.
- We recognise that this minimum threshold represents an initial high bar. However, it is worth noting that organisations involved in the rating and synthesis of programme evidence rarely consider findings from Level 2 studies.
- There is no limit on the number of evaluations that may be submitted, but we would discourage submitting large numbers of evaluations which do not meet the threshold for a Level 2 rating.
- It is not necessary for evaluations to be published in peer-reviewed journal articles. Nevertheless, it is necessary for evaluations to meet a high standard in terms of reporting quality, such that the results can be interpreted with confidence.