



EARLY
INTERVENTION
FOUNDATION

EARLY YEARS TRANSFORMATION ACADEMY

P R O S P E C T U S
2019/20

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



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Early Intervention Foundation

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1. Introducing a systems approach to improving maternity and early years outcomes

The Early Intervention Foundation is seeking local partners to participate in a 12-month intensive, applied programme to develop the local maternity and early years system in the light of the latest evidence.

Who is EIF?

EIF is a research charity and member of the UK's What Works Network. EIF champions the use of effective early intervention to improve the lives of children and young people at risk of poor outcomes. EIF's work includes making the case for prioritising and investing in effective early intervention, synthesising the evidence from scientific studies, tests and evaluations, and working with the early intervention sector to ensure this evidence is used in decisions about how early intervention is supported and implemented.

Over the past five years EIF has published a series of important evidence reviews relating to early intervention in the early years, and worked with over 30 local areas on using evidence to improve local systems.

Focusing on the early years

The early years of life are critical in determining physical, emotional and cognitive development. Yet too many children are facing challenges or disadvantages that can affect their development and threaten their future life chances. The case for early intervention is strong, particularly in the early years, but we have a long way to go before effective early intervention is available to every child or family who needs it. Part of the reason is that the current system holds back early intervention, through a combination of funding pressures, short-term planning, fragmented responsibilities, not using evidence in decision-making, and gaps in understanding what works.

The Early Years Transformation Academy

In response to these challenges, EIF has created the Early Years Transformation Academy, an innovative and strengths-based approach to planning the local maternity and early years system which applies the latest evidence.

The Academy will help local areas to focus on what families and communities do for themselves alongside a shared responsibility across health, education and social care services for early child outcomes. It will bring the right people together at a local level to build a shared vision of what maternity and early years services should be like in the future, offering a coherent response to local issues, an investment in the longer term, an opportunity for leadership development, an independent lens to support and challenge, and the opportunity to share local strengths on a national stage.

The Academy is built around a core group of local commissioners and service leaders from the local area who work as a team to review and redesign their local system. It uses a combination of online learning, face-to-face design workshops and practical application in the local context across four modules: preparing for change, identifying vulnerable populations, system planning, and measuring impact.

Local areas are invited to work with EIF to identify whether they can benefit from participating in the Academy, with initial expressions of interest welcomed by 15 February 2019.

2. Introducing the Early Years Transformation Academy (EYTA)

EIF is launching a new Transformation Academy to support local partners to use evidence in the planning of maternity and early years services.

The Early Years Transformation Academy has two parts:

1

APPLIED STRAND

Multi-disciplinary leadership teams from four local areas participate in a development programme to prepare a local system transformation plan for maternity and early years services.

2

LEARNING STRAND

Evidence seminars and online materials for leaders, commissioners and other stakeholders with an interest in evidence-based maternity and early years system transformation.

This Prospectus sets out the arrangements for the **Applied Strand** and invites local areas to participate in the Academy as partners.

What is the Academy (Applied Strand) about?

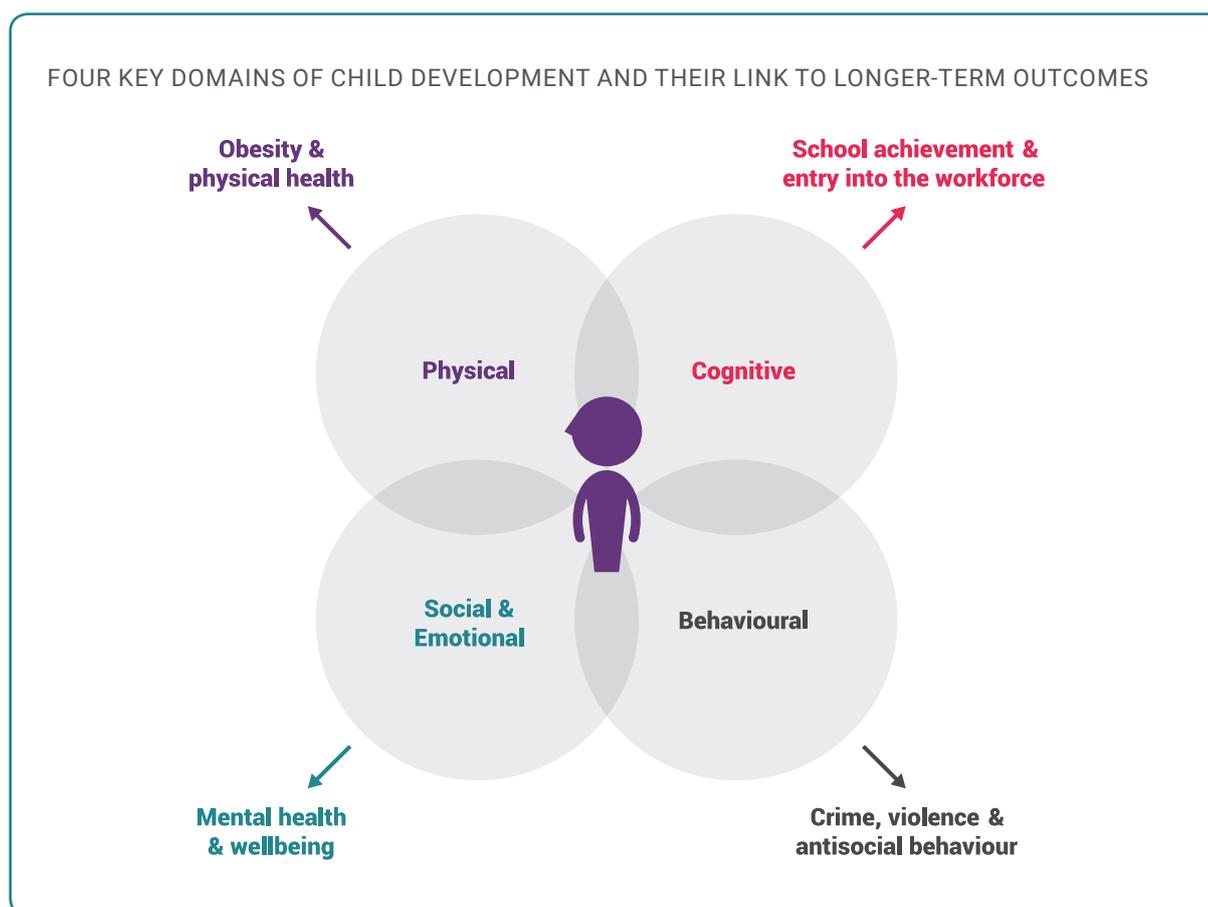
The Academy offers an opportunity to bring together the people who are responsible for maternity and early years services in your area to collectively review your local system in the light of the latest evidence. The Academy (Applied Strand) is a 12-month intensive, applied programme to support you to identify areas for development and create a change plan.

