

SCHEDULE 1 – Tackling internalised stigma

Fast-Track Cities London Initiative



1. Summary	
Title	Tackling internalised stigma – part of the Getting to Zero collaborative approach to ending new transmissions, ending preventable deaths, ending stigma and improving quality of life for people living with HIV.
Date work requested	4 th August 2025
Proposed start date	15 th October 2025
Proposed end date	October 2026 – October 2027, depending on bid proposals
Response deadline for proposals	6pm Thursday 25 th September 2025

2. Context and outline	
Background	<p>Fast-Track Cities London is working with partners on a wide-ranging programme of activities to tackle stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV in London and beyond.</p> <p>This work includes:</p> <p>1. Centring people living with HIV</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leadership roles for people living with HIV: Ensure people with lived experience co-design, co-lead, and co-deliver all interventions.• HIV Ambassadors programme led by Terrence Higgins Trust: Train and support people to act as advocates and mentors across health and social care, business and community settings. <p>2. Shift the narrative through communications campaigns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive representation campaigns: Showcase diverse stories of people living with HIV (race, gender, class, language, age, sexuality)

via YouTube, TikTok, Instagram – amplify joy, success, love, and resilience.

- **Supporting partner campaigns on all media channels:** with video content and through events/campaigns like Pride London, UK Black Pride, Do it London, Zero HIV stigma day, HIV Testing week, World AIDS Day, Black History Month and LGBTQ+ History Month.

3. Mental health integration

- **Connect Well:** Free, trauma-informed therapy, counselling, mentoring and empowerment.
- **Peer support in every London clinic:** Implementing one-to-one peer-led support, offered automatically (opt-out) in every London clinic.
- **‘Learning to live well with HIV’ courses:** Peer-led workshops to help people adjust to their diagnosis and find community.

4. Societal and community stigma programmes

- **HIV Confident charter mark led by National AIDS Trust:** Charter programme targeting frontline health organisations working in London and across the country through training, education, policy and a reporting framework.
- **Anti-stigma microgrants:** Small grants for targeted projects and interventions that are community led, hyper-local and culturally tailored (for example CliniQ annual conference, *Our stories told by us* launch, Anti-stigma London protest march, etc.).

5. Measure and report stigma

- **National public knowledge and attitudes towards HIV survey:** funded previous survey in 2023.
- **Published resources:** the empowerment framework in 2021 and empowerment programme case studies 2023. Funded the Gay Men’s Sexual Health Survey and research into mental health for people living with HIV.
- **Evaluating HIV Ambassadors and HIV Confident programmes:** to establish impact and develop the work so it can become sustainable and transferable to other parts of the country. Routes for reporting

	<p>stigma and discrimination via the HIV Confident Charter and NAT services.</p>
<p>Purpose of grant programme</p>	<p>To deliver empowerment programmes to tackle internalised stigma for people living with HIV in London.</p> <p>These programmes will utilise the Empowerment Programme Framework, its assessment tool and learning from the previous Empowerment Programme to deliver interventions which demonstrate the effectiveness of the approach in reducing internalised stigma by building knowledge, confidence and connections.</p> <p>These Programmes will work closely with existing Fast-Track Cities programmes, HIV voluntary sector organisations, HIV healthcare providers, and GPs to ensure that the people with highest need (those not engaged with services or identified as at risk of not engaging with services) are being supported.</p>
<p>Approach and scope</p>	<p>The Fast-Track Cities London Leadership Group is looking to commission a small number of partnership programmes from the voluntary and community sector to tackle internalised stigma, from a total pot of £200,000. Bids over this amount will not be considered.</p> <p>While we welcome smaller proposals that address needs within individual ICB footprints, we are interested in working with consortiums or partnerships of voluntary providers to deliver a joined-up, pan-London approach. We would particularly welcome larger proposals that bring together several organisations to bid for a larger proportion of the grant, as long as they prioritise meeting the needs of the diverse groups we have identified in the ‘expected approach’ section below.</p> <p>FTC London will hold a webinar in August 2025, so that providers have an opportunity to ask any questions relating to the grant and potential approaches.</p> <p>The programme will aim to start in October 2025, subject to procurement and run for up to 24 months.</p> <p>An evaluation partner will be procured separately to conduct an evaluation of the impact and outcomes, alongside any individual project evaluation conducted.</p> <p>Expected approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure you are working with the right populations, prioritising those least likely to be engaged with services, patients who are at risk of

not continuing with treatment and care and people who have already fallen out of treatment and care services. Focus must be to engage people who are not already accessing ongoing voluntary sector support.

