



# Frequently Asked Questions

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## THE PROGRAMME

### What exactly is involved in taking part in Mobilise?

You will join a cohort of 12 changemakers who work in policy making and implementation, to learn more about the research around early child development. You will learn from and with each other, from evidence, and from children, and will be supported to use this learning in your work in order to drive change for children.

Mobilise consists of a range of learning opportunities spread over a six-month period. The most intensive elements of the programme will be three days in Cambridge interspersed across the six months, where you will learn about the latest research and consider how to drive change. During the six months, you will also be sent supporting materials such as reading and links to resources such as videos and podcasts, to engage with in your own time. You will also be asked to join monthly action learning calls, which can be arranged at a convenient time. You will have the opportunity to join other webinars and organise additional 1-to-1 conversations with academics who can bring useful insights and expertise to inform their work.

### What is the time commitment involved in the programme?

All participants are expected to come to Cambridge three times during the programme when you will have dinner with your cohort and then a day of intensive learning, reflection and conversation.

The three days in Cambridge are 11 January, 21 March and 16 May.

The programme will kick off late in the afternoon of 10 January with a welcome event, time with children, and then dinner. The March and May events will start with dinner the night before each event. You will be provided with accommodation in Cambridge the night before each event.

Between these three days, you will be asked to connect to a monthly action learning set and will be given other materials and opportunities which you can utilise as you wish at times that suit you.

## What are the dates of the programme?

The programme runs from January to June 2024. The three days in Cambridge are 11 January, 21 March and 16 May.

## Who is involved in delivering the programme?

The programme is coordinated by the team in PEDAL (the Centre for Research on Play in Education, Development and Learning in the Faculty of Education at the University of Cambridge). We are supported by academic partners from across the UK and beyond, who come from a wide range of universities and bring expertise from many different fields related to early child development. They are advising us on programme design and may teach on the programme or contribute other content.

## I have seen that the programme involves "playful learning". What does that mean?

Playful learning is learning in a way that is fun, meaningful, actively engaging, allows for testing and iteration, and is socially interactive. We'll be designing the programme to ensure these characteristics are true of your learning experiences. For example, you won't just be sitting still listening to lectures, you'll be reflecting, absorbing and playing with ideas to get the most out of the content of the programme. Learning in this way can be more engaging and effective, as well as more fun!

## Will the cohort be expected to produce a particular output from the programme?

The cohorts are not intended to produce specific outputs together. It is intended that each individual participant applies the learning from the programme in their own work and the programme makes a difference through influencing a range of decisions and actions.

You may, of course, decide to undertake new projects alone, or with fellow cohort members, as a result of the programme.

## I'm not very academic, is this programme for me?!

This programme is designed to put evidence into the hands of people who can drive change for children. You don't need an academic mindset, experience in research, or a university degree to take part. It's our job to make sure the content is accessible to everyone, and we will make the programme as welcoming, fun and relaxed as possible. As academics, we know we have as much to learn from you as you do from us. We may be experts in the evidence, but you bring a wealth of other expertise from your lived and professional experience and we value that hugely.

## How are children involved in the programme?

We will work with local partners to build opportunities for you to observe, speak to and play with children during the programme to help you to understand and reflect on their experiences and

views. You will not be left alone with children and activities will be facilitated by the PEDAL team and other practitioners who know the children. You'll receive some guidance in advance to make the most of this time (although we hope you'll also just enjoy playing too!).

## Do I get anything for taking part in the programme?

At a celebration event in Summer 2024 Mobilise participants will receive a certificate to recognise their participation in the programme.

## ELIGIBILITY

### Who is eligible to take part in the programme?

We welcome applicants from all backgrounds and all parts of the UK.

You must be in a leadership role, either developing or implementing policy. You must work in a role relating to supporting parents and harnessing their power to support children's wellbeing, learning and development in early childhood.

Your role might be:

- Developing and implementing policy in national or local government.
- Commissioning services and pathways of support at a national or local level (in a government agency, local authority or integrated care system).
- Leading/managing an organisation that provides services either in the public or voluntary sector.