The Academy enables you to use local skills and expertise to build on your system strengths and find solutions to local challenges. It offers you access to independent expertise in evidence and implementation to support and challenge you with the practical task of designing systems around the needs of families. It is designed to help you accelerate local progress in realising the potential of early intervention for children in the early years.

We are seeking partnership teams with a clear mandate to collaborate on system improvements, across health, education and social care. This work responds to local pressures but focuses on building longer-term and sustainable whole-family approaches.

The Academy focuses on child outcomes from conception through to the end of the early years foundation stage – ready for school. It considers four key domains of children's development: physical, cognitive, behavioural, and social and emotional. Each of these is influenced by what happens from conception onwards.

The primary focus for the Academy is intended to be on early intervention for children who are at risk of poor outcomes. However, a balance of preventative, targeted and remedial components is key to local systems, and so also to the Academy.



What are its intended benefits?

The Academy is ultimately about supporting local areas to secure better outcomes for children by focusing at the earliest point in their development.

Taking part in the Academy will enable local areas to collaborate in new ways and build on their own skills and experience as well as learning from independent specialists. The Academy will help you to create the foundations for a sustained local focus on the maternity and early years and accelerate change on your locally defined goals.

From EIF's perspective, we are seeking to test and learn from the approach and use this to drive our wider dissemination of learning. We want to increase the focus on high-quality evaluation to generate a strong UK evidence base.

For more details, see section 3: Why should you get involved in the Academy?

Who is it for?

The Academy is for local areas that want to prioritise system transformation across maternity and early years services. A core group of local commissioners and service leaders from each area that is participating in the Academy will work as a team (the 'EYTA Team') to review and redesign their local system.

Each local EYTA Team should include strategic commissioners who are responsible for maternity and early years from local government children's services and public health, and NHS clinical commissioning groups; and senior leads from the key provider services across maternity services, child health, family support, early education, and the voluntary and community sector.

The Academy is designed to help you to both explore new approaches and consolidate existing work. It is suited to local areas that have already made transformation across maternity and early years a local priority, but have not yet produced a plan for how they intend to do this.

For more details, see section 8: Your EYTA Team

WHAT ABOUT THE LEARNING STRAND?

Information and resources on maternity and early years system planning will be made available to the public via a new online portal, the Early Years Transformation Academy Hub. These resources will form part of the Applied Strand, but will also be available to anyone who is seeking to transform their local system.

Find out more at: <https://EYTA.EIF.org.uk/>

EIF will also host a series of seminar-style events to discuss the latest evidence in this area and allow participants to share questions and local experiences.

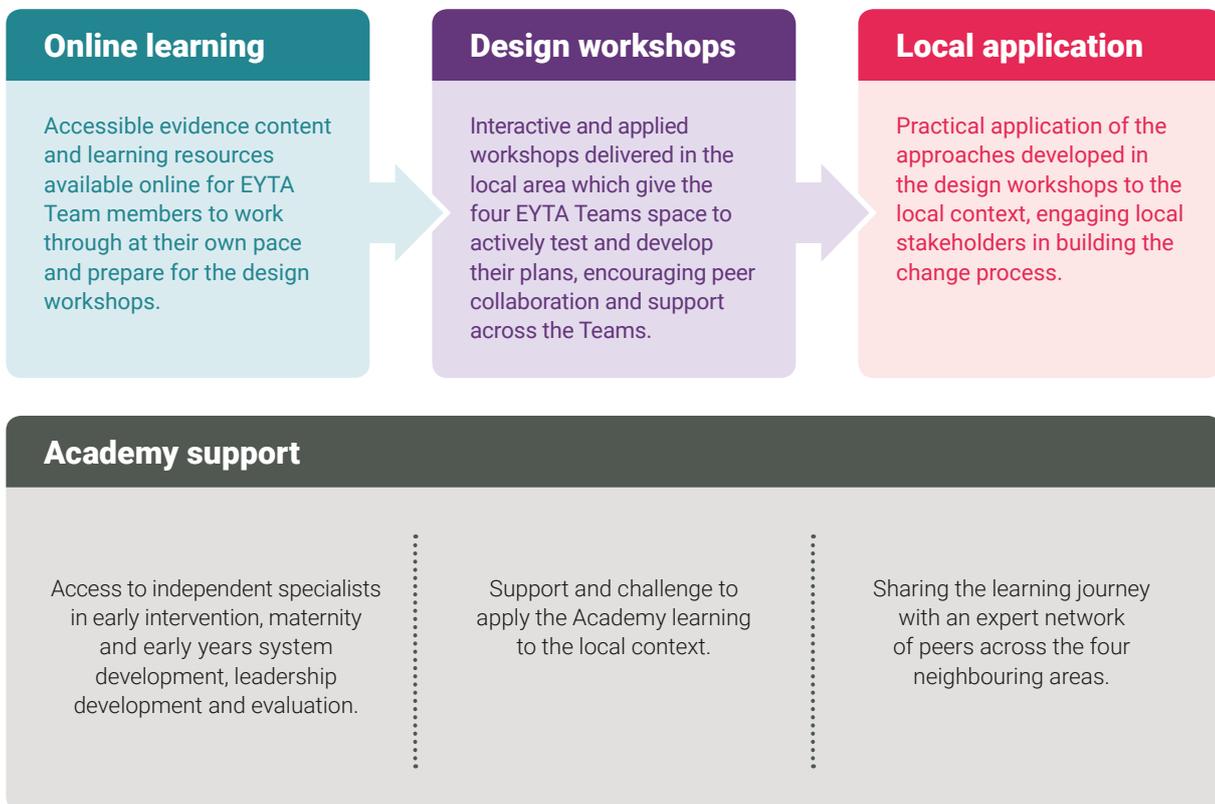
What does it cover?

