



Play Works II

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Play Works II project?

Play Works II is a two year extension of the innovative and successful [Play Works](#) project. Funded by City Bridge Trust, the project provides an evolved training and mentoring programme for the senior staff of six play organisations in deprived parts of the capital. The project aims to embed monitoring and evaluation skills at a strategic level so that senior managers feel confident in putting together funding bids, thinking strategically about the impact of the work their adventure playground/s do and communicating this authoritatively to funders and other stakeholders. Funding is available to cover the time of lead participant from each organisation.

The tried and tested data collection and evaluation tools already developed in our online toolkit will be enhanced with online training modules which will be made available to a wider group of adventure playground staff teams. This has the potential to provide a more sustainable learning model that sees organisations taking the reins of their own learning and implementing longer term strategies that continue beyond the lifetime of the project. It will allow whole adventure play staff teams to work through learning modules at their own pace and in their own space.

2. What does the project offer?

- A series of half day group workshops (with funding for staff time), curated by London Play in response to the individual needs of each Playground and delivered by experts in the field.
- Follow-up support from trainers and 1:1 mentoring from the Play Works II programme designer to support senior managers to devise their own ambitious and creative strategic plans which consider their longer-term goals for change.
- Access for wider staff team to the online training programme (from year 2 of the project) with downloadable resources, podcasts, webinars and a whole host of other fun, interactive activities.

3. Who is Play Works II targeting?

We are particularly keen for applications from organisations based in areas of high need that the project hasn't reached to date. Note that in contrast to Play Works I we are aiming this training at senior staff operating at a strategic level in their organisations.

We especially welcome applications from organisations who are committed to disseminating learning across multiple settings.

4. How many project leads should we have?

We are asking for one main project lead; but would advise having a second lead to support them. The supporting lead can help completing the tasks in between training sessions (e.g. designing data collection tools, collecting data, analysing the results and writing the strategic plan). NB. Only the main project lead will be reimbursed for their time but up to three staff members in total can attend the training free of charge.



5. Who should be the main project lead?

The main project lead must be a senior manager of your adventure playground/play association and should not be a trustee. The main project lead will be the person who receives and submits all correspondence relating to the Play Works project. The project lead should be open to working with other adventure playgrounds, be keen on sharing ideas and want to learn from others.

6. What is required of the project lead?

- Commit to Play Works for 12 months
- Have the capacity and commitment to collect high-quality data over a sustained period
- Attend four group training workshops over a four month period between January – May 2019
- Engage with the Play Works II Programme Designer for mentoring support and with trainers for follow up post workshops
- Complete assignments in between training sessions to help strengthen monitoring practices
- Produce a strategic plan for your organisation that embeds monitoring and evaluation

7. What will the training cover?

The training will cover the principles of monitoring and evaluation. This will include things like Setting objectives, outcomes and outputs; Data collection methods (including metric, qualitative, before and after); Research methods (eg, focus groups, interviews, observations, questionnaires, using secondary sources); Data entry and coding; Analysis and report writing with an emphasis on how to report the impact the work you do has; and how to use this to gain additional funding. But most importantly we will tailor the training to the participating playgrounds, so please do be really honest about what is challenging and what would be most helpful to you in your application.

8. When will the training take place?

Between January and May 2019, approximately four half day training sessions will be offered. In addition, follow up support from trainers will be available (this may be in the form of phone calls, Skype, email and/or webinars) as well as monthly 1:1 mentoring and support from Chrissy, Play Works II Programme Designer.

9. Will I be collecting data, monitoring and evaluating, whilst being involved in the project?

Absolutely. The project is all about implementing monitoring and evaluation changes, so there will certainly be a requirement to collect real world data and evaluate it. Participants must be willing to collect and share data on their adventure playground(s), sometimes at their busiest time periods, as this is when your playground(s) are likely to be having the biggest impact. The mentoring and support will help you do this, as well as the training you'll receive and the work projects you'll complete over the course of the 12 months.



10. What are the financial benefits to our adventure playground from being involved?

There is funding available for all participating adventure playgrounds involved in Play Works II. This will be to cover the time spent by the main project lead when attending training and for some time spent completing the assignments in between. The one-to-one mentoring sessions are free, as is the training for up to two additional staff members from each organisation. The Play Works II Programme Designer will request information in advance about the main project lead's hourly rate in order to help plan the training.

A small amount of further funding will be available for each organisation to upgrade monitoring and evaluation tools and to launch their learning.

An indirect financial benefit will be the chance to increase your adventure playground's fundraising potential and boost your adventure playgrounds sustainability.

11. I've got more questions relating to Play Works II, who do I contact?

Get in touch with Chrissy Baxter, the Play Works II Programme Designer. Email chrissy@londonplay.org.uk or give her a call on 020 3384 8511. Chrissy works for London Play 2.5 days a week – usually Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays – she'll respond to messages sent outside these days as soon as possible.

12. What have previous participants said about the programme?

"I thought you'd be interested to hear that last week Play Works had a direct impact on my fundraising. We're looking to apply to Children in Need later on this year for an expansion to the services we offer at the adventure playground. The application asks for three differences our project will make. These are simply our outcomes, already set in our M&E Plan, which I transferred over and then that section was complete. It might seem like a small thing, but it was satisfying to know that we had already completed this work and that it was exactly the message I wanted to get across. So thanks for making life a little bit easier!"

Beneficiary, June 2017

"It's great to prove these things and make them more tangible"

Beneficiary, July 2017

"Now we have the data we can prove what we already knew and say, to back us up."

Beneficiary, July 2017

"The Play Works project has helped our frontline staff gain great insight and skills in evaluation and data collection. The next thing we'd like to be able to do is to use what we have learned to think strategically about development of play across our whole organisation and the wider community in Hackney. Children in Hackney currently face huge challenges feeling safe and being able to play out, due to increasing levels of violent crime in the borough. It's vital for us to be able to evidence the importance of staffed play provision in helping children and young people to play outside, be active and meet new friends."

Nicola Butler, Director, Hackney Play Association