

# Review of the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies

## Request for Expressions of Interest

### Background

The European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies is a WHO-hosted partnership that generates and disseminates evidence for policy-making. More information on the European Observatory is located [here](#). Terms of reference for the assignment are attached.

### Purpose and objectives

The Observatory is planning to undertake a review as part of its partnership renewal cycle and to strengthen the understanding of how its combination of activities (for 2019-23) helped deliver its aims. The exercise will build on past reviews, revise the theory of change and, focus on recommendations on how the Observatory might strengthen its impact.

The review has two objectives, with the emphasis on the second objective and lessons for the future.

1. To collate information on past activities to help inform an assessment of impact and to advise on how data from routine Steering Committee monitoring can best be used to demonstrate appropriate performance.
2. To understand how the combination of activities and the cumulative and complex interactions between them have contributed to the intended impact of the Observatory, so as to inform and strengthen future evidence for policy work.

### Deliverables and Timeline

The review will commence in November 2022, ending with a final report in July 2023. Key deliverables will include the following:

- **An inception report**, outlining the way forward (draft inception report due late November for discussion at the Observatory Steering Committee 12-13 December 2022);
- **A draft report** (due 01 May 2023); and
- **A final report** incorporating feedback received from the Evaluation Working Group and Observatory Steering Committee (due 03 July 2023);
- **A PowerPoint presentation** of key findings and recommendations, to be presented to the Observatory Steering Committee and Partners.

### Expert Profile

The Observatory is seeking experts with an understanding of the nature of evidence to policy work and an awareness of the complex nature of policy impacts and the importance of process as well as outcomes. The expert(s) should have:

- 5-10 years' experience with evaluation, project appraisal or process/organizational development and/or organizational monitoring and evaluation

- Recent and relevant experience with evaluation and / or impact assessment for a complex, policy focused organization
- Relevant international experience with European health systems and health policy
- Demonstrable understanding of research, secondary research and evidence synthesis
- Familiarity with policy making and the use of evidence in policy making
- Understanding of knowledge brokering
- Excellent communication, facilitation and drafting skills in English (oral and written)

The Partners would like to ensure that the expert(s) is(are) demonstrably independent so prefer not to consider individuals or teams who have worked closely with the Observatory during the last 5 years or intend to do so in the next 2 years.

Daily fees for this assignment are dictated by a pre-determined band range established by WHO. The specific rate offered will be calculated based on the level of experience of the selected candidate(s).

## Governance

The Observatory Steering Committee has appointed an Evaluation Working Group to oversee the review exercise. This Group is responsible for overseeing the process to identify an expert. It will act as an advisory panel to the selected expert and assess the draft review report for quality although the selected expert remains responsible for the quality assurance of all deliverables, at a technical, linguistic and graphical level. The Steering Committee as a whole will approve the choice of expert and act as a de facto peer reviewer, assessing the quality and objectivity of the final report; and approve it.

## How to apply

Interested candidates should submit an expression of interest to [evaluation\\_obs@who.int](mailto:evaluation_obs@who.int) by end of day **Wednesday, 06 July 2022**. Please specify “OBS Review 2022” in the email subject line.

The expression of interest should include:

- A cover letter or cover email
- List of expert(s) to be involved with recent CV of key expert(s)
- Examples of recent, relevant engagements (up to 5);
- Expected daily and total fee (exclusive of expenses); and
- Confirmation of availability during the period November 2022 to July 2023.

Short-listed candidates will be invited to complete a tender form (if they are a company or institution) or a personnel form (if they are an individual) and to take part in a short virtual interview as part of the final selection process. It is likely that short-listed candidates will also be invited to prepare and submit a written concept note outlining a proposed approach and methods to support their application.

Queries can be addressed to [evaluation\\_obs@who.int](mailto:evaluation_obs@who.int), again please specify “OBS Review 2022” in the subject.