The Academy learning programme has four core modules which are designed to help you move from initial system assessment through to the creation of a transformation implementation plan:

- 1 Preparing for change**
This module helps EYTA Teams to create a supportive environment for transformation, establish the personal and collaborative leadership needed to drive change, and produce an implementation plan.
- 2 Identifying vulnerable populations**
This module focuses on how EYTA Teams can enhance their work on measuring needs and setting goals. It uses the latest evidence on risk and protective factors across four key domains of child development: cognitive, behavioural, social and emotional, and physical.
- 3 System planning**
This module helps EYTA Teams to understand how system thinking can enable local delivery and equips them to build future pathways of support which are rooted in 'what works' evidence.
- 4 Measuring impact**
This module explores the value of evaluation evidence and the role of local leaders and commissioners in building the UK evidence base about what works to support child development in the early years through robust but proportionate local evaluations. It supports the EYTA Teams to design in evaluation to their work on maternity and early years system transformation.

For more details, see section 7: EYTA modules

How will it work?



For more details, see section 6: The EYTA journey

3. Why should you get involved in the Academy?

The Academy is all about bringing the right people together at a local level to build a shared vision of what maternity and early years services should be like in the future, using evidence and local intelligence to build a local plan, with an independent guide to provide support and challenge for the journey.

Take advantage of the Academy offer

1

A coherent response to local issues

Taking part in the Academy offers you an opportunity to bring greater coherence to multi-agency planning for maternity and early years services in your area. The Academy programme is designed to flex around your issues and priorities. You can use it to consolidate connected strands of planning and system transformation and reduce duplication.

2

An investment in the longer term

The Academy supports you to plan for a future joined up approach to maternity and early years services rather than responding to the immediate operational pressures. It gives you a way to create a profile and mandate for transformation work in the early years.

3

Leadership development

The Academy is a multi-disciplinary learning and development opportunity for your local leaders and commissioners, building on the expertise of The Staff College in the development of leadership and management capacity in local authorities and their partners.

4

An independent lens

The Academy gives you access to a range of experts in evidence and implementation, as well as the chance to test and develop your ideas through peer review and independent support and challenge from EIF.

5

Co-design with EIF

The Academy also gives you the chance to influence EIF's own work, using your knowledge and experience to help us to test and learn about the most effective way to deliver the Academy, and to develop new methods for using evidence to support local delivery of early intervention.

4. Is the Academy right for you?

Being a partner to the Academy isn't for everyone. It is intensive and demanding of both the individual participants and the organisations that take part. It brings access to a range of evidence resources and implementation support, but in return it requires sustained commitment despite the wider context of capacity pressures in local public services.

We are seeking partners for whom this type of programme is a good fit. We have designed the application process to help you to decide if this is an investment that will pay off for you, and to avoid generating multiple detailed and time-consuming bids.

Finding the right local partners for the Academy

Commitment to evidence

The Academy is designed for local partners who recognise the importance of evidence to the development of their local system, and are committed to using and generating evidence even though this may challenge local custom and practice.

Ready for new ideas

We're looking for local areas that want to start a journey, looking for innovation and new ideas for their local maternity and early years system, rather those that already have a planned design and destination and just need people to deliver according to that plan. This means that the Academy is less likely to be suited to areas that already have established system focused early years programmes, such as A Better Start or Opportunity Areas.

The right people

At the heart of the Academy is the skills, knowledge and time of the local leadership teams. The Academy is for you if you can bring together strategic commissioners and service leaders who:

- have the capacity to engage in the process including accessing specially designed online resources, taking part in eight days of design workshops, and delivering local work with a wider stakeholder group to build the plan for change
- are able to think strategically about the whole system, including assets which are not in their control, and focus on longer-term principles not just immediate operation pressures, and who have the leadership ability to bring wider stakeholders together and build a collaborative approach around a shared vision
- are likely to stay the course. A stable local leadership team throughout the process gives the Academy a much better chance of being effective.

Not another initiative

Short-term funding and 'initiative-itis' makes it very difficult for service leaders to deliver long-term strategy where this requires investing in services in a co-ordinated and multi-agency way. The Academy is for you if you feel it will help you to deliver your longer-term ambitions for early intervention in the early years, by consolidating and supporting your existing work on maternity and early years strategy, and helping you to mobilise existing resources or coordinate the use of short-term initiative funding pots. If it feels like an add-on, then it is probably not right for you at this point.

Senior mandate

The Academy depends on existing strong and open relationships at a senior strategic level, and a willingness across organisations that are responsible for maternity and early years services to work together and commit to the Academy process and schedule. This means identified senior champions actively championing this work, freeing up wider resources where needed, and acting on the results. It also means recognising shared responsibility for the local early years system, and giving a mandate to strategic commissioners and service leaders to explore service redesign driven by a whole-system perspective.

Neighbours

We are seeking to work with four local areas from a single geographical area, in order to build on the benefits of a more local perspective, such as reducing travel time and encouraging sub-regional collaboration. How your local area is defined is up to you to decide: for example, by local authority or NHS area boundaries. The defined areas must have strategic responsibility for the local early years system. We will also consider participation in the Academy which better reflects existing regional relationships and governance providing this doesn't compromise the core Academy approach.

5. Why does evidence-based early intervention in the early years matter?

All children deserve the best possible start in life.

The early years of life are critical in determining physical, emotional and cognitive development. What happens in early childhood can have a lifelong effect on health and wellbeing – from physical health, including obesity and heart disease, and mental health through to educational attainment and economic status. The UK's independent review of health inequalities, *Fair Society, Healthy Lives*, based on more than three decades of research on the social determinants of health and health inequalities, recommended "giving every child the best start in life" as the highest priority.

Yet too many children are facing challenges or disadvantages that can affect their development and threaten their future life chances.

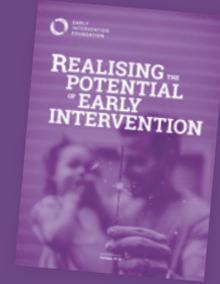
- Four million children in the UK are living in poverty, and the Institute for Fiscal Studies expects this to rise to five million by 2020.
- Nearly a third of children are overweight or obese.
- The number of children permanently excluded from school rose by more than 1,000 between 2016 and 2017.
- There is a widely held view that more and more children are experiencing mental health problems such as anxiety, depression and conduct disorders.

While early intervention cannot solve all of these problems, it can substantially improve children's lives if it is delivered to a high standard to the children or families who need it the most. There are now a substantial number of early intervention approaches which have good evidence of improving children's outcomes when they are offered in response to identified risks, particularly in the early years.

The case for early intervention is strong, but we have a long way to go before effective early intervention is available to every child or family who needs it. Part of the reason is that the current system is not designed in a way that fully enables early intervention.

On balance, families and children who receive interventions shown through rigorous testing to have improved outcomes are more likely to benefit, and to a greater degree, than those who receive other services.

