

Invitation to Tender

Development of Buttle UK's Organisational Theory of Change

1. Overview of Buttle UK

Buttle UK is a charity dedicated to helping children and young people in crisis in the UK: those living in financial hardship and dealing with multiple challenging social issues. We are driven by the belief that poverty and crisis should not define a child's future. Through a combination of fundraised income and income from our endowment, we provide individually tailored grants to prevent them from falling further into crisis and help them to transform their lives.

The charity is governed by a Board of Trustees, with a staff of approximately 32 people.

2. Introduction:

Buttle UK is seeking proposals from qualified and experienced consultants (individual or team) to collaborate on the development of a comprehensive organisational Theory of Change (ToC). As we embark on our new strategic direction, it is crucial to clearly articulate and understand the pathways through which our activities and interventions will lead to our desired long-term impact.

Over the last five years, we have supported over 25,000 children with our Chances for Children grant. [Our new 2025-2030 strategy](#), co-produced with our Youth Advisory Panel, referrers, external stakeholders, Board and staff team, is rooted in everything we've learned through direct work with families during this time, our grant-making data, and - most importantly - the voices of the children and young people we support. It marks a shift from addressing immediate need alone to tackling the systemic challenges that keep children trapped in cycles of poverty and crisis.

This ToC will serve as a foundational tool for our organisation, guiding our strategic planning, program design, monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL), and external communications. We're currently working with an agency to develop our brand and we expect the successful candidate to engage them in the process of development. While we will be the primary audience we expect that the Theory of Change will be shared with other external audiences such as funders and partner organisations.

3. Project Purpose and Objectives

The primary purpose of this consultancy is to work collaboratively with Buttle UK to produce a robust and clear organisational Theory of Change, building on our existing [Grants ToC](#), [Co-Production ToC](#) and incorporating all existing and newly developing workstreams.

The specific objectives of this project are to:

- **Develop a clear ToC:** Articulate how, as part of our new strategy, our organisation's activities and interventions lead to desired short, medium, and long-term outcomes and ultimate impact.
- **Provide a strategic framework:** Create a framework for aligning our programs, resources, and evaluation efforts with our strategic goals.
- **Enhance impact communication:** Improve our ability to effectively communicate our intended impact and the logic behind our work to stakeholders, including funders, partners, beneficiaries, and the public.
- **Strengthen organisational learning:** Foster a stronger culture of organisational learning and adaptation by providing a basis for reflection, hypothesis testing, and iterative improvement.
- **Incorporate cross-team working:** Ensure that our ToC captures the multiple and varied strands of work undertaken by different teams, reflecting and championing the bigger picture each part is working towards.

4. Scope of Work

The selected consultant(s) will be expected to undertake the following activities, in close collaboration with Buttle UK's designated team:

Inception Phase:

- Initial meetings with key Buttle UK staff and stakeholders to understand the organisational context, new strategy, existing relevant documentation, and expectations for the ToC.
- Review of relevant internal documents (e.g., strategic plan, program documents, past evaluations, stakeholder analyses).
- Development of a detailed work plan and methodology for the ToC development process, to be agreed upon with Buttle UK.

ToC Development Phase:

- Map the organisation's activities, outputs, outcomes, and long-term goals, with specific attention to the role of grant-making, co-production, and influencing/advocacy in achieving these goals.
- Identify the underlying assumptions and evidence that support the relationships between activities (including grant-making, co-production, and influencing/advocacy) and outcomes.
- Facilitate in-person/online workshops and meetings with key stakeholders, including staff, trustees, Youth Advisory Panel/Advisor Network, and our brand agency to gather input and validate the ToC. This will involve participatory methods to:
 - ◆ Define the long-term impact(s) the organisation aims to achieve.
 - ◆ Identify and map out the necessary outcomes (short, medium, long-term) that contribute to this impact.
 - ◆ Articulate the key activities and interventions the organisation will undertake, specifically detailing the mechanisms of grant-making, fundraising, co-production, and influencing/advocacy.
 - ◆ Uncover and articulate the assumptions underpinning the causal pathways.
 - ◆ Consider the key external factors and risks that may influence the ToC.
 - ◆ Define key indicators at different levels of the ToC that can be used for monitoring and evaluation.
- Synthesise information gathered from document reviews and stakeholder consultations.
- Develop a visual representation of the ToC, illustrating the identified pathways and connections.
- Document the ToC narrative, including a clear explanation of the causal pathways, detailing how activities lead to outcomes and ultimate impact, with explicit reference to grant-making, co-production, and influencing/advocacy strategies.