You should be working within the UK, and intend to remain in your role, or a similar role in your organisation, for the next year.

Although academics are largely involved in delivering the content, we will welcome academics to be part of the cohort too. If you are a researcher who is playing a leading role in developing, scaling interventions or undertaking policy research, and would benefit from learning from policy makers and implementers, you are welcome to apply. You must be at least a mid-career researcher or more experienced to take part in the programme.

### What do you mean when you say a focus on early childhood?

We are using the UNICEF definition of early childhood, which refers to the period from pregnancy until a child is eight (so the early years and key stage 1 in the English education system).

### What grade or level of seniority are you looking for?

We welcome people from a range of professional backgrounds and job roles, as long as you are able to drive change. You should have sufficient seniority to be able to make and influence significant decisions in your organisation.

### Do I need academic or professional qualifications?

You do not need any level of academic or professional qualifications to join the programme.

### The programme says it is for changemakers. What is a changemaker?

Changemakers are people who take action to solve social problems. They:

- are motivated to act and are tenacious; they keep trying until they make a difference.

- influence and mobilise other people.
- are inquisitive, open-minded, creative and resourceful.

## COST

### What does it cost to take part in the programme?

Thanks to the LEGO Foundation, we can cover the costs of delivering the programme, and your accommodation and food for the days in Cambridge. You need to cover travel costs and commit to time to participate in the programme.

### My organisation cannot afford for me to be involved; can you help?

We are committed to enabling a range of people to join the programme and would like to help remove barriers to participation. Please contact us about your needs, and we can discuss reasonable adjustments. We have a limited amount of discretionary funding available to help address barriers to participation, such as an organisation not being able to cover the costs of travel.

## THE APPLICATION PROCESS

### How do I apply?

Most applicants should complete the application form and send it to Sally Hogg (sah225@cam.ac.uk). The application is a word document that you can download from [www.pedalhub.net/mobilise](http://www.pedalhub.net/mobilise), edit and then submit.

We are working with some central government departments to identify the most appropriate people to join the programme. The Department of Health and Social Care, for example, has an internal process to select participants.

### What is the deadline for applications?

The deadline for applications to be submitted is 8 am on Monday 13 November 2023. Later applications will not be considered.

### Must I complete the whole application form?

You must complete the personal information, application questions and managers' endorsements sections of the form.

The practical information section will be used to assist our planning if you are successful. We would be grateful if you could complete this section, it will not be used to assess your application.

The EDI and monitoring section supports our monitoring, evaluation and learning. This section is not compulsory, but we would be grateful for your help in completing it.

### How have you chosen the questions in the application?

The application section is designed to enable us to judge if you have the passion, motivation and ability to mobilise knowledge to drive change for children.

## Will you judge the quality of writing in my application?

We will judge you on the content of your answers and if they reflect the values and principles underpinning our programme. We will not judge the quality of your writing or your spelling, grammar, typos or punctuation.

Each answer is limited to a maximum number of characters. If you exceed the limit, we will only consider the section of your response that is within the character limit.

## Can I get additional support or reasonable adjustments?

We want a wide range of people to be able to access the programme. If you need additional support to complete the application process or would like to discuss how we can make a reasonable adjustment, please contact us to discuss this. Please ensure that you contact us well in advance of the application deadline as our deadline cannot be extended.

## How will you select the first cohort?

We will score applicants' answers to the application questions. We will also work to ensure we have a cohort that represents different parts of the policy and delivery system and has candidates from a range of organisations and professional backgrounds from around the UK.

## Do I need support from my organisation to apply?

A senior manager in your organisation who is in your line management chain must complete part of your application and commit to supporting your engagement in the programme. If you are a CEO and have no line manager, please ask a trustee or senior colleague to complete this section. Please cc this person when you submit your application to demonstrate that you have their consent.