The EIF report, 'Realising the potential of early intervention' identified five particularly intransigent barriers to implementing effective early intervention at scale.



1

Funding

Effective early intervention services require long-term investment. However, constraints on public spending mean ongoing real-term funding cuts at a time when demand for services is rising. This is particularly significant for services such as midwifery, health visiting, and children's centres as decision-makers prioritise immediate pressures and statutory duties over discretionary services with longer-term benefits.

2

Short-termism

Policymakers are often required to develop unproven initiatives to deliver short-term results. Small, short-term, single-issue funding can be especially unhelpful, absorbing significant local resources in the bid process and setting up services which are withdrawn when the funding ends. This can hinder whole system planning, coherence and efficiency.

3

Fragmented responsibility

The local public services system is complex and poorly designed to facilitate the seamless services which are desired for families. The decision to invest will often rest in the hands of a single agency that may not directly benefit from that investment. At a local level, despite the Healthy Child Programme, a disconnect can exist between the maternity and early years parts of the system.

4

Not delivering what works

There is often a significant gap between what the evidence tells us is effective and what is actually being commissioned and delivered for children and families.

5

Gaps in understanding what works

The evidence base relating to early intervention in the UK is still at an early stage. The strongest evidence is from evaluations of early intervention programmes, such as Family Nurse Partnership, Incredible Years, Triple P and Infant Parent Psychotherapy. However, we also need to understand more about effective practitioner practice, and the system factors that support early intervention such as culture, leadership, and partnership working.

A strengths-based approach to maternity and early years

The Early Years Transformation Academy has been designed to directly respond to these barriers, building on the existing skills and experience held within our maternity and early years services.

- The Academy supports local areas to make a balanced case for why medium to longer-term investment in maternity and early years services is so critical, with pragmatic proposals for how to consolidate planning and delivery and so make the best use of tight resources.
- The local area EYTA Teams are given a mandate, time and support to create a plan for sustainable change, connecting together the different funding sources and policy levers to create a coherent system-wide approach and overcome an initiative driven approach. They create a strategic framework which guides the use of resources from different parts of the local system, whether that is the Early Outcomes Fund for speech language and communication, or NHS resources for perinatal mental health.
- The Academy is multi-agency and multi-disciplinary by design, built around the interdependency of agencies and communities in enabling children to thrive in the early years. It reinforces the importance of distributed leadership and shared responsibility for longer-term outcomes.
- The first two essential ingredients of the Academy approach are the **mandate** for the local experts to make things happen, and **time** to use their skills and knowledge to build a sustainable and joined-up approach. The third ingredient is access to the latest research and practice **evidence**, with an independent guide to help the EYTA Teams understand and apply it to their local context.
- The Academy will be evaluated as a 'test and learn' programme, building on the experience of the participants who will be supported to design robust evaluation to test the impact of their new local plans.

For more on 'Realising the potential of early intervention'

Read the full report at www.EIF.org.uk/report/realising-the-potential-of-early-intervention

6. The Academy journey

Taking place over 12 months, the Academy is designed to guide your EYTA Team along a path from the decision to transform the local system to having the leadership, vision and plan to make that decision a reality.



The Transformation Academy journey starts with you deciding that you want to partner with EIF to transform your maternity and early years services. You do this by submitting an expression of interest by **15 FEBRUARY**, which triggers a discussion with us to work through whether the Academy is a good fit. There isn't long to put the EOI together, so this should be brief, with initial ideas of what you want from the Academy and what your team or partnership approach would be. The EOI must come from a senior local sponsor, such as a Director of Children's Services or Public Health, or a CCG Director with responsibility for maternity and children's commissioning.

We will then invite a small number of areas to put together more detailed proposals for how they would participate in the Academy, and we will use this to select the four areas by the end of **MARCH**.

The 30th of **APRIL** is official launch day of the Academy, bringing together the four local teams to introduce the journey ahead, confirm how we will work together, and run through an initial system assessment. That meeting will include senior local sponsors as well as the strategic commissioners and key provider services who make up your EYTA Team.

The EYTA Teams get to work in **MAY**, individually working through the initial online learning materials which introduce some of the key concepts that run through the Academy, such as theory of change and how to critically assess evidence, and getting up to speed on the latest EIF evidence on early child development. The online learning is designed to enable people to work at their own pace, depending on how much of this is new, or just a refresher. This month also includes work on the initial system assessment, using an online survey, which the EYTA Teams use to run a local stakeholder workshop to build wider support for the transformation journey.

JUNE brings the first design workshop, a dynamic two-day session to help the EYTA Teams to focus on how they will work together as system leaders, drawing on the extensive leadership training experience of The Staff College. The Teams also explore how to build evidence into their local outcomes framework and population needs assessment.

The design workshops are delivered in the selected region and bring all four EYTA Teams together. They are highly interactive to give the EYTA Teams creative space to develop and test ideas and learn from their peers. They prepare the EYTA Teams for real application locally, so that they are ready to involve the wider stakeholder group to develop grounded local approaches, and secure buy-in and agreement.

The local application work in **JUNE** and **JULY** focuses on confirming any revisions to the local outcomes framework and population needs assessment, and using this to draft a 'local narrative'.



The second one-day design workshop in **JULY**, set up by online learning on systems thinking and working with vulnerable families, then helps the EYTA Teams to explore system designs and challenges relevant to maternity and the early years. Each team also gets peer challenge on their 'local narrative', and develops a plan for how they will use their narrative to build consensus on priorities for change with local stakeholders, including families.

Over the late summer, EYTA Teams are busy mapping their current system pathways and preparing for the two-day design workshop 3 in **OCTOBER** which focuses on how intervention evidence informs how local leaders design coherent family support pathways. This work is at the heart of the Academy, using the latest EIF evidence on programmes and practices, and helping the EYTA Teams to understand when evidence can and can't directly inform their local decisions. The Teams spend the rest of the year consulting, refining and confirming their pathways, and preparing their overarching theory of change and evaluation plan.

At every stage the EYTA Teams have access to the peer network across the four sites, and Academy associates who provide support and challenge. They are also active participants in the evaluation of the Academy itself, helping to co-design the approach and content.

Design workshop 4 in **JANUARY** uses a Dragon's Den style approach to test and challenge each area's theory of change, and helps the EYTA Teams to explore the capacities needed to deliver their desired system. It prepares the teams for the work which follows on putting together a local implementation plan.