## Review of the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies

### Terms of Reference

The European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies is a WHO-hosted partnership that generates and disseminates evidence for policy-making. It is planning to undertake a review as part of its partnership renewal cycle and to strengthen the understanding of how its combination of activities (for 2019-23) helped deliver its aims. It will build on past reviews, revise the theory of change and, focus on recommendations on how the Observatory might strengthen its impact.

#### **Review objectives:**

1. To collate information on past activities to help inform an assessment of impact and to advise on how data from routine Steering Committee monitoring can best be used to demonstrate appropriate performance.
2. To understand how the combination of activities and the cumulative and complex interactions between them have contributed to the intended impact of the Observatory, so as to inform and strengthen future evidence for policy work.

The emphasis will be on the second objective and lessons for the future.

**Target groups:** The review seeks to meet the needs of Partners, Steering Committee members and the Secretariat, by assessing impact over 2019-23 and demonstrating how expectations are being met and by supporting strategic thinking. It will help the Observatory to adapt its way of working and Partners to play a more active role in sharing evidence.

**Scope:** The review will consider the current partnership period from 2019 to 2023.

**Expected approach:** The work is expected to be conducted in two stages:

#### **1. Observatory activities and outputs(25%)**

The Observatory Steering Committee meets twice a year and reviews detailed activity reports and a mix of impact measures. This element of the review will compile core information and advise on how to pull together existing data to give an overview of what the Observatory has achieved and inform future work. It will include:

- Identifying and collating the information (on activities, outputs, proxies for uptake and quality, and the visibility of the Observatory and its work) needed to inform the remainder of the review.
- Providing a framework for the mapping of Observatory activities and outputs against intended target groups in light of its aims, to help in understanding the fit between outputs, user groups, entry points and expected impacts;

- Identifying a discrete set of indicators (including of proxies for uptake and quality) to serve as a template for ongoing monitoring and future 5-year overviews of activities and outputs and to give insights into how and where Observatory evidence is used;
- Preparation of an inception report outlining the way forward for stage 2, including specific questions for key informant interviews, data collection methods and instruments, and a specific timeline indicating interim milestones.

## 2. Understanding Observatory impact and its lessons for the future (75%)

This element will look at the lessons from the first stage and explore reflections from Partners on, and expert understanding of, impact (and how to measure it). It will include:

- Review of **data on (and proxies for) presumed and expected impact** (from stage 1).
- **Key informant interviews** with Partners to:
  - explore how the various Observatory inputs (including evidence and efforts to reach the relevant audiences) have combined to influence policy decisions at different levels;
  - identify the context, circumstances and timing that affect the ability of Observatory evidence to impact policy decisions;
  - determine which formats and outputs/deliverables work best with which audiences.
- **Key informant interviews** with policy makers to identify impacts, strengths and weaknesses.
- A set of **case studies** on how Observatory evidence is used in practice supported by the understanding of the work done generated in stage 1 and above. The case studies will identify examples that were felt to have worked and which illustrate impact; the entry points/pathways used; the factors for success; the obstacles; and the lessons learned.
- Consideration of the experiences of COVID-19 (perhaps as a case study as above) and of the **factors affecting the agility** of Observatory responses.
- Analysis of the **'state of play' on indicators** and measures of impact and lessons for the Observatory.
- Facilitation of **groupwork with Partners** to explore and strengthen their role in sharing evidence and creating impact.
- Updating of the Observatory's **theory of change**, based on a review of the 2017-18 recommendations, the analysis of impact and the understanding of Observatory audiences generated above.
- **Preparation of a report** that includes
  - A framework mapping the fit between outputs, user groups, entry points and expected impacts
  - A set of indicators to serve as a template for ongoing monitoring and review of how and where Observatory evidence is used
  - A set of case studies illustrating factors that enable and block the use of evidence in practice
  - Lessons from state of the art thinking on impact
  - A revised theory of change
  - Recommendations on how the Observatory can strengthen the way it plans and delivers its work and knowledge brokering (its focus, timing/timeliness and presentation of evidence) to increase policy relevance and maximize impact.

The report will include a summary and PPT making key findings and recommendations readily accessible.

