

Health Innovation *East*



Invitation to Tender

Provision and implementation of Action Learning Sets or Community of Practices for a new leadership programme: NAVIGATE (NHS East of England)

About Health Innovation East

'Great ideas only make a difference for our health when they are put into practice'.

Our purpose at Health Innovation East (HIE) is to help the best innovations in health and care reach the people, places, and problems where they bring most benefit.

We are a team of clinicians, data scientists, life sciences industry experts and skilled programme leaders passionate about helping the best innovations in health and care reach the people, places, and problems where they bring most benefit. Whether working with global companies, pioneering start-ups, leading universities, or regional health providers, we never lose sight of the patients and communities we serve.

As the regional innovation arm of the NHS our collective skill set is valued by the NHS and industry to implement the advances being made across health and care.

We are an established and trusted partner to the NHS England, East of England team.

Introduction

NAVIGATE (NHS EoE) is an innovative programme supporting participants in **navigating the path to Medical Directorship**.

The programme will provide important tools, knowledge and confidence for senior medics or executives who aspire to become clinical leaders in the East of England (EoE)

The context of leadership and management within the NHS has never been more challenging, in a rapidly changing health and care landscape across the UK. Support and training of leaders is central to the delivery of *The 10 Year Health Plan for England*.

The NHS England East of England leadership team aspire to do all we can to promote colleagues into medical leadership careers; to embrace the opportunities of the 10-year workforce plan as they arise and ensure the best possible outcomes for patients and staff across the region.

We recognise that, to some, the entry into a career of medical leadership may be daunting and appear inaccessible. It is possible that the consequence of this is a leadership that doesn't represent the medical community as a whole. Representing communities as fully as possible helps deliver the best results for patients across the region. In finding solutions, we are working to ensure equity of access to education, training and support; breaking down the barriers that may exist within medical leadership roles

NAVIGATE NHS EoE is an eleven-month immersive development experience, centred around face-to-face workshops where attendees address emerging issues and focus on new skills and adaptability needed for the years ahead. The workshops will be supported by online programme modules and small group **Action Learning Set (ALS) or Community of Practice** discussions between blocks. NAVIGATE will also encompass an innovative development project and detailed Psychometric assessments to support participants insight and personal development.

Health Innovation East is seeking a suitably qualified supplier to provide either an ALS or CoP services for this programme.

This document sets out the lot available, the expected criteria suppliers should address in their bids, along with the timescale, methodology and process for submission, scoring and award.

Questions regarding this lot can be directed to helen.bengtsson@healthinnovationeast.co.uk

The following table sets out the intended timetable for the submission of bids, their assessment, and the conclusion of the contractual arrangements.

Date	Milestone
18 December 2025	ITT published and made known to suppliers
22 December 2025	By 17:00 Suppliers to submit any questions for clarification
23 December 2025	By 17:00 HIE to provide written responses to all questions to all suppliers
05 January 2026	17:00 deadline for all submissions
12 January 2026	Scoring of applications conclude, applicants notified by email, and preferred supplier notified
19 January 2026	Contract commences
May 2026	Delivery commences

Background

Audience

The NAVIGATE NHS EoE programme is targeted at those who aspire to becoming Medical Directors or similar senior leadership roles in the NHS and is aimed at those who are in a substantive hospital consultant post within an East of England health and care provider. Delegate recruitment is currently in progress.

Aim

The aim of the NAVIGATE NHS EoE programme is to provide important tools, knowledge and confidence for participants who aspire to become clinical leaders in the East of England

ALS or CoPs will form an important part of the programme, which should help delegates gain a deeper understanding of the issues senior medical leaders face and the ways in which these can be addressed, in a psychologically safe environment.

Deliverables

As part of their participation in the programme, delegates will be invited to be a member of an ALS, providing them an opportunity to experience this model and to use it to get a deeper understanding of the issues senior medical leaders face and the ways in which these can be addressed.

