

Project Evaluation – Tender Brief

Connected Lives: Dementia-Aware Volunteering

Contract Period: July 2026 – March 2027

About Befriending Networks

Befriending Networks is a national charity and the network for befriending services in Scotland. We support, promote and connect organisations delivering befriending and other relationship-based social connection services. With over 30 years' experience, we provide training, resources, quality assurance and national leadership to strengthen practice and reduce loneliness across communities.

Our vision is a society where quality befriending support is available to everyone who needs it, and where meaningful social connection is recognised as essential to wellbeing.

About the Project

Connected Lives: Dementia-Aware Volunteering is a Scotland-wide programme led by Befriending Networks to strengthen social connection and dementia-inclusive volunteering in communities. Research shows that long-term loneliness increases the risk of dementia, while meaningful relationships and volunteering can improve wellbeing and help people live well.

Building on over 30 years of experience, Befriending Networks has developed this project in response to organisations and volunteers who want greater confidence in supporting people living with dementia and their carers. Funded by the Scottish Government Dementia Resilient Communities, the 12-month programme will provide free dementia and social connection training, resources and support to volunteer-involving organisations across Scotland.

Connected Lives includes an accredited Good Practice course delivered online and in person, practical training resources that can be used locally, and an accessible e-learning course for volunteers and carers. Together, these elements will help organisations deliver dementia-inclusive events, activities and services, whilst supporting volunteers to build safe, meaningful and respectful relationships, ensuring more people affected by dementia stay connected to their communities.

Purpose of this Tender

Befriending Networks is seeking to appoint an independent Project Evaluator to design and deliver a proportionate, high-quality evaluation of the Connected Lives programme.

The evaluation will:

- Assess progress against agreed project outcomes
- Capture learning from staff, volunteers and carers
- Evidence impact at organisational and individual level
- Inform future programme development and sustainability
- Meet reporting requirements of the Scottish Government Dementia Resilient Communities Fund

Scope of Work

Evaluation design

- Review project aims, outcomes and monitoring arrangements
- Develop a proportionate evaluation framework aligned to fund outcomes, activities and available budget
- Agree methods, timetable and reporting approach with Befriending Networks
- Design evaluation surveys for project participants
- Ensure methods are accessible, inclusive and proportionate

Data collection

The evaluator will draw on existing project monitoring data which will be collected by Befriending Networks including:

- Attendance and participation data
- Immediate feedback from training sessions and e-learning
- Follow-up surveys post-training and e-learning

In addition, the evaluator will:

- Conduct a small number of qualitative interviews (by phone or teams) with a sample of participants (e.g. staff, volunteers or carers)



- Capture a small number of illustrative case studies or examples of practice change
- Ensure methods are accessible, inclusive and proportionate

3. Analysis and learning

- Analyse quantitative and qualitative data
- Assess progress against fund outcomes and project objectives
- Identify learning, strengths, challenges and areas for development

4. Reporting

- Produce a concise written evaluation report suitable for funder submission
- Provide a short summary of key findings for wider dissemination
- Present findings to Befriending Networks staff

The project aims to reach 16 volunteer involving organisations in 20 locations across Scotland through in-person training (320 direct participants). Four additional sessions will be delivered online. E-learning will be available to the public, aimed at volunteers and carers with a focus on sustaining social connection with and for those living with dementia.

Support Provided

Befriending Networks will provide:

- Access to project plans, outcomes and monitoring data
- Contact with relevant staff and trainers
- Support with participant recruitment for interviews
- Guidance on funder reporting expectations

Evaluator Requirements

Essential criteria

- Proven experience delivering evaluations in the third or public sector
- Experience evaluating funded projects or programmes
- Strong qualitative and quantitative evaluation skills
- Ability to analyse and present evidence clearly and accessibly
- Understanding of social connection, volunteering, health or community-based work
- Ability to deliver work within a fixed budget and timeframe
- Independence from the delivery of the Connected Lives programme

Desirable criteria

The following are desirable but not essential:

- Experience evaluating training and workforce development projects
- Experience working with volunteers or volunteer-involving organisations
- Experience engaging people with lived experience in evaluation
- Knowledge of Scottish policy or funding environments



Equality, Inclusion and Values

Befriending Networks is committed to [equity, equality, diversity and inclusion](#). We welcome expressions of interest from trainers of all backgrounds and expect successful applicants to:

- Deliver the evaluation in a way that respects dignity and lived experience
- Use inclusive language and accessible evaluation methods
- Align with Befriending Networks' values of support, collaboration and leadership
- Align with our Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy

Application Process

Applicants are asked to submit:

1. A proposal covering your relevant experience, the proposed methodology and approach, and an indicative timetable.
2. Proposed fee and budget for the delivery of the required services of this project

Due diligence checks will be undertaken, and copies of relevant business insurances will be requested, if appointed, and a contract for services will be issued. References will be sought.

Applications from individual consultants and businesses will be considered.

Applications should be made to Susan Hunter, Chief Executive Officer by 18 May 2026 via email susan@befriending.co.uk

Informal enquiries are welcomed and encouraged.

Evaluation and Appointment

Tenders will be assessed against:

- Evidence of meeting essential criteria
- Strength of relevant experience
- Understanding of the project and fund context
- Value for money

Timescale

- Contract start: July 2026
- Data collection: ongoing during programme delivery
- Final evaluation report: April 2027

Exact milestones will be agreed with the appointed evaluator.

Value of Tender

The maximum budget for this tender is £5,000 inclusive of VAT

Proposals should clearly set out:

- Daily or hourly rates
- Estimated time allocation
- Any additional costs

About

Connected Lives is funded by the Scottish Government's Dementia Resilient Communities Fund and supports the delivery of the [Dementia in Scotland: Everyone's Story](#).

Fund Outcomes

- Local communities have increased capacity and resources to provide dementia support and address gaps and unmet needs
- A sustainable national infrastructure is established, enabling long-term growth and coordination of dementia community supports across Scotland.
- Collaboration between national organisations and local groups is strengthened, creating a more connected and resilient network of dementia community supports which deliver best practice.
- Systemic barriers and inequalities in accessing community supports are removed, increasing people's access to culturally appropriate services.