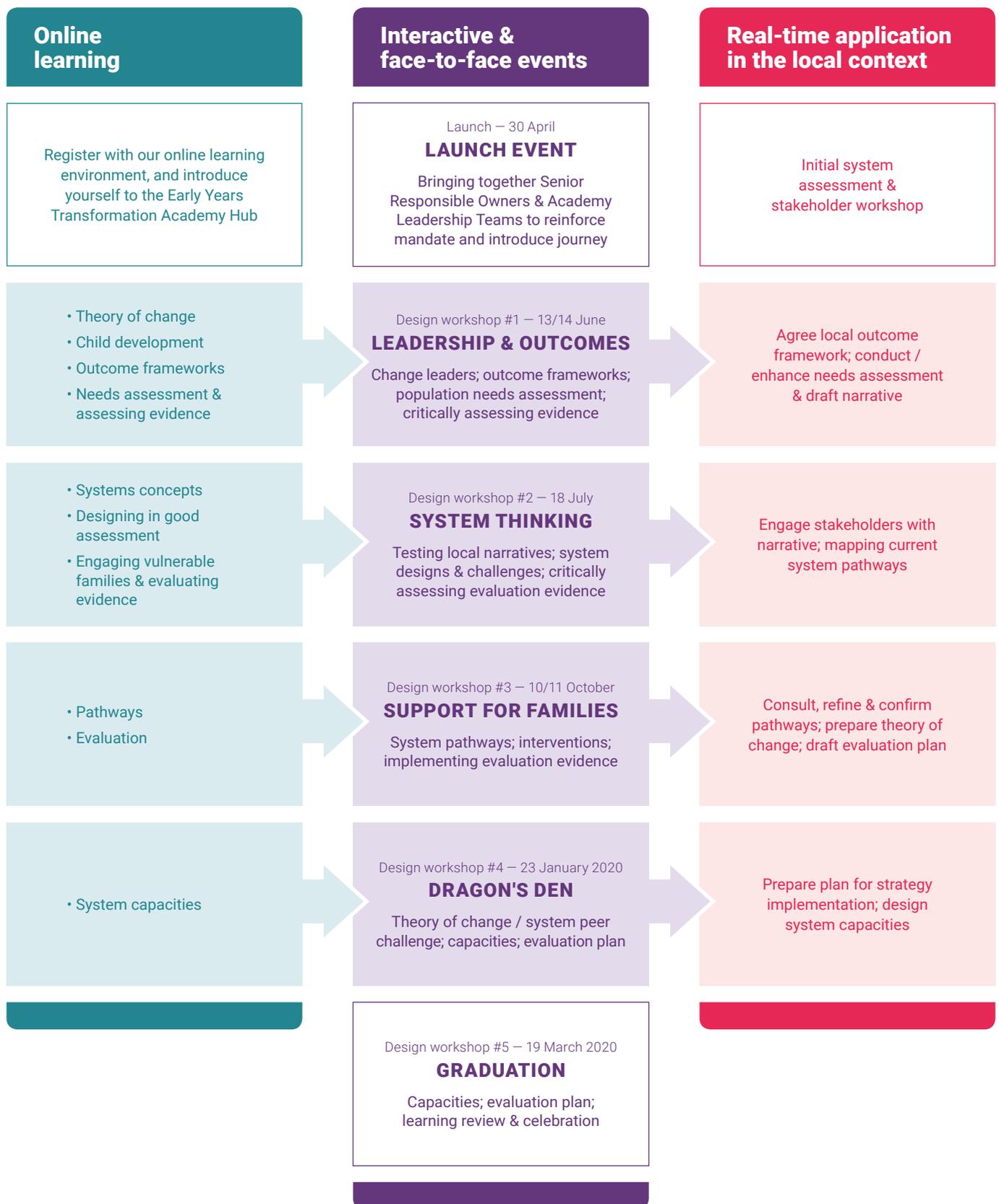
MARCH sees the final design workshop, which helps the EYTA Teams to take stock of the progress that they have made, with peer review of their implementation plans. It also includes a graduation style celebration of each team's journey through the Academy, sharing the learning with a wider audience of key national and local stakeholders.

And this, of course, is when the hard work on implementation really starts.

The EYTA Teams will be ready to introduce changes to their local system across the local maternity and early years services, with a robust but proportionate evaluation approach that helps them to test and learn as they go.

Naturally, the real-world experience of the local areas taking part in the Academy will not be so neat and sequential, and they will seize opportunities when they arise and adapt as the context changes. Nevertheless, participating in the Academy will equip a core team of local system leaders to work well together and build momentum for change. It will also develop peer-support networks across the region to support and sustain that momentum.

The Academy involves three streams of activity, happening in parallel, which aim to build new skills and understanding, enable collaboration and knowledge sharing, and reflect learning in the living local context.



7. EYTA modules

PREPARING FOR CHANGE

Key factors in the success of any intervention, no matter how strong the evidence, are whether the conditions for change are in place, and the quality of the implementation process.

Overview

Preparing for change has a strong practical emphasis in helping the EYTA Teams to create a supportive environment for transformation, establish the personal and collaborative leadership needed to drive change, and produce a plan for strategy implementation.

Topics:

- **Initial system assessment** uses system diagnostics to identify barriers, set a system baseline and build commitment to change with a wider local stakeholder audience.
- **Creating implementation leadership** focuses on what science and innovative practice tells us about effective transformation, and the individual & team leadership skills and behaviours required.
- **Creating an implementation plan** confirms the local vision & strategy and creates the plan required for implementation.

Purpose

This topic introduces the core methodologies used in the Academy and supports the EYTA Teams to assess and plan for effective change management.

Features

This topic uses a robust self-assessment of local leadership to build a sustainable virtual team approach, including senior responsible owners, change leaders, and wider stakeholders. It uses Staff College expertise to guide the individual leadership journey. It uses practical tools to support participants to structure local deployment of change.

Outputs

1. Initial system assessment
2. Individual leadership assessment
3. Leadership team terms of reference
4. Theory of change
5. Implementation plan

Contents

Online learning

- Change science
- Introducing theory of change
- Practice testimony: 'A Better Start'

Design workshops

- Leadership launch event
- Applying change science
- Personal leadership skills
- Building leadership teams
- Peer review: theory of change

Local application

- System maturity matrix
- Readiness for change tool
- Local partner workshop
- Theory of change – plan on a page
- Implementation planning

7. EYTA modules

IDENTIFYING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

An understanding of current and future community and family needs lies at the heart of any effective public service.

