

## Evaluation of the International Public Policy Observatory

[The International Public Policy Observatory \(IPPO\)](#) wishes to commission an external evaluator to undertake impact evaluation work related to the initiative's specified outcomes. The work will need to be completed by October 2024. Work will begin on 03 April 2023.

### Background

IPPO is an ongoing initiative supported by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) and hosted at University College London.

#### *What does IPPO do?*

IPPO finds, distils, and shares the best global evidence for policy practice across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. IPPO undertakes policy research, knowledge exchange activities and evidence synthesis around four broad themes: **recovery from COVID-19; net zero; place and spatial inequalities; and socio-economic inequalities.**

IPPO's work is shaped and framed by numerous and diverse conversations with decision-makers. Those interactions help us to identify important questions and issues that can benefit from rigorous knowledge synthesis, drawing on research and expertise from around the world, we do this with the help of our partners, locally and globally. We describe our approach as a 'double helix' model, reflecting the constant iteration between evidence supply and policy demand to ensure the delivery of useful and actionable evidence products.

#### *Who is involved in IPPO?*

The initiative is co-led by Professor Joanna Chataway, IPPO's Principal Investigator, and project leads Sir Geoff Mulgan, Sarah Chaytor and Ayden Wilson, IPPO's Operations Manager. UK engagement partners include the [University of Glasgow](#), [Queen's University Belfast](#) and the [Wales Centre for Public Policy](#). The [EPPI-Centre](#), based at UCL, conducts rapid reviews of evidence in response to policy demand. [INGSA](#), based at the University of Auckland, work with IPPO to identify useful and relevant international expertise, and identify examples of policy innovation and practice globally. [The Conversation](#) is an independent source of news and views, sourced from the academic and research community and delivered direct to the public, and is IPPO's communication partner.

IPPO is also in the process of establishing its advisory board made up of academics, policy stakeholders and other interested parties that have links to its broad themes.

#### *IPPO's impact to date*

IPPO has completed a first phase of work from October 2020 until December 2022. During that phase our focus was on COVID-19. The COVID-19 pandemic created unprecedented challenges for local and national policymakers and other decision-makers across the UK, who were being asked to make many varied and complex decisions in quick succession

whilst knowledge of the virus and its impacts we're still emerging. IPPO was established to make the growing evidence base on COVID-19 and its consequences more accessible to policymakers, to support the development of measures to help society through the severe and widespread impacts of COVID-19.

An ESRC independent review – which drew on an external independent evaluation conducted by Social Business Solutions Ltd – judged IPPO's approach and work related to COVID-19 recovery to be successful. We have now extended the approach to the four themes identified above, with some refinements as follows:

- A defined stage gate process to determine specific outputs in response to the strength of policy demand.
- Greater emphasis on dialogue, iteration and relationship building.
- Stronger integration between partners across the UK and internationally.
- A greater focus on the long-term sustainability of IPPO.

### **IPPO's Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**

IPPO's overall aim is to enable access to and use of evidence and knowledge to address critical and time sensitive social policy challenges. It aims to achieve outcomes related to that overall ambition in three main ways:

- we aim to stimulate demand for research and evidence from a range of policy stakeholders across the UK;
- we will supply a range of knowledge synthesis products which can be used by policymakers;
- we will facilitate and enable the creation and use of appropriate evidence, including through building of relationships and networks with policy and other stakeholders and supporting ongoing dialogue

Additionally, in phase 2, we will address the challenge of creating a sustainable funding and operational base for IPPO, in particular by exploring strategic partnerships.

During its first phase, IPPO had a well-developed monitoring and evaluation (MEL) framework based in a Theory of Change (ToC) and Logic Model approach. This encompassed activities including stakeholder engagement, roundtables and other events, and the production of a range of knowledge synthesis products. Data collection associated with indicators that IPPO developed as part of that framework was collected and analysed by the internal team, IPPO then organised a sounding board meeting with colleagues across UCL who have been involved in monitoring and evaluation to review our framework and plans and the evidence that was collected.

