



**Short term consultancy
Discovery Programme Evaluator**

To undertake work from 2nd November to 7th December 2020
14 days @£250 per day

HorseWorld Trust are looking for an independent evaluator to undertake a short-term consultancy for the review of their Discovery Programme in accordance with the attached terms of reference.

Interested persons should apply directly to Rebecca.Hopkins@horseworld.org.uk. Please send a supporting letter including evidence of experience to meet the criteria below and details of the proposed approach responding to section 4 within the terms of reference. A tentative workplan for the work has been given in section 6.1, please confirm availability or any necessary deviation.

The deadline for applications is 5pm on Wednesday 14th October. Shortlisted candidates will be notified on Friday 16th October with final selection to be confirmed w/c 19th October following a Zoom interview.

The Evaluator who is an expert on Programme Management will have the following profile:

- Knowledge in process evaluation, overall governance and accountability of programme delivery, management and business analysis
- An understanding of Animal Assisted Learning, ideally experience of equine behaviour specifically related to equine/human interaction
- Knowledge of Special Education Needs, plus social, emotional and mental health issues in young people
- Awareness of mechanisms within local authorities to support children and young people
- Relevant degree / equivalent experience related to the evaluation to be undertaken;
- Significant experience in management, implementation, accountability of programmes;
- Good communications skills and experience of workshop facilitation;
- Ability to write clear and useful reports (may be required to produce examples of previous work);
- Ability to manage the available time and resources and to work to tight deadlines;

TERMS OF REFERENCE

For the Independent Evaluation of

HorseWorld Discovery Programme

Summary Table

Programme Name	HorseWorld Discovery
Location	Keynes Farm, Whitchurch, Bristol, BS14 0QL
Evaluation period starting date	2 nd November 2020
Evaluation period end date	7 th December 2020
Evaluation Sponsor	Petra Ingram, CEO
Evaluation Manager	Sharon Howell, Course Leader
Evaluation Type	Independent process evaluation

1. HorseWorld BACKGROUND

1.1. Brief History of HorseWorld

HorseWorld was established in 1952 to rescue working horses in the region surrounding Bristol. In the past horses were a vital part of everyday life, pulling carts making deliveries, ploughing fields, working on the railways and in coal mines, pulling canal boats and of course, transporting people around the country. In the 1950s motorised vehicles were becoming more available and affordable and before long, horses were being replaced by these faster, lower maintenance, vehicles. Sadly, the majority of horses were being sent to slaughter, even though many were still very young. Seriously concerned about their plight, in November 1952 Mabel Cocksedge arranged a public meeting to discuss the situation. A dozen people attended and by the end of the meeting, The Friends of Bristol Horses Society had been founded to rescue working horses from slaughter and give them a happy retirement.

In 1978, after much fundraising, the charity was given the chance to buy Keynes Farm which was right next door to Staunton Manor Farm and increased the land available to approximately 160 acres. The dawn of the 21st century saw Staunton Manor Farm opened to the public in 2000 as HorseWorld Visitor Centre and the charity changed its name to HorseWorld in December 2008. Sadly, the Visitor Centre had to close in February 2014 as it was not covering its costs. Today the charity is responsible for around 100 animals on site at any one time with hundreds more out at loving loan homes across the country.

HorseWorld's Discovery programme was established in 2007 and has evolved to the successful programme it is today, benefitting around 200 students each year. It helps children and young people who, for various reasons, have difficulties accessing the mainstream education curriculum. Through sessions with specially selected rescued horses, the young people develop the skills needed to build resilience, improve communication, find their confidence and self-belief, and as a result better cope with the challenges of life. Discovery has brought about outstanding results when nothing else has worked for the individual or the group; our horses have shown us that they have the capacity to change lives and we are seeing the evidence almost every day. We ignite a love of learning, nourish developing minds and give vulnerable children and young people hope for a brighter future.

1.2. New Strategic Framework, to be launched January 2021

In August 2020, the trustees approved a new 2-year Strategic Framework following a consultation process involving themselves and all staff, coordinated by the CEO. In summary this framework consists of the following:

The Board has approved a new mission as follows:

“HorseWorld is a caring team and a safe environment for the rehabilitation and training of rescued horses who become vital to support young people in their personal learning journey, building confidence whilst creating life-changing opportunities and a positive future for both.”

And here is the new strategic goal:

“By working with local communities and partners, we will enable more horses and young people to have the second chance of a happy life.”