**Expert profile:** The Observatory is seeking experts with an understanding of the nature of evidence to policy work and an awareness of the complex nature of policy impacts and the importance of process as well as outcomes.

**Criteria:** The expert(s) should have:

- 5-10 years' experience with evaluation, project appraisal or process/organizational development and/or organizational monitoring and evaluation
- Recent and relevant experience with evaluation and / or impact assessment for a complex, policy focused organization
- Relevant international experience with European health systems and health policy
- Demonstrable understanding of research, secondary research and evidence synthesis
- Familiarity with policy making and the use of evidence in policy making
- Understanding of knowledge brokering
- Excellent communication, facilitation and drafting skills in English (oral and written)

The Partners would like to ensure that the expert(s) is(are) demonstrably independent so prefer not to consider individuals or teams who have worked closely with the Observatory during the last 5 years or intend to do so in the next 2 years.

**Methodology and reporting:** The review methodology will demonstrate impartiality and lack of bias by relying on a cross-section of information sources and using a mixed methodological approach to ensure triangulation of information from various stakeholder groups gathered through a variety of means.

The review report will be based on the quality criteria defined in the WHO Evaluation Practice Handbook. It should be relevant to decision-making needs, written in a concise, clear and easily understandable language, of high scientific quality and based on the review information without bias. The report will include an executive summary and evidence-based conclusions and recommendations directly derived from the review findings and addressing all relevant issues.

**Governance and Accountability:** The Observatory Steering Committee has appointed an Evaluation Working Group (EWG) to oversee the review exercise. The EWG is responsible for developing terms of reference and overseeing the process to identify an expert. It will act as an advisory panel to the selected expert and assess the draft review report for quality although the selected expert remains responsible for the quality assurance of all deliverables, at a technical, linguistic and graphical level. The Steering Committee as a whole will approve the choice of expert and act as a de facto peer reviewer, assessing the quality and objectivity of the final report; and approve it.

The EWG members are all part of the Steering Committee and reflect a mix of Partners (national governments, international, research and policy bodies). They have volunteered and have confirmed that they do not have any conflicts of interest that might bias their selection, conduct, findings, conclusions, recommendations and reporting.

The selected expert(s) is(are) also expected to be independent and to make a declaration on conflicts of interest.

**Support to the review process:** The Observatory Steering Committee members will make time available for discussion. Finally, the Observatory staff will provide time, information and insights into work over the review period.

**Timeline:** The expectation is that work will meet the following deadlines:

November 2022	Work starts
21 November 2022	Draft inception report delivered
12-13 December 2022	Meeting with Partners and Steering Committee to confirm the proposed approach
01 May 2023	Draft review report shared with EWG
08-09 June 2023	Meeting with Partners and Steering Committee to confirm the final draft report
03 July 2023	Final revisions incorporated and final report delivered.

Payment will be made in instalments upon satisfactory completion of deliverables.

**Scale of work:** The expectation is that the review will take in the region of 80 working days and including background research, interviews, and writing up. Additional funding for travel is available.

**Process:** Interested candidates should submit an application by 06 July 2022 to [evaluation\\_obs@who.int](mailto:evaluation_obs@who.int) Please specify "OBS Review 2022" in the email subject line.

The expression of interest should include:

- Cover letter
- Recent CV of key expert(s)
- Examples of recent, relevant engagements (up to 5)
- Expected daily and total fee (exclusive of expenses)
- Confirmation of availability during the period November 2022 to July 2023.

Short-listed candidates will be asked to complete a tender form or a personnel form (depending on their status as company, organization or individual contractor) and invited to a short virtual interview as part of the final selection process. It is likely that short-listed candidates will also be invited to prepare and submit a written concept note outlining a proposed approach and methods to support their application. For information about the Observatory please see our website <https://eurohealthobservatory.who.int/home>

Queries can be addressed to [evaluation\\_obs@who.int](mailto:evaluation_obs@who.int), again please specify "OBS Review 2022" in the subject.