### **What we are looking for**

We are looking for an evaluator to evaluate the impact of IPPO's work in relation to the specified outcomes. We are keen to build greater understanding of the breadth of impacts arising across the activities undertaken by IPPO.

In the first instance, we would like an evaluator to work with us to review IPPO's current ToC, logic model, and monitoring and evaluation framework, including our data collection framework and mechanisms. We will also want to explore whether the overall ToC might be supplemented by theme or project specific ToCs.

### *Methodology*

We are open to suggestions and discussion about specific methodologies but will want to use a theory based approach. We believe this can be used to help us understand more about the impact of IPPO's activities. We are keen to hear from potential evaluators about methodologies and approaches that they might use and to discuss with them their preferences. Case studies proved a useful methodology in the phase 1 evaluation and we would be interested to hear about how evaluators might use case studies to further our understanding of IPPO's success. The evaluator, together with IPPO staff, would work across the four themes.

### *Presentation*

We are keen to hear about how evaluators might use graphics and diagrams as part of the presentation of their work.

### *Specific requirements and timelines*

The evaluator would be required to supply the following as a minimum:

- One workshop with some of the IPPO team to review IPPO's Theory of Change and associated MEL framework. This should take place on **03 April 2023**.
- A draft workplan, based on the ToC and initial discussion with the IPPO team, outlining a detailed description of the evaluation work to be undertaken. This should be delivered by 5pm on **17 April 2023**. The draft workplan should provide details about how impact on relevant stakeholders is to be gathered, assessed, and documented. This would include presenting the draft workplan to IPPO colleagues on **20 April 2023**. The workplan will constitute the first major output from the evaluator.
- IPPO would provide initial feedback on the draft workplan during the presentation and in writing by the **27 April 2023**.
- The second major output is delivery of a revised ToC and MEL framework. This should include proposed policy impact indicators, and a data collection framework for use by the IPPO project team. It should also set out how IPPO should collect data necessary for the final report, division of labour between the IPPO and external evaluation, responsibility for developing case studies. This should be delivered by no later than **01 June 2023**.
- The third major output for the evaluator will be delivery of an outline report and presentation to the IPPO team detailing the results of the research by no later than **31 August 2024**. IPPO will provide feedback within 10 working days of output delivery.
- A final 5000 word report including graphics by **11 October 2024**. The final report should succinctly describe IPPO's impact, offer insights into how impact has been achieved; provide an overall assessment of the extent to which IPPO has met its impact and outcome objectives. Detailed accounts of work and findings should be

included in annexes. The final report should include a stand-alone Executive Summary alongside stand-alone graphics, case studies, and other snapshots of impact which can be used in our wider dissemination work.

IPPO will be flexible to requests from the evaluator to meet with colleagues in the Observatory to help support the timelines set out above.

IPPO may ask the evaluator to attend up to four team meetings between **May 2023** and **October 2024**. Should this be required, we will work with them on finding a suitable date and time, providing at least 10 working days notice.

*Timelines and outputs are subject to change and IPPO will work with the successful evaluator to discuss and agree the outputs and timelines set out above. This will also be completed in consultation with IPPO's funder, the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)*

The budget available for this work is a maximum of £25,000

### **To apply**

Please respond to this invitation to tender with a short proposal (maximum 4 pages) outlining how you would approach this evaluation and a high level indicative workplan. Please include a budget. You may provide links to previous work in your proposal.

Please submit your proposal and high level indicative workplan to [ayden.wilson@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:ayden.wilson@ucl.ac.uk) by 0900 on **24 March 2023**.

If you would like an informal chat before submitting your bid, please contact Ayden Wilson.

IPPO will confirm the successful evaluator on week commencing **27 March 2023**.

### **UCL**

In line with the Procuring and Purchasing Policy at UCL, IPPO are expected to send this tender to at least three evaluator or evaluator teams to receive a competitive proposal and quote, before the successful evaluator can be set up as a new supplier and invoices paid.

For more information about IPPO and the work that we do, please visit our [website](#).