



Joining the Q community – Guidance on applying

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When can I apply?

Anytime from June 2018. We will consider applications on a rolling basis, and we should be able to let you know the outcome within about a month of submitting your application.

The only exception is that we may sometimes need to close the process for short periods for routine maintenance, or evaluation. When we do more information will be shared on the Q website.

FAQs

This document aims to cover the key things you may want to know when applying to join Q. If you don't see what you need, take a look at our [Frequently Asked Questions](#). If there's



more you need to know regarding the application or you have trouble submitting your application through the AIMS portal, please email joiningQ@health.org.uk.

What does it mean to be part of Q? What's expected?

The success of Q is largely dependent on the community. There are many different ways to [get involved](#). There is no minimum time commitment, but as a general rule, the more you put in to Q, the more you, and others, will get from it. Some members will take a more active role in the community, while others less so and we expect individual members' involvement to vary over time.

There are some core commitments that all members make by joining.

- Contribute to building relationships and networks by attending events when possible or engaging on social media, or through Q-municate (e-newsletter).
- Keep your profile on the online directory up to date.
- Take Q back to your work place and share and spread learning beyond Q.
- Participate in the evaluation of Q, when possible, helping to design the community as it grows and develops.

A '[Q compact](#)' has been co-developed by members to describe some expectations about how members behave towards and support each other to make sure everyone will make the most of Q.

Completing the application form: Registering your application

To join Q you need to submit an application form. Applications are assessed by people experienced in improvement from a range of different backgrounds.

Your application needs to be submitted through the Health Foundation [AIMS portal](#). Full guidance on accessing, completing and submitting your application via AIMS can be found in the [user guide](#).

We also want to particularly highlight the following:

- When registering for an account in AIMS please ensure you register as an **individual** rather than as an organisation.
- You can draft your responses to the application questions in a Word document and copy and paste your answers into AIMS at a later date. This means that you will have a copy of your application, in case you do not save your application form on AIMS. You must submit your application via AIMS – we cannot accept Word documents.



- The form does not need to be completed in one session. It is possible to save your progress and return at a later date.
- Some questions have a character limit, please be aware of this when drafting your responses to the application questions.

Completing the application form:

Section 1 – About you

Some of the information you put in this section will be used to update the Q online directory and create your public Q member profile if you are successful. The information in this section will be visible to the assessors but will not be considered in the assessment of your application.

Applicant details and contact information

The contact details you give will enable the Q project team to contact you with the outcome of your application and with regular communications about Q.

If successful, your email address will also be used to enable members to contact you via an online message form through the Q member directory. Your email address will not be publicly visible.

Geographic location

Please indicate which region of the UK you either live or work. If you work across regions please indicate this.

Social media details

Please provide your Twitter handle and/or LinkedIn URL. These details will be shared on the online directory visible your public Q member profile if your application is successful.

Health Foundation award holders and fellows

If you are a Health Foundation programme award holder, or a Health Foundation fellow please share more information.

Professional background

We ask for this information to help connect you with other members that have similar backgrounds. This information also helps us get an understanding of the diversity of the Q community and patterns of engagement. This means we can identify gaps within the community and proactively try and increase the diversity.



Areas of interest

Please select your areas of interest. We ask for this information to help the community share and collaborate. This will be included in your public profile on the Q online directory.

Section 2 – About your work

Please provide details of your current work/role. This can include roles in which you improve quality of health and care in a voluntary capacity. This information is important to help us understand who is in the community and continue to design Q to benefit its diverse range of members.

Some of the information in this section will be used to update the online directory if you are successful. The information in this section will be visible to the assessors but will not be considered in the assessment of your application.

Section 3 – About your place of work

The information in this section will be visible to the assessors but will not be considered in the assessment of your application.

Name of primary organisation

Please provide the name of the organisation with which you work most closely to improve quality. Your primary organisation may not be the one you are employed by, particularly if you work in improvement on a voluntary basis.

Type of organisation

Please indicate what type of organisation it is.



Section 4 – Your experience, knowledge and commitment

Your responses to the two questions in this section will be used in the assessment process.

- It is important that your responses have sufficient detail for the assessors to make a recommendation. Those applicants who give fuller answers that get close to the word limit, tend to be more likely to be successful.
- We hope a diverse range of people who work/volunteer to improve health and care apply to join Q. We do not expect everyone to have the same level of experience or knowledge: people have been able to show they meet the criteria in many different ways.



QUESTION 1: EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

What has been your experience to date of using structured approaches to enable improvement? Please include a SPECIFIC example where you played an influential role in improvement efforts that went beyond an individual team?