ALSs will be facilitated groups of 5-8 delegates, who will meet online, six times during the programme, for between 2 and 2.5 hours each. These groups will work on real and current challenges, learn from one another, and take practical action between meetings. This structured approach to learning will combine doing, reflecting, and questioning.

We are seeking a supplier to facilitate these interactions and all communications around them independently, based on the overall programme schedule (see appendix 1). There will be ALS meetings associated with each bitesize online session, a total of six. The full cohort of the Navigate NHS EoE is expected to be a maximum of 30 delegates.

Suggested format/methodology

We have currently planned ALSs as part of the programme but are open to suggestions of other community learning models where suppliers have experience and can demonstrate translatable success.

- ***We ask suppliers to provide a rationale for their recommended approach, which model they would employ, why, how, and how rigidly they would recommend implementing this throughout the programme.***
- ***Please demonstrate how your recommended approach ensures equity of access, inclusivity and caters to the needs of all future NHS leaders.***

Budget

Our indicative budget for this service is approx. £10,000 (plus VAT). Please provide a breakdown costing for the full programme of facilitated sessions.

Timelines

The NAVIGATE NHS EoE programme will be delivered between March 2026 – February 2027 (see appendix 1 for more detailed timings). We appreciate that you may have some unavailability during the year and would encourage you to consider how this would be addressed.

Assessment criteria

You are required to respond to all the quality criteria below in a document not exceeding 4 sides of A4, or PowerPoint presentation not exceeding 10 slides.

70% of the marks will be assigned against the quality criteria with the remaining 30% allocated against the financial proposal.

Scoring Methodology

0	The Provider is unable to fulfil the requirement, or no response is received
1	The Provider is only able to partly fulfil the requirement
2	The Provider can fulfil the requirement
3	The Provider exceeds fulfilment of the requirement

Quality – weighted at 70% of total score

The Provider has demonstrated that:

Review deliverables	All the objectives and products contained within the specification will be delivered.
	Comprehensive and suitable solutions are proposed for all aspects of the work, with the rationale for each.
	Solutions provide equitable and inclusive access to all.

Capability	Project challenges have been identified and suitable mitigations proposed.
	Experience of undertaking at least two similar pieces of work, delivered to timescale, supported by references.
	The availability of suitably competent staff who have relevant experience, evidenced by CVs.
	An understanding and application of data confidentiality and information governance issues.
	Able to deliver the activities within the project timeline.
Price – weighted at 30% of total score	
Price	<p>Price will be evaluated by the bid with the lowest cost scoring 100 and all other bidder prices being expressed as an inverse proportion.</p> <p>For example, where maximum value for an opportunity is £10,000</p> <p>Bid A – Price £8,000 = scores 100</p> <p>Bid B – Price £9,000 = scores 90</p> <p>Bid C – Price £10,000 = scores 80</p>

Responses

We invite interested suppliers to submit their response describing how they would deliver the described requirements within the time and budget envelope.

Completed responses should be sent by email to helen.bengtsson@healthinnovationeast.co.uk (copying navigate@healthinnovationeast.co.uk) by 17:00 Monday 05 January 2026.

If you have any questions on the invitation document or the deliverables, please contact helen.bengtsson@healthinnovationeast.co.uk by 17:00 on Monday 22 December 2025.

We will circulate all questions raised (without disclosing the source of the enquiry) and all responses to those contacted about this opportunity unless they are considered commercially sensitive. Our view on whether a question is commercially sensitive or not shall be final.

We reserve the right to conduct clarifications if necessary; these may be conducted via email or by inviting bidders to attend a clarification meeting. To ensure that both the Health Innovation East's and bidders' resources are used appropriately, we will only invite up to three highest scoring bidders to attend a clarification meeting, should a clarification meeting be required. Scores will be moderated based on any clarifications provided during this meeting. You are responsible for all your expenses when attending such meetings.

Health Innovation East reserves the right to vary all dates in this Invitation to quote, to terminate this procurement process and/or decide not to award a contract.