Validation and Refinement Phase:

- Present the draft ToC (narrative and visual representation) to Buttle UK for feedback.
- Facilitate a validation workshop with key stakeholders (including staff, trustees, Youth Advisory Panel/Advisory Network) to review and refine the draft ToC.
- Incorporate feedback and finalize the ToC documents.

5. Key Deliverables

The consultant(s) will be expected to deliver the following:

1. Inception Report: Outlining the consultant's understanding of the assignment, a detailed methodology, work plan, and timeline for the ToC development process.

2. Draft Theory of Change Documents:

- Comprehensive ToC narrative, including a clear explanation of causal pathways with specific attention to grant-making, co-production, and influencing/advocacy.
- Visual ToC diagram(s).
- Clearly articulated list of impacts, outcomes, outputs, activities (detailing grant-making, co-production, influencing/advocacy), assumptions, and potential indicators, along with supporting evidence where identified.

3. Workshop Facilitation and Reports: Agendas, materials, and brief summary reports/notes from key workshops (development and validation) with staff, trustees, and Youth Advisory Panel/Advisory Network.

4. Final Theory of Change Documents:

- Finalised comprehensive ToC narrative incorporating feedback.
- Finalised visual ToC diagram(s) in editable and shareable formats.
- Finalised list of impacts, outcomes, outputs, activities, assumptions, and potential indicators.

6. Data protection and confidentiality

The successful candidate will be expected to comply with all of the requirements of the Data Protection Act and for seeking appropriate research consents from interviewees or any data collection, including the safe storage of any confidential information collected.

The consultant is expected to maintain confidentiality about their dealings with the charity.

7. Budget

The budget for this work is up to a maximum of £8,000 (excluding VAT and including expenses).

The tender return should include an outline of the budget and a detailed breakdown of all costs and timescales, including the number of days for each task and the rate per day of each team member.

An appropriate allowance for expenses should be included. In presenting your budget, please indicate VAT where this applies.

8. Project Timeline

It is anticipated that this project will be completed within 12 weeks from the contract start date. Consultants should propose a realistic timeline for the deliverables outlined above.

- **Expressions of Interest to be submitted by** 30 June 2025
- **Shortlisted organisations will be contacted by** 4 July 2025
- **Interviews to take place** 10/11 July 2025
- **Final decision by** 14 July 2025
- **Project Commencement (Anticipated):** 21 July 2025
- **Final ToC Submission:** 17 October 2025

9. Skills & Knowledge

Interested consultants (individuals or teams) should demonstrate the following qualifications and experience:

- Demonstrable experience in designing, facilitating, and delivering high-quality organisational

or program-level Theories of Change, preferably for non-profit organisations or Trusts & Foundations. (Please provide examples or case studies).

- Experience in facilitating participatory workshops and consultations with diverse groups of stakeholders, including young people.
- Ability to gather, analyse, and synthesise complex information into clear and concise ToC frameworks, including mapping complex activity types like grant-making, co-production, and advocacy.
- Familiarity with the context and common challenges/approaches in our sector is highly desirable. Specific experience with organisations employing grant-making, co-production, and influencing/advocacy strategies would be an advantage.
- Ability to produce clear, well-structured, and accessible reports and diagrams.
- Willingness and ability to work collaboratively with the Buttle UK team.

10. Instructions for Responding

The deadline for submission of proposals is 5 pm on 30 June 2025. Interested consultants should submit an expression of interest that includes the following:

- 1. Cover Letter:** Demonstrating a clear understanding of the project's purpose, objectives, and scope of work, including the specific focus areas within the ToC development.
- 2. Proposed Methodology and Work Plan:** Detailing the approach to be taken for each phase of the project, including specific tools and techniques to be used for ToC development and stakeholder engagement (particularly with staff, trustees, and the Youth Advisory Panel/ Advisory Network). Include a proposed timeline.
- 3. Consultant/Team Profile:**
 - CV(s) of the lead consultant(s) and any other team members involved, highlighting relevant experience and qualifications.
 - At least two examples of previous similar work (ToC documents or reports) or detailed case studies. Links to publicly available work are acceptable.
- 4. Detailed Financial Proposal:**
 - A clear breakdown of costs, including daily rates for consultant(s), number of days anticipated for each activity/deliverable, and any other anticipated expenses (e.g., travel, materials – specify if these should be included or if they will be covered separately by the organisation).

Please return your submission to **Clare Piechota - clarep@buddleuk.org** with the subject line: "Theory of Change Consultancy - [Consultant/Organisation Name]".

Tender returns will be assessed against the criteria specified under section 9; the appropriateness and quality of the proposal to address the objectives; and value for money.

References may be requested from shortlisted respondents.

11. For queries on this ITT please contact Kamna Muralidharan (Director of Grants Development): kamnam@buddleuk.org

We thank all applicants for their interest.



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