Finally, we have agreed 3 specific outcomes for us to focus on over the next 2 years:

1. We will increase the number of young people who successfully complete a HorseWorld Discovery course
2. We will increase the number of horses retrained for HorseWorld Discovery and rehoming programmes, creating more space for new rescues
3. We will grow income, increase awareness, build staff skills and increase effective use of our facilities to enable our strategic goal.

Further discussions are now taking place on what success looks like and how the framework is delivered. The approach will be incorporated into the workplans, targets and budgets from January 2021. This independent evaluation is part of that process.

1.3. HorseWorld Management Set-Up

HorseWorld is led by CEO, Petra Ingram, under the guidance of Chairman, John Newman and a Board of Trustees. Working alongside the CEO, three directors form the Senior Management Team (SMT); Director of Finance and deputy CEO, Director of HR and Director of Fundraising and Communications. The Operations are managed by an Equine Welfare Manager, Discovery Course Leader and Site Maintenance Manager, with guidance and oversight provided by the CEO.

1.4. Discovery Course Objectives

Discovery unites rescued horses who have been given a second chance in life with young people who are outside of mainstream education or those who face adversity in a formal school setting, with the aim of supporting them to develop essential life skills and encouraging aspirations to lead meaningful and purposeful lives. Discovery provides a safe, nurturing and welcoming environment, in which every young person feels valued, loved and respected as a unique individual. Discovery is a non-judgemental space where every child, young person, adult and horse are accepted; a place where they can belong and achieve. The HorseWorld Discovery programme is a recognised alternative learning provision within the local authority. For more information, please see the HorseWorld website: <https://www.horseworld.org.uk/discovery-courses/>

2. PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

2.1 Rationale for the Evaluation

To meet the growing need for a better understanding of the impact our Discovery programme has on the lives of young people, a small internal assessment was undertaken in 2019. Analysis of data collected between 2012 and 2018 demonstrated that the results achieved by our HorseWorld Discovery programme are nothing short of outstanding;

- 100% of students showed an increase in communication skills
- 93% of students reported an increase in their self-esteem
- 91% of students felt highly or very highly engaged with the Discovery course
- 87% of students demonstrated a definite improvement in their sense of achievement
- 81% reported that Discovery has had a positive impact on the student's life beyond the course

However, due to increasing demand, we now want to expand the programme and believe that an independent evaluation of our design and implementation will provide important guidance to ensure our expansion comes from a firm foundation of effectiveness and efficiency. This evaluation is a crucial exercise to learn from past, and to ensure the programme delivery is aligned to our new Strategic Framework whilst having the maximum impact on the lives of young people. This means we will incorporate the learning into our 2021 work plan and expansion approach over the next 2 years.

2.2 Objectives of the Evaluation

Over the past 12 years, our Discovery Programme has evolved to meet increasing need from young people in Bristol and the surrounding areas. It has been structured around what works for the young people, and continues to receive very positive feedback from everyone involved. However, we now want to capture the essence of what makes it such a success, identify our weaknesses and learn from other approaches to ensure that as we expand, we have a strong foundation to form the basis of our future success.

There are three specific objectives we want to achieve through this evaluation:

- i. External review – an understanding of the external environment via a desk review
 - a. other agencies offering an equine assistant learning (EAL) programme, their approach, target audience and evidence of how they capture positive impact
 - b. research base for the success of EAL programmes and similar studies that have been undertaken in UK, with a focus on young people from age 6 to 25 years old
- ii. Internal review – documentation of approach
 - a. Review of our approach which documented in our learning syllabus, multi-level journey, etc and demonstrated in daily sessions with horses and young people
 - b. The extent to which our impact is measured and feedback provided to stakeholders
- iii. Utilising the outputs from objectives (i) and (ii) above, identify the strengths and weaknesses of our Discovery programme, leading to recommendations for how our approach and impact measurement could be improved

The work associated with this term of reference could be considered as part 1 of a 2-stage approach, where the second stage is undertaken during 2021 specifically focusing on the needs of young people, other options available to them and our social impact. This could support the development of a theory of change for the young people involved in our Discovery Programme, leading to more specific outcome measurement criteria. We have begun to have discussions about what it means to deliver a “successful” Discovery course, and the importance to working with young people to ensure they leave school and continue a life of education, training and employment. The trustees have agreed that we can expand our beneficiary base to involve young people from ages 19 to 25 who are considered NEET (not in education, employment or training). We already have a small number of students within this category and believe it is a significant area of future need, particularly in response to the challenges of Covid-19. In responding to this term of reference, we also welcome feedback from the evaluator regarding the planning of this second stage, to inform our longer term thinking but feel if we combine with this initial evaluation, the scope will be too broad for us to take meaningful actions in the short term.