Contacts

For any questions and to submit a bid: helen.bengtsson@healthinnovationeast.co.uk

Health Innovation East is a business name of Eastern Academic Health Science Network which is registered in England as a company limited by guarantee with company number 08530726. Registered office is at Unit C, Magog Court, Shelford Bottom, Cambridge, CB22 3AD, England.

Appendix 1 – Indicative programme outline



(Navigating the Path to Medical Directorship in the East of England)

The following provides an outline - given current landscape changes, some topics may change to reflect pressing areas of development. **Session dates are indicative.**

March 26th and 27th 2026: 2 day with overnight stay on 25th and 26th March

We start the programme by focussing on Human factors in leadership delivered by EoE faculty and Trainetics at the British Airways Global Academy.

Action learning set - tbc

Late April 2026: Bitesize online session. Leading change – project and change management.

Project and change management are essential skills for leaders. We will support and extend your learning by looking at external environmental factors and implementation science applied to health care settings. Our focus on Change Management will consider how people experience change as well as how to go about enabling change effectively.

Early May 2026: Full day session, in person, in region - leadership and management, career journeys of clinicians

A day of inspirational lectures, delivered by national and local leaders, highlighting their journeys and also the skills they developed and the values they worked by.

Mid May 2026: Bitesize online session: The fundamentals of the NHS

The things about the NHS you really need to know if you don't already. You will be updated on the shifting nature of NHS structures, commissioning and NHS finances, how the management of the NHS supports aspiring leaders and the role of the Medical Director in the new commissioning landscape.

Action learning set - tbc

Mid June 2026: Bitesize online session: The new 10yr plan

What is the 10 year plan for the NHS and what does it mean for me as a clinical leader? What does the 10 year plan promise and your future part in delivering the radical changes in services and workforce posed by the 10 year plan.

Action learning set - tbc

Early July 2026: Full-day session, in person, in region - Power, politics and Politics in Organizations - and the personal impact

An in-depth day exploring clinical leadership practice through the lens of organizational behaviour. Participants will explore the nature of politics (big P and little p) and power in both teams and wider organizational structures. This day will address the psychology of leadership and use facilitated sessions to explore how our own experiences and values influence our leadership.

Late July 2026: Bitesize online session: Is the NHS fit for purpose for our changing population?

The session will examine cultural attitudes, health equity and demographic change now and in the next 50 years in the EoE and the UK and explore how it will impact the delivery of health care.

Early September 2026: Bitesize online session: HR skills for leadership

A session to help you think about how to improve staff experience and your survey results, including the essentials of conflict management and negotiation. How to support poorly functioning teams, including your executive team.

Action learning set - tbc

Mid September 2026: 2 day in person session, in region

These 2 days will all be about surviving as a leader in a challenging environment, using the experience of skilled faculty and your own reflections to illustrate and help you build and share solutions.

Late September 2026: Bitesize online session: Finance skills for leadership

This will cover the 'dark arts of finances'. Topics will include managing budgets (yours and that of the organisation), CIP/PQIPs, productivity, recurrent vs non recurrent savings, how to manage and track improvements and deterioration well, how to stop tests of change rapidly and move on, and the critical importance of measurement.

Action learning set - tbc

Early November 2026: Bitesize online session: Communicating as a leader

Covering the essentials of good communication – how do you devolve the message throughout the organisation, how do you build relationships across the system. How do you use these relationships to good effect.

Action learning set - tbc

Early February 2027. Final day of the Course: 1 day in-person session in region - Innovation and research: the role of the clinical leader

On your final day's training, we will explore the important interconnectedness between research, innovation, technology and service development and delivery. As a clinical leader you will be expected to lead on the shift towards technology embedded in the 10 year plan to drive change. This day will give you the knowledge to develop the appropriate skills to deliver this. Finally, you will have the opportunity to showcase your projects and your learnings from your Action Learning Sets.

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