1. We are looking for people with established improvement experience, so please describe the improvement activities you've been involved in. You can draw on experience from your whole career, and from voluntary as well as paid work, within the health system and beyond.
2. The term 'structured approaches to enable improvement' includes any deliberate approach designed to make things better. It includes not just the methods directly used to improve services, but also the policy/strategy development, leadership, organisational development, engagement, analytical and evaluation methods that are needed to create an environment where improvement activities succeed. Tell us not just what you did and the outcomes, but also the 'how' by describing the approach and why it was used.
3. We are looking for people who have played a significant role in at least one improvement effort. This may be in different ways (e.g. evaluation, lay member, analyst, project manager or senior sponsor) the important thing is to show how your contribution had a significant impact on the process or outcome of the work.
4. Often people start their improvement journey with small scale change, working with a single team. We think there are additional challenges with efforts to improve once you move beyond individual teams. We ask for people for people to demonstrate they have insights, skills and behaviors gained from working beyond an individual team to join Q. We have set this as a requirement for Q because as a Q member you will connect, share and learn from a diverse community of people who have different approaches and perspectives on what it takes to improve quality.
5. It's important that you demonstrate what you learned from your experience because we are looking for people who are willing to share what went well and what didn't. When writing your response, you may want to use the STAR method to reflect on your experience:

Situation – set the scene

Task – describe the purpose

Action – explain what you did and how you did it

Result – share the outcomes and what you learned from the experience, even if you didn't achieve what you hoped you would.



QUESTION 2: COMMITMENT TO THE Q COMMUNITY

Why do you want to join Q?

1. We are looking for people who have thought about what it could mean to be involved in Q. A good way to demonstrate this is to share what you understand about Q and some of the things you might choose to participate in.
2. Please share what you hope to bring as well as get from the community and how joining the community might support the work you are doing, for the ultimate benefit of improving health and care.

Submitting your application

Once you have completed sections 1, 2, 3 and 4 you will be able to submit your application.

Declaration: privacy notice and Q compact

To enable you to join and participate in the Q Community, the Health Foundation needs to collect and process your personal information. You also asked to confirm and acknowledge that your participation in Q will be in line with expectations as currently detailed in the [compact](#), if successful

The Health Foundation is the Data Controller (as defined by the Data Protection Act 1998 and all applicable laws which replace or amend it, including the General Data Protection Regulation) who will collect and process your personal data.

Please refer to our Privacy Notice for full details of what data we collect about you, how we use it, who we share it with, how long we keep it and your rights relating to your personal data. Our Privacy Notice is available on our website - <http://www.health.org.uk/privacy-policy-and-cookies>. If you do not have access to the Internet, please write to the Health Foundation Data Protection Officer (DPO) at the details listed below with your address and a copy will be sent to you in the post.

The information we collect will be:

- Name, job title, organisation name and contact details such as email address.
- Social media details.
- Processing requires your application information and personal details to be shared with third parties including assessors, [Q partner organisations](#), the Q website developer, the independent evaluator for the Q community and Q service providers.



We will ensure that all parties we share your data with keep your information secure and do not use it for any other purposes than those which we have specified in the Privacy Notice.

We will retain this data for as long as is necessary for the relevant activity. We may keep some of your data indefinitely. We will share your information if we are required to by law.

If you have any concerns about how your personal data is being collected and processed, or wish to exercise any of your rights detailed in our Privacy Notice please contact:

The Health Foundation Data Protection Officer (DPO)
The Health Foundation
90 Long Acre
London
WC2E 9RA

Marketing information

Please help us to monitor the effectiveness of our communications activities by letting us know where you heard about Q.

Diversity Monitoring

Q values a highly diverse community and we ask members to complete a short form to monitor the community's diversity. By providing this information, you are agreeing to us holding this information, under current data protection legislation, and will be helping us to monitor our practice. If you do not wish to respond to any of the questions in the diversity monitoring form please select 'prefer not to say.'

The information you provide is not used in the application review process and responses will not be shared with assessors. Anonymised information will be shared with the Q project team and RAND Europe, Q's independent evaluator.

Application assessment and outcome

Please ensure that you have correctly typed your email address into your application form as this address will be used to notify you of the outcome of your application. Please check your junk email folder to make sure you receive the outcome of your application.

Successful applications



We aim to notify successful applicants by email within a month of submitting their application.

Applications with a development need

Applications are assessed on your reflection and demonstration of your experience, knowledge of improving health and care and your commitment to the Q community. An unsuccessful application may be due to a development need. If your application is unsuccessful we encourage you to apply to join the community at a later stage. We will provide brief feedback on your application to help you plan your further development.