Overview

Identifying vulnerable populations focuses on how EYTA Teams can enhance their work on measuring needs and setting goals. It uses the latest evidence on risk and protective factors across four key domains of child development: cognitive, behavioural, social & emotional, and physical.

Topics:

- **Creating an outcomes framework** applies recent EIF evidence reviews to practical local activity on outcome measurement.
- **Conducting population needs assessment** focuses on how an understanding of outcomes drives local maternity & early years population needs assessment.
- **Building consensus around priorities** deepens stakeholder awareness of local needs and identifies common goals.

Purpose

This topic enables EYTA Teams to apply the latest evidence on early child development to local frameworks for outcome measurement & needs assessment, and to use this to develop priorities for change.

Features

This topic uses EIF's evidence reviews to test and refine local arrangements for outcome & needs measurement. It provides an innovative virtual comparator to offer new insights to local data.

Outputs

1. Outcome framework
2. Population needs assessment
3. Needs assessment narrative
4. Common goals / priorities

Contents

Online learning

- Early childhood development
- Risk & protective factors
- Using outcome frameworks
- Model EIF framework
- Using population needs assessment

Design workshops

- Benchmarking local outcome framework
- Needs assessment review
- EIF virtual population benchmarking assessment
- Risk and protective factors
- Peer review: local population needs narrative
- Planning engagement

Local application

- Outcome framework
- Population needs assessment and narrative
- Stakeholder engagement to build consensus around priorities

7. EYTA modules

SYSTEM PLANNING

Local family support systems often feel complicated and organic rather than coherently designed to deliver seamless services. System scope is often defined by the limits of organisational responsibility rather than considering the factors which are most important to child and family outcomes, such as family income and employment, or informal support from family and friends.

Overview

System planning enables the EYTA Teams to understand how system thinking can enable local delivery and equips them to build future pathways of support which are rooted in 'what works' evidence. It uses what works evidence for interventions and practice to guide local pathways of support across the key domains of child development.

Topics:

- **System thinking** explores key system concepts, design and challenges and their practical application to maternity and early years systems.
- **Support for families** applies intervention evidence to review current / design improved support pathways for families.
- **System capacities** provides a structure for local analysis and agreement to the capacity needed to deliver a changed system, considering workforce, community, technical, financial and partnership dimensions.

Purpose

This topic challenges the EYTA Teams to apply pragmatic system approaches to transform maternity and early years outcomes, considering the system scope from the perspective of families rather than organisational resources.

Features

This topic uses EIF's evidence reviews to test and refine local support pathways. It draws on Better Start Bradford's experience of local implementation. It integrates with wider work on pathways such as the PHE-led work on speech, language and communication.

Outputs

1. Support pathways
2. Delivery capacity plan

Contents

Online learning

- Introducing system thinking
- Designing in good assessment
- Engaging vulnerable families
- Resource & capacity mapping

Design workshops

- Applying system thinking
- Customer journey planning
- Maternity & early years system designs
- Building support pathways
- Identifying delivery capacity requirements

Local application

- Analysis of current support pathways
- Consultation on revised pathways
- Capacity redesign work

7. EYTA modules

MEASURING IMPACT

On balance families who receive interventions shown through rigorous testing to have improved outcomes are more likely to benefit, and to a greater degree, than those who receive other services.

Overview

Measuring impact introduces the key language and concepts of evidence, and how these apply to practice and delivery. It explores the value of evaluation evidence, and the role of local leaders and commissioners in building the UK evidence base through robust but proportionate local evaluations. It supports the EYTA Teams to design in evaluation to their work on maternity and early years system transformation.

Topics:

- **Understanding evidence** explores evidence concepts and how these can apply to system transformation. It also confirms the Team understanding and language.
- **Critically assessing evaluation evidence** deepens understanding of evaluation purpose and choices, and how to use evaluation evidence generated by others.
- **Implementing evaluation into practice and commissioning** equips the EYTA Teams to agree and apply evaluation methods for their work on maternity and early years system transformation.

Purpose

This topic is designed to give EYTA Teams greater confidence in applying critical assessment skills to their local system, in both the use and generation of evidence.

Features

This topic uses interactive and applied exercises from EIF and Born in Bradford to deepen the understanding of participants in how to most effectively use evidence.

Outputs

1. Local evaluation plan

Contents

Online learning

- Core evidence concepts

Design workshops

- Understanding evidence
- Critically assessing evaluation evidence
- Implementing evaluation into practice & commissioning
- Peer review: evaluation plan

Local application

- Preparing a local evaluation plan

8. Your EYTA team

The Transformation Academy is built around a multi-disciplinary team approach who can learn together and take responsibility for leading change. The make-up of this team will vary for each area according to your local arrangements but should bring together the individuals who have a key leadership role for the important components of the maternity and early years system.

Although some of these leaders may have a service rather than a system perspective, their collective focus as part of the Academy Team is on the strategic design of the wider system. This system is complex and not suited to a more traditional commissioner–provider relationship, so the Team should include both roles.

Each EYTA Team should include 6–8 representatives of the following functions:

Strategic commissioners

These are the system commissioners for the maternity and early years system.

They are responsible for the design of key elements of the system, the results achieved for families with children in the early years, the procurement and contract management of some key services, and the leadership of local transformation projects.

They are 'boundary spanners' focusing on systems and how these work rather than merely purchasing services.

They are used to using tools such as outcome frameworks and needs assessments, and as part of their role they design service specifications to embed wider system goals.

This should include:

- **Local Authority Commissioners** who are responsible for children's services such as children's centres, SEND, and early help
- **Clinical Commissioning Group Commissioners** who are responsible for services such as maternity, neonatal, mental health and SEND
- **Public Health Consultants** who are responsible for health visiting, school nursing and the wider Healthy Child Programme.

Key provider services

These are the leaders of key maternity & early years services which impact on family experience of public services.

They are responsible for the effective delivery of key universal and targeted interventions, and for the impact of these on children and families. They also lead service redesign and improvement projects.

They are the employers of the children & families workforce, and responsible for their development.

They are used to working in the partnership context, and using management data and community intelligence to target their resources. They work in both operational & strategic spheres.

This should include:

- **Heads of Service for child health services** such as midwifery, health visiting and perinatal mental health
- **Senior leads for family support services** such as children's centres and early help
- **A sector lead for early education services** such as nursery schools and PVIs
- **A sector lead for VCS family services** which focus on children in the early years.

The members of your EYTA Team are fundamental to leading the change process – they must be your local system leaders, even if they do not initially identify themselves as such.

