



Project Search – Evaluation

In order to monitor how Project Search works in practice for all those involved and determine the benefits of the model, Government will evaluate the results and benefits that the sites deliver. We have tried to ensure that this process is as light-touch as possible.

This paper sets out the aims of the evaluation, suggested areas of focus for the research questions and proposed research.

Aims of the Evaluation

The evaluation will aim to:

- demonstrate how Project Search can deliver improved employment outcomes for people with learning disabilities.
- describe the expectations and experiences of participants and practitioners.
- identify the key costs and benefits of the Project Search model, including the costs and benefits to employers.
- identify common themes, issues, lessons learnt and good practice in assessing the effectiveness of the projects.
- model local partnerships and stakeholder engagement to identify key criteria for success.

Areas of focus

The following are proposed areas of focus for the evaluation. Under each we have set out potential research questions and how we might measure them. We propose that this might form the basis of a research framework to be further developed over the coming months.

It is likely that any qualitative research (for example in-depth face to face interviews) would be carried out by an independent researcher who will have

experience of carrying out research with disabled people, including people with learning disabilities.

Some of the data we collect will be published in aggregate form. We will also want to publish real case studies to show good practice and lessons learnt. Issues around anonymity will be discussed further with selected sites at the appropriate time.

Proposed Evaluation Criteria:

Process

1. Did you find the Project Search guidance helpful?
2. What further guidance/information would have been helpful?
3. Did you find the Central Team useful? Please tell us what type of issues you have raised with them.
4. Were there any issues where you felt more guidance was needed?

Suggested methods: These questions could be asked on a written feedback sheet including open ended questions. The intention is that feedback would be used internally by the Central Team to improve the process. Where possible we would encourage responses not to be anonymised so that particular issues can be followed up with individual sites. As such this information would not be published as part of the evaluation.

Partnership working

1. Which partners were involved?
2. How did you secure your funding?
3. What barriers did you face when setting up your partnerships?
4. What barriers did you face in sustaining partnerships?
5. What went particularly well in your partnerships?

Suggested methods: This information will be gathered through a combination of written feedback and face to face meetings with staff within organisations. It might be possible to develop a partnership model in future analysis highlighting successful models and identifying barriers. Sites will have the option for this feedback to be anonymised when published.

Project Search Programme

1. How many interns started the programme?
2. How many finished it?

3. How many interns secured permanent employment with the host organisation?
 4. How many interns secured employment elsewhere within 3 months of leaving the programme or the programme ending?
 5. Was your job coach trained in Systematic Instruction?
 6. If not, did they receive training?
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7. Please give details of the job coach's pre-existing qualifications and experiences and any training they undertook for the Project Search role.

Suggested methods: It is anticipated that this information could be provided from a combination of management information and asking questions on a short paper or telephone survey (particularly for question 4). Sites will have the option for this feedback to be anonymised when published.

Experiences of interns

1. What were your expectations of the Project Search Programme?
2. How has the Project Search Programme helped you to meet your expectations?
3. What benefits, if any, have you gained from Project Search?
4. What did you feel worked well? What didn't work so well?
5. Overall how would you rate your experiences?

Suggested methods: These questions would be asked to interns in face to face interviews with trained researchers who will have experience of carrying out research with disabled people, including those with learning disabilities. Any participation by interns would be strictly voluntary but sites will be asked to provide a list of interns who would be willing to take part in this research.

All participants would have the right to anonymity however we would like to discuss with sites and interns, the possibility of using a case study approach in which some identifiers could be included, for example identity of intern, type of organisation etc.

Project Search host organisations

1. From an employer's point of view, what were your expectations of the Project Search Programme?
2. To what extent has the Programme met your expectations?
Were you satisfied with the Project Search Programme?
3. What did you feel worked well? What didn't work so well?
4. What benefits, if any, did it deliver to your organisation?

5. What were the costs (or cost savings) to the organisation (financial and other)?
6. Overall how would you rate the Project Search Programme?

Suggested methods: This information could be collected by face to face meetings or by self-completion questionnaire by appropriate staff within the organisation.