## Will you take more than one person from the same organisation?

The cohort will have multiple people from the large Government departments working in this area. For organisations outside of Government, it is unlikely (but not impossible) that we will engage more than one candidate from each organisation as we are looking to create diversity across the cohort.

## MONITORING, LEARNING AND EVALUATION

### Are you evaluating the programme?

Yes, we see the first Mobilise cohort as a pilot of the programme. We will be undertaking a formative evaluation to learn about how people engage in the programme, the value to participants, and how it impacts their decisions and actions. We want to learn what parts of the programme are useful, and how we can improve it in the future.

### How will you measure the impact of the programme?

We will ask participants and their managers to complete a questionnaire before and after the programme, and we'll be capturing case studies of how the programme has informed action. We'll also be measuring engagement with the programme materials and collecting feedback after each accelerator day.

## Will I have to take part in the evaluation?

All participants will be asked to complete some short surveys and feedback forms during and after the programme and to share examples of how they are using the content of the programme in their work.

## How will you use my personal information?

We take great care in handling and protecting all your data.

If you apply for the programme we may contact you by post, email, or phone, in connection with your application; to let you know about future developments with the Mobilise programme, and/or to support the evaluation of the programme.

If you would like to be removed from our contact lists in future you can contact us.

## PRACTICAL REQUIREMENTS

### Do I need to stay in the accommodation you have booked?

At three points during the programme, participants will be asked to attend dinner in Cambridge and learning events the next day. We provide accommodation to facilitate this but you may wish to stay with friends, family or in your own accommodation in Cambridge. If you aren't using our accommodation, please let us know as soon as possible so that we don't pay for rooms we don't need.

### What accommodation is provided?

You are provided with en-suite rooms and breakfast in a Cambridge college or nearby hotel. If you wish to use alternative accommodation, you must pay for this yourself.

### What transport is provided?

We provide transport between your accommodation and the venues for dinner and the learning events. Other travel, including your travel to and from Cambridge, must be covered by your organisation (except in exceptional circumstances).

### What food is provided?

We provide dinner before each day, and then breakfast, lunch and refreshments during the day. If you have specific dietary requirements, please let us know as far in advance as possible.

### Do you cover other expenses?

We do not cover your expenses beyond providing food, accommodation and travel within Cambridge. However, if the costs of taking part are a barrier to you getting involved, please talk to us. We do have a limited fund for discretionary support to enable participants to take part.



## Some of the programme occurs on my non-working days, and I have caring responsibilities. Can I join remotely?

We want to support a diverse range of people to join the programme. However, we do require participants to join the events in Cambridge face-to-face, as the interactive nature of the activities will mean they don't work well delivered in a hybrid way. We hope that giving you advance notice of dates will help you to make arrangements to cover other commitments and responsibilities. We also have a discretionary fund to cover barriers to engagement. Please talk to us about the support and adjustments that you might need in order to participate in the profile.

## What if there are activities during religious festivals?

We have tried to avoid religious festivals, but one of our accelerator days does take place during Ramadan. A prayer room is available, and dinner will take place after the sun has set. We will be sensitive to any participants marking Ramadan when considering how food is provided for other participants during the day. If you celebrate Ramadan, or any other religious festival that takes place during the programme please talk to us about how we can ensure we can ensure you can both participate meaningfully in the programme and observe the religious practices in the way you wish to.

## FUTURE PLANS

### Will you be running future cohorts?

This is a pilot programme, and we are learning about the design and delivery of the programme. We do intend to run future cohorts if this programme is a success. We may adapt the programme in response to learning from the pilot.

### How will you keep in touch with participants beyond the programme?

We will be in touch in the months after the programme ends as part of our evaluation to learn more about if and how you are using the programme, and your reflections on the content and design.

We want to create a community of Mobilise Alumni so we hope to keep in touch with you and invite you back to future celebration events to meet other cohorts and keep in touch.

### Can I apply again if I am unsuccessful?

Yes, if you are eligible for Mobilise but don't join this cohort, please do apply in future if there are future Mobilise Programmes that you wish to attend.