2.3 Users and use of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is primarily to ensure we have a firm foundation for expansion over the next two years. There are three categories of users from this evaluation:

- i. Internal, management and staff responsible for design and delivery of the programme
- ii. CEO, for identification of potential partners to support our expansion
- iii. Funders, to ensure our approach is robust and evidence based

2.4 Scope of the Evaluation

This evaluation should be focused on the use of horses as a partner to implement a personal learning journey for young people (aged 6 to 25) at risk of exclusion or excluded from school, or who are struggling with mental health and well-being concerns. The evaluator needs to understand the behaviour of horses particularly when interacting with people. They should also be aware of the bigger picture relating to the education provision for young people and services available to those defined as NEET within our region.

3. EVALUATION APPROACH AND QUESTIONS

This evaluation should be a combination of desk study, interviews and physical observation. It is important there is participation of the Course Facilitators, referral links from schools/local authorities and the young people themselves. Under no circumstances should the welfare of horses or young people be put at risk during this evaluation.

4. EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

In response to this term of reference, we will seek feedback from the evaluator on their approach to the following areas of this evaluation:

- 4.1. Evaluation Briefing
- 4.2. Desk review
- 4.3. Inception Report
- 4.4. Interviews
- 4.5. Programme observations
- 4.6. Evaluation Report
- 4.7. Discussion with the CEO and Course Leader
- 4.8. Presentation of the evaluation report to trustees

5. KEY DELIVERABLES

The evaluator will deliver the following outputs during this evaluation:

Outputs	Deadlines
Inception Report	6 th Nov
Identification of stakeholders to be interviewed	6 th Nov
Stakeholders introduction to evaluation (before interviews)	10 th Nov
Draft Evaluation Report	26 th Nov
Presentation to trustees	3 rd Dec
Final Evaluation Report	8 th Dec

All reports must be submitted in English and using Word Document format.

6. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND WORKPLAN

The Evaluation Manager is responsible for coordinating the interviews and observation sessions. They will support the sponsor by attending briefing sessions and providing feedback on the draft evaluation report. The sponsor will be responsible for coordinating input from SMT and Board members as appropriate.

6.1. Tentative Workplan

NOTE: Consultant is expected to complete work during the month of November and in early December

Activities	HorseWorld team working days	Evaluator Working Days	Tentative Dates
Initial briefing with CEO and Course leader		0.5	Mon 2/11
Desk study		3.0	3/11-5/11
Inception report		0.5	6/11
Quality review of inception report by CEO	0.5		9/11/20
Interview preparation		1.0	10/11/20
First stage of stakeholder interviews (internal)	1.0	1.0	11-12/11

Observation of courses		2.0	w/c 16/11
Second stage of interviews (external)		1.0	18-20/11
Evaluation debriefing with CEO/Course leader		0.5	24/11
Production of draft Evaluation report		2.0	26/11
Circulation and feedback from key stakeholders	1.0	1.0	1/12
Presentation of findings to trustees		0.5	3/12
Final Evaluation report		1.0	Mon 7/12
Total:	2.5	14.0	

6.2. Profile of the evaluator

The evaluation will be carried out by an **evaluator**.

The **Evaluator who is an expert on Programme Management** will have the following profile:

- Knowledge in process evaluation, overall governance and accountability of programme delivery, management and business analysis
- An understanding of Animal Assisted Learning, ideally experience of equine behaviour specifically related to equine/human interaction
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- Significant experience in management, implementation, accountability of programmes;
- Good communications skills and experience of workshop facilitation;
- Ability to write clear and useful reports (may be required to produce examples of previous work);
- Ability to manage the available time and resources and to work to tight deadlines;
- Independence from the parties involved.

7. ANNEXES TO THE TORs

- I. HorseWorld CEO letters to staff 1st July and 25th August
- II. Strategic Framework paper to the Board meeting 24th August
- III. Discovery impact report – 2012 to 2018
- IV. Discovery documentation including syllabus, session plans etc
- V. Etc.