They will all be active participants in the Academy, individually completing the online learning modules, working as a team in the design workshops, and sharing the responsibilities for running the change programme in the local context. Each member of the EYTA will play a different role, depending on their skills and their professional role in the wider local system. One of these roles is to act as the coordinator for the Team's relationship with the Academy, bringing people together and making things happen, and the each Team will be asked to identify who will play this role.

The EYTA Team cannot deliver this work alone, and are supported by two other important sets of stakeholders in the process.

1

Senior sponsors

These are the senior managers for the members of the EYTA Team and are the people who give a mandate for this work to happen. They need to be active champions for the transformation work, making this part of their local priorities, freeing up wider resources where needed, and acting on the results of the work carried out by the EYTA Team.

They also interact with the Academy, even if the direct relationship should be assigned to a single senior representative, by:

- liaising with EIF on the expression of interest and signing off the Academy application
- participating in the Academy launch event on 30 April
- participating in programme governance for the Academy as appropriate to ensure that the Academy is designed and delivered in a way that meets the needs of the local senior sponsors
- participating in the Academy final event on 5 March 2020 to understand the conclusions of the Academy's work and celebrate Team successes.

The people in these roles are likely to be members of the local strategic partnership for children and families, such as the Director of Children's Services or Assistant Director for Early Help, Director of Public Health, CCG Director of Commissioning, and other senior leaders.

2

Wider stakeholders

The EYTA Team will interact with a wider group of professionals and community representatives who are leaders and champions for change in maternity and early years services.

They will engage them in the local application of the work of the Academy, for example by:

- inviting them to participate in the initial system assessment and local stakeholder workshop in May
- involving them in creating the local narrative about maternity and early years over summer 2019, building on the local population needs assessment and family experiences
- engaging them to co-design family support pathways in the Autumn 2019
- consulting them on the theory of change and implementation plan in winter 2019/20.

There will be a key relationship between EIF, the EYTA Team coordinator and the designated representative of the senior sponsors to establish the local approach and keep things on track.

9. Our team

The Transformation Academy has been created by EIF, in partnership with The Staff College, Better Start Bradford and Born in Bradford.

The Early Intervention Foundation

EIF is a research charity and member of the UK What Works Network. EIF champions and supports the use of effective early intervention to improve the lives of children and young people at risk of experiencing poor outcomes. EIF's work includes:

- Making the case for prioritising and investing in effective early intervention at both the national and local level.
- Conducting research, synthesising the evidence from scientific studies, tests and evaluations of early intervention programmes and practices, and the expertise and experiences of people working in early intervention.
- Disseminating the findings, conclusions and recommendations from our research, and producing resources to translate this research into practical guidance and tools.
- Working with government and all levels of the early intervention sector to ensure this evidence is used in decisions about how early intervention is supported and implemented, from national policy to frontline practice.

EIF is the lead agency for the Academy and is responsible for the overall design and effectiveness as well as for communicating the learning to a wider audience. EIF has a key role in the Academy's work on evidence-based interventions and pathways, as well as on practical implementation tools and approaches.

The Staff College

The Staff College is the CPD arm of ADCS. The College supports the development of leadership and management capacity in local authorities and their Children's Trust partner organisations.

The Staff College seeks to develop current and future leaders who can respond to current and emerging challenges for local authorities and their local partners.

The Staff College has a key role in the Academy's work on personal and team leadership development, and on system leadership. They also bring a wealth of experience in designing and delivering learning programmes which respond to public sector challenges.

Better Start Bradford

Better Start Bradford is funded by Big Lottery over a 10-year period to improve the life chances of children aged 0–3.

The programme focuses on a shift in culture and spending towards prevention to co-produce and deliver less bureaucratic, more joined-up services for families, focusing on pregnancy and the first three years of life.

Led by Bradford Trident, their mission is to work with families and partners to improve the life chances of children in Bradford through a comprehensive programme focused on improving health, social and emotional development and communication, and to share lessons from this to promote wider change.

Better Start Bradford has a key role in the Academy's work on lived experience, practical implementation, and sharing learning from the five 'A Better Start' sites within the Academy.

Born in Bradford

Born in Bradford is one of the largest cohort studies in the world, tracking the lives of over 30,000 people to find out what influences the health and wellbeing of families. Bradford has one of the youngest populations in the UK, and high levels of ethnic diversity and deprivation. The findings and experiences of Born in Bradford are, therefore, generalisable to many other children's services across the UK.

Born in Bradford uses their findings to develop new interventions to improve outcomes for families. Through their collaboration with Better Start Bradford they have experience of successfully integrating evidence and evaluation into system-wide early years services to evaluate multiple complex interventions.

Born in Bradford has a key role in the Academy's work on measuring impact, including the evaluation design.

Apply to be an EYTA partner

EIF is accepting expressions of interest for local partners to participate in an Early Years Transformation Academy to drive improvements in local maternity and early years systems.

EIF is looking for local partners who:

- have made a local commitment to prioritise the early years
- are open to innovation in how they approach system redesign in the early years
- are keen to apply evidence to their work
- can demonstrate the potential to apply the learning from the Academy to the real world of service design and delivery.

Timeline

- **Friday 15 February 2019:**.....Deadline for expressions of interest
- **18–22 February:**EIF discussions with area sponsors
- **Friday 22 February:**Shortlisted applicants invited to complete full applications
- **Noon, Monday 25 March:**Submission of final applications
- **Friday 29 March:**.....Academy local partners confirmed

Eligibility criteria

- Local partners are defined as those with responsibility for key maternity and early years services, as a minimum the local authority and clinical commissioning group.
- Local areas may be defined by the local authority boundary, or by a different geographical area agreed by local partners providing this has a rationale for a strategic approach to the local maternity and early years system, and has appropriate local partner oversight.
- The scope of the local system (and thus the local area response) should be defined by the factors which impact on family outcomes and not be limited to the direct services delivered by individual agencies – this should take account, for example, of community capacity and assets.
- Applications will need to demonstrate that local partners are committed to working together, understand the demands that the Academy would place on them, are open to sharing their learning with a wider audience, and are able to demonstrate how this work enables them to meet their local priorities.

Application process

The three-stage EYTA application process has been designed to reduce the application burden on local areas.

STAGE 1: Expression of Interest

This is your opportunity to tell us about how the Academy would work for you, the difference you are hoping that it would help you to make, who would be in your EYTA Team, and your initial risk assessment.

Expressions of interest should clearly explain how local partner organisations will seek to sustain involvement in the Academy in the face of operational pressures and competing priorities; and how involvement in the Academy will drive subsequent change to how resources are used and local services are designed.