- Ensure you are being intentional about intersectionality, to reach: people who have migrated, racially minoritised GBMSM and heterosexuals, young people, including those who acquired HIV from vertical transmission, sex workers, people who inject drugs/people engaging in chemsex, trans communities and people who experience challenges with neurodivergence or mental health.
- Work in partnership with other HIV charities, clinics and form links with community organisations outside the HIV sector, particularly those engaging people most likely to experience stigma and discrimination and those not effectively engaged in HIV services.
- Collaborate with other Fast-Track Cities London workstreams: e.g. Getting to zero collaborative, Barriers to access and primary care workstreams, stigma programmes (HIV Ambassadors and HIV Confident) and the NHSE opt-out BBV ED testing programme.
- Focus on stepped engagement – one size will not fit all; from initial trust-building 1:1 support to peer-led groups, workshops or events, ensuring that people are met where they are, at the right point of entry for them and moving them along with support as they need it.
- Work closely with existing and developing engagement in care projects and re-engagement in care work to build in referral routes from HIV clinicians, GPs and others.
- Use existing resources – e.g., HIV Ambassadors for outreach and training or HIV Confident charter mark to ensure all organisations are fit for purpose to engage with the empowerment programme.

Scope

1. We expect to offer several grants to HIV charities who are committed to working according to the above approach, and show they are partnering with smaller charities and community organisations both in and beyond the HIV sector who work directly with the communities listed below:

- people who have migrated to London, racially minoritised GBMSM and heterosexuals, young people <25, including those who acquired HIV from vertical transmission, sex workers, people who inject

	<p>drugs, people engaging in chemsex, trans communities and people who experience challenges with neurodivergence or mental health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not every project has to target every demographic group, but intersectional needs must be considered and addressed to maximise engagement. <p>2. We expect bidders to show how they will work with HIV consultants, psychologists, health advisors and nurses, GPs, engagement and re-engagement in care programmes, other Fast-Track Cities programmes like the Getting to Zero programme, FTC partners such as the London HIV Prevention Programme and other HIV charities to ensure they are targeting people not currently engaged in services and/or at risk of falling out of HIV care and treatment.</p> <p>3. This work must be delivered for people who are living in one of the London boroughs or who are or were accessing care in London. It will be delivered for an initial period of up to 24 months, from programme launch in October 2025, with some flexibility in case of delays such as recruitment challenges.</p> <p>4. Organisations will work towards the aim of tackling internalised stigma for people most at risk in London. The funded HIV charities leading the programmes will be expected to understand the best approaches and methods for empowering the communities they are targeting. They will work with us and the other empowerment programmes to make sure they are dynamic and adaptable, using the Empowerment Programme Framework and quality improvement methodologies to address unmet needs and clearly demonstrate improvements in knowledge, confidence and connection.</p>
3. Monitoring and financial oversight	
Context	<p>This initiative will be monitored by the Fast-Track Cities London Leadership Group until 2026/27.</p> <p>The Leadership Group has nominated a Stigma Steering Group to codesign and oversee the tackling stigma work programme and report into the leadership groups on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Transformation Partners in Health and Care (TPHC) is hosted by the Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust. The Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust will hold this contract on behalf of Fast-Track Cities London from October 2025.</p>

	<p>There is a potential of up to 50% extension in contract value/timescales, subject to additional funds becoming available to Fast-Track Cities London in future annual budgets. This would be awarded at the discretion of the Leadership Group, based on the outcomes delivered by the Programme.</p>
4. Provider requirements	
Key skills and experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of positively influencing outcomes for and working with people living with HIV with complex intersecting needs. • Experience of developing and implementing empowerment programmes/services. • Excellent knowledge of HIV, incorporating strong understanding of prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care, quality of life, stigma and discrimination. • Excellent understanding and experience of supporting people around the wider determinants of health and inequalities related to HIV and sexual health through the life-course. • A clear understanding of the current HIV NHS and voluntary sector services across London, from prevention to treatment, care and support services. • Ability to work collaboratively with multiple stakeholders from diverse communities. • Strong project management skills. • Experience of working in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of people accessing their services. • Experience of linking/partnering with NHS organisations, voluntary sector partners and local authorities. • Experience of improvement methodologies, or willingness to learn. • Political sensitivity and ability to maintain neutral, evidence-based approach to the programme. • Experience of delivering large programmes of work with maximum impact.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experience of successfully funding ongoing programmes of work.• Capacity and ability to undertake the proposed initiative, ideally with prior experience of delivering similar work.• Ability to collect and analyse data to gain insight, inform decisions and improvements, and build data-led reports• Participate in delivery of Evaluation of the programme to share learning.
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