

## Future Directors Programme – Leadership for Change

### Sponsorship nomination guidance

#### Dear Sponsor,

You have been nominated as a sponsor as part of an application process for the Future Directors Programme, which is the latest element in the 'Leadership for Change' series of programmes, being offered by a collaboration of several agencies responsible for leadership development in public services. The applicant will have made you aware of their wish to apply for the programme and the process that now follows. The sponsorship nomination form is designed so you can confirm your sponsorship and support of the applicant and your assessment of how suitable the programme will be for them. The applicant is concurrently completing an application form, which will be independently assessed, as part of the assessment process to award places on the programme. Their application will not be progressed without your sponsorship. The applicant should provide you with the timescales for completion.

The applicant should already have had a discussion with you about their suitability for the programme and your potential sponsorship. If this has not happened, we strongly advise that you have this conversation, before you agree to be a sponsor. Places on the Programme will be limited and therefore it is important that you only sponsor applicants for whom you feel the Programme will be appropriate and who can, with further development, become credible candidates for a Director role (or equivalent) in the near future.

The role of the sponsor is critical throughout the programme. You will be asked to provide ongoing support to those whom you sponsor throughout the duration of the programme, acting as both a mentor and critical friend and providing practical support as well as professional challenge to enhance their learning. In completing this form, you may find it helpful to consider the descriptions of the sort of competencies required for these roles. Examples of these from various health, social care and system leadership perspectives can be found at:

- [National Leadership Qualities Framework](#)
- [Directors of public health: role in local authorities](#)
- [Leadership Qualities Framework](#)
- [Healthcare Leadership Model](#)

Future Directors will also have to lead across sectors and systems and this will require new capabilities – a useful summary of these can be found at:

<http://leadershipforchange.org.uk/the-research-report/>

In becoming a sponsor, you are agreeing to provide support and challenge throughout the programme for your nominee. This will be an active role, in which you will be asked to review their progress and support their ongoing development.

## The applicant's suitability for the programme

Places on the **Future Directors Programme** are limited and we need to ensure that the selected participants are those who will gain most from the programme. We anticipate that this is likely to include senior professionals who:

- Are approximately 1 - 3 years from being a credible candidate a Director (or equivalent) post
- Already demonstrate a good level of knowledge and key skills/attributes required for this role and also an appreciation of wider system leadership requirement
- Have the aptitude to learn and demonstrate commitment to the programme
- Are committed to continued professional development and the ongoing review of their professional skills and competences
- Are committed to deepening personal learning about leadership and making behavioural changes that impact positively on those around them

Other programmes are run to support the development and wider career aspirations of aspiring leaders in public services by the partner agencies collaborating in the 'Leadership for Change' initiative (the [Staff College](#), [Public Health England](#), the [NHS Leadership Academy](#) and the [Leadership Centre](#)). If you feel that an individual is not yet ready for this Future Directors Programme, then it may be more appropriate to direct them to these other sources of support. We will be happy to offer guidance on what may be most appropriate for an individual's needs.

## Supporting the applicant through the programme

A key role for the sponsor will be to provide the initial support to potential applicants, helping them understand whether their development needs can be met by the programme. They will also need to become familiar with the applicant's current development and learning needs and be prepared to support them through the programme.

## How to complete your sponsor nomination

Once the applicant has completed their application form, you will be sent an email asking you to sponsor the applicant. Their application form will not be considered until you have responded to the email by clicking the link contained in the email and providing your responses to four questions. Outlined below are the four questions you will be asked; this allows you to consider, and potentially complete your response in a word document before copy and pasting into the online application. Please note that you must complete the sponsor nomination form in full when you follow the link provided in your email. You will not be able to save answers and return to the form, and your responses must be no longer than 3000 characters per question.

In becoming a sponsor, you are agreeing to provide support and challenge throughout the programme for your nominee. This will be an active role, in which you will be asked to

review the participant's progress and support the work-based learning experiences. For this reason, it is very important that you provide a considered response to the following questions:

1. Why is the person in this nomination ready now for further development through the Future Directors Programme?
2. What do you see as the main strengths of the applicant, in terms of the requirements for a Director post in public services? It may be helpful to reference your response to one of the competency frameworks above in order to highlight key areas of knowledge, skills, attitudes and achievements etc. and also the emerging system leadership capabilities outlined in the ['Leadership for Change' research report](#).
3. Are there any additional areas that this sponsor nomination form has not identified, which you think may be helpful to the assessors in assessing the applicant's suitability for the programme?

### **Confirmation of sponsorship**

In submitting this sponsor nomination form you are confirming that you are prepared to support your applicant in their initial application and throughout the programme.

The amount of time that you need to commit to the role of sponsor will vary according to the individual needs of your applicant. Support for the application process is likely to take between a half and a full day and it is likely that the ongoing time commitment throughout the programme will be between two and four hours a month. It is anticipated that the mid-point review will require half a day to complete and the end of Programme assessment is likely to require a commitment of half a day to support the participant in their preparation for assessment.

### **What happens next?**

Applications are being reviewed by independent assessors who will consider the information submitted by the applicant. The information provided on this Sponsor Form may be taken into account by assessors when making their decision. Applicants will be informed of the outcome of this assessment in the timeframe outlined in the Programme flyer.

The outcome of the assessment process will be subject to a benchmarking process to ensure fairness and consistency across all applicants. This will involve a face-to-face benchmarking of results. Feedback will be offered to unsuccessful applicants in order to support their future development.

If applicants feel that they have grounds for appeal against a decision, they must lodge an appeal in writing within ten days of being notified of the decision. Full details of the appeals process including grounds for appeal can be found on the [Leadership for Change](#) website.