To support you to understand the Academy requirements better we are offering a webinar about the Academy on **Monday 4 February at 15:00**.

A key factor for local participation is that there are three other sites in your regional area that also want to participate. We have asked the **ADCS regional chairs** to help to coordinate a regional approach so that areas are aware of who else is interested.

The deadline for this stage is **Friday 15 February**.

[Submit your expression of interest →](#)

STAGE 2: Discussion with EIF

EIF will speak with senior sponsors from each individual area (or as a group of four areas if appropriate) to explore how well the Academy methodology and the requirements of the local area/s match. The discussion is to enable both EIF and the senior sponsors to judge whether the Academy is a good fit for the local context.

EIF will then shortlist areas and invite them to complete a full application.

STAGE 3: Full application (by invitation only)

A small number of shortlisted areas will be invited to complete a full application. This will require more detailed information about local goals, governance for this work, system resources, team capacity and roles, and an outline deployment plan.

EIF will run a planning workshop on the afternoon of Tuesday 5 March in London to support shortlisted areas with their applications, including individual application surgeries to answer site specific questions and issues. EIF and its partners will review applications **in the week of 25 March**. We may need to confirm specific details with individual sites during that week, and will make a final decision on Academy local partners by **Friday 29 March**.

Frequently asked questions

1

What constitutes a 'local area' for the Academy?

This can be defined by local authority or CCG area boundaries, or another area which makes sense in the local context, providing this allows for local system level planning for about maternity and early years and is of a scale that makes sense to the team model of the Academy. For example, Greater Manchester would be too big to be a single area, there are too many separate local systems and decision-makers; whereas Cambridgeshire and Peterborough might choose to put themselves forward as a single area due to there being a single CCG as well as shared leadership roles across the local authorities.

2

Do the four local areas have to be in a single ADCS region?

No. The expectation is that the local areas are in the same geographical area so that the design workshops can be delivered in a convenient local location, but this can span more than one region if appropriate.

3

Why are you looking for four local sites, and is there any flexibility on this to match with local opportunities?

Four areas should give us sufficient variation to test the Academy approach, and keep the scale of the design workshops and support mechanisms manageable. However, we are open to adapting the approach to better fit with a sub-regional approach that builds on your priorities if you can make a compelling case, providing this fits within the overall approach. Given the tight schedule for selecting sites, however, it would make sense to keep the process as simple as possible.

4

Is it worth doing an application if there are not others nearby who also want to participate?

No. We have designed the Academy delivery model to avoid team members having to travel long distances to participate. We think that this approach is more likely to sustain high levels of participation over the 12-month period and make the Academy more grounded in local issues and priorities.

5

How can we find other neighbouring areas to apply?

We have asked ADCS regional chairs to help to coordinate expressions of interest across their regions.

6

Should local areas apply individually, or is there a single application for the four local areas?

Each local area should apply individually.

7

We already have a new delivery model based on a population needs assessment, we just need to improve how we implement this. Would the Academy help us to do this?

No. The Academy would take you through some of the same steps that you have already completed. It's not the right approach for the stage that you are at.

8

How much time would be needed for each member of the EYTA Team?

The individual 'study time' needed to work through the online materials will vary depending on how familiar the content is to each participant, and is frontloaded at the start of the Academy to introduce the core Academy concepts and evidence sources. There are eight days of design workshops spread through the year which will involve all the team members. And finally, the time needed for local deployment will vary widely according to the roles of the EYTA Team members, how they choose to work together, and how much adaptation they decide is needed to their current approach.

For example, one area may have recently updated their population needs assessment and decide it only needs a brief review; whereas another area may decide that they do not have sufficient analysis of maternity and population needs, and commission detailed work to remedy this including ethnographic research. Local application is scalable, however, the work does need to fit within the schedule set out for Academy delivery.

Although it is difficult to be precise about exactly how much time each team member will need to commit to the programme, what is clear is that this will be a significant commitment of time, spread over a 12-month period.

9

Isn't this just another initiative?

No. It is a way for a local area to plan for the longer-term, consolidating separate strands of work and initiatives and bringing coherence to an overall local approach. If it seems like another initiative then it's probably not for you – it has to be an embedded way of working for it to be a success and for it to provide a return on the significant investment of time required.

- 10 The time for preparing an expression of interest and application is very challenging – can we have more time?**
Unfortunately not. To complete the delivery of the Academy on time, local partners need to be identified in this financial year. We have designed the application process to be light-touch, but we recognise that it will be likely to work best for areas that are already talking about a partnership approach to the early years.
- 11 What if we can't get all the relevant people to commit to the EYTA Team?**
We have not specified who must be involved in the EYTA Teams, but have suggested the kinds of roles that should be involved. Each area needs to be able to bring a sufficient spread of key leaders together to be able to influence the wider system, but we recognise that not every key person will be in the EYTA Team, although they should be part of the wider stakeholder group. As part of the application process each area is asked to how they would respond to issues such as this.
- 12 What is the connection between this programme and the Big Lottery's A Better Start?**
EIF have consulted with Big Lottery on the design of the Academy and will use the Academy to share learning from the A Better Start programme. Better Start Bradford are working with EIF on the design and delivery of the Academy.
- 13 The intensive programme isn't for me but I'd like to hear about what people learn from it. How can I do that?**
We have created an online portal – the Early Intervention Transformation Academy Hub – to share information about the Academy and wider learning resources related to maternity and the early years. See <https://EYTA.EIF.org.uk>.
- 14 Who can an expression of interest come from?**
This should come from a senior local sponsor, like your Director of Children's Services, Director of Public Health or a relevant Director in your CCG. It is not sufficient for this to come from a Head of Service who would be involved in the EYTA Team.
- 15 What sorts of challenges would participating in the Academy help me to overcome?**
The Academy could help you to: prioritise the key outcomes that you want local maternity and early years services to achieve; align provision to strategic policy priorities; use the evidence to inform service redesign, including decommissioning decisions; improve partnership working and information sharing; better understand population needs and gaps in provision. The Academy is not a shortcut to financial savings, although it could help you to take a more strategic approach to how the local system responds to funding pressures.
- 16 Will any ongoing support be available after the academy ends? Will it be expected that the teams continue to support each other, for example, or will there be access to EIF support?**
At this point no formal EIF support is planned for the participating sites from April 2020. Academy participants will consider what capacities they will need to implement their transformation plan as part of the Academy process. It is likely that the peer networks will continue, particularly given the regional delivery approach of the Academy.