

My Nature Play

Information for potential partners: Project Evaluation and Policy Briefing

About LtL: Learning through Landscapes (LtL) is the UK's leading outdoor learning and play charity, working to make outdoor learning and play part of every child's day. LtL was founded 35 years ago and has directly impacted more than 17.5 million children and young people and reached over 10% of all UK schools and early years settings. We have a strong track record of developing innovative Early Years projects, such as [Nurturing Nature](#) and [Forest Kindergarten](#), which build practitioner confidence in outdoor learning and play and support children's development, learning, and environmental connection. We are currently the Early Years Lead in the Department for Education's [National Education Nature Park project](#).

Project context: The Raising the Nation Play Commission ('Everything to Play For', 2025) reports that the amount of time children spend outside has declined by 50% in a generation, and 55% of parents and carers say that their youngest child plays outside less than they did as a child. But young children are happier and healthier when they have regular opportunities to play outdoors, and playing in nature supports children's personal, social, emotional and language development. The Play Commission recommends that parents and carers are empowered to support their children to play, and that all early years practitioners receive play-based training and CPD; LtL want to support the goals of the Commission by focusing specifically on the unique opportunities afforded by outdoor play in nature.

Project summary: Our new *My Nature Play* programme helps young children fall in love with nature by improving their outdoor experiences in their Early Years settings. We want every child across the UK to have the opportunity to play, explore and learn outdoors, every day.

My Nature Play works with Early Years practitioners to build their skills, confidence, and inspiration for high-quality nature play. Over the course of a term, practitioners take part in six fun, practical training sessions. Together, we'll discover simple, creative ways to bring outdoor learning to life, both within settings and in local green spaces.

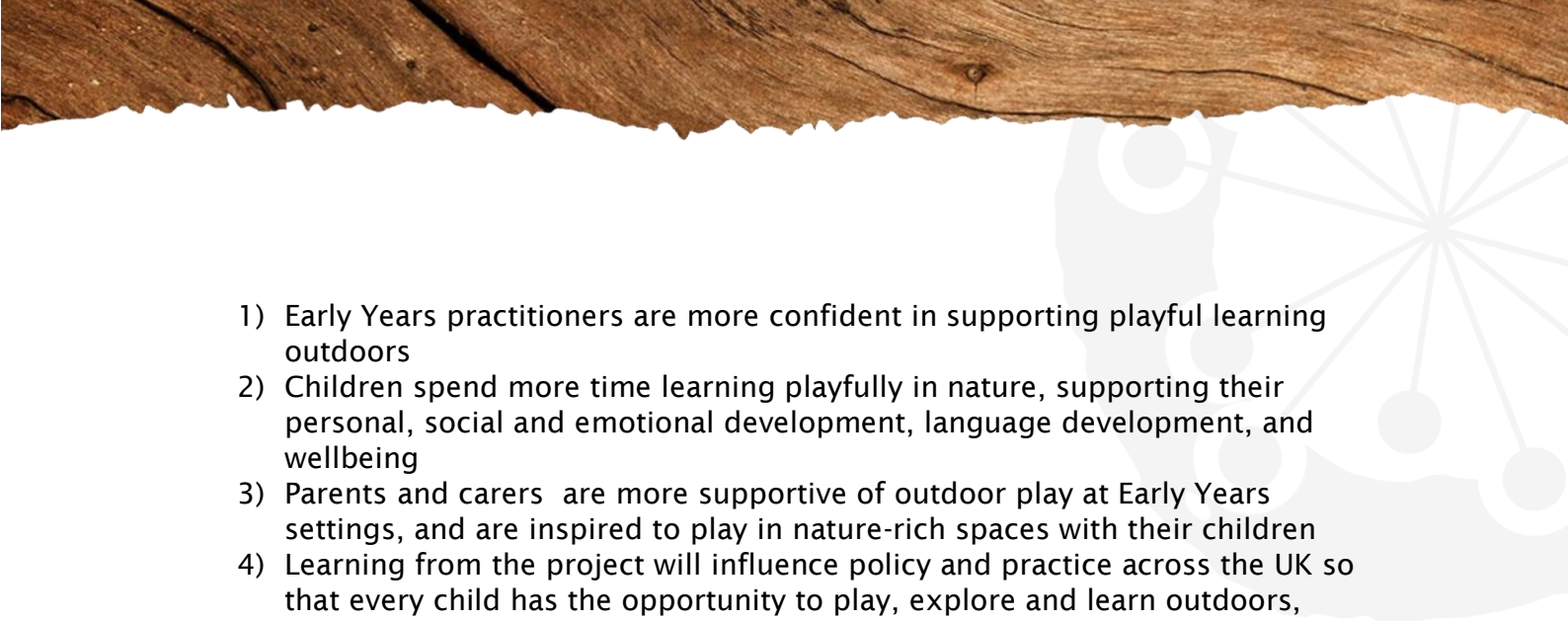
Delivered throughout England, Wales and Scotland across 170 Early Years settings between February 2026 and July 2028, *My Nature Play* will create a long-term legacy of confidence, creativity and connection to nature.

We'll also work closely with parents and carers, helping them to find joy in spending more time outside with their children and creating memories that nurture curiosity, confidence and connection to the natural world.

My Nature Play is funded by the Worwin UK Foundation.

Outcomes: The project's target outcomes are:



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- 1) Early Years practitioners are more confident in supporting playful learning outdoors
 - 2) Children spend more time learning playfully in nature, supporting their personal, social and emotional development, language development, and wellbeing
 - 3) Parents and carers are more supportive of outdoor play at Early Years settings, and are inspired to play in nature-rich spaces with their children
 - 4) Learning from the project will influence policy and practice across the UK so that every child has the opportunity to play, explore and learn outdoors, every day.

Evaluating *My Nature Play*

LtL is commissioning two pieces of work to help us evaluate and share the impact of the project:

- 1) A project evaluation**
- 2) A policy briefing and event series**

We can work with separate consultants for the two pieces of work or offer both to a single consultant.

Our ambition is that these two pieces of work will demonstrate the unique impact that play in natural spaces has on the development of young children.



1) Project Evaluation

Purpose:

- To help improve and refine My Nature Play project delivery
- To report back to the Worwin UK Foundation on the impact of their funding

Primary research questions:

These link to the outcomes identified in our grant agreement with Worwin UK Foundation:

- 1) Do Early Years practitioners feel more confident in supporting playful learning outdoors and in nature after taking part in the project?
- 2) Are children spending more time playing outdoors and in nature because of the project?
- 3) Have parents and carers' attitudes towards playing in nature with their children changed because of the project?

Secondary research questions:

These are questions that we are interested in exploring. We would welcome a discussion with our evaluation consultant to help us decide which to prioritise:

- Are there improvements in children's wellbeing and development which can be attributed to the project?
- What are the barriers that stop practitioners from facilitating more time in nature for children? Which elements of the project (e.g. specific training sessions, clothing libraries, webinars) are most impactful in overcoming these?
- What is the relative impact of practitioners facilitating more nature play in their setting's outdoor space versus local green space?
- What were the most effective ways to engage parents and carers in nature play with their children? (E.g. stay and plays, workshops, play sessions in a local green space)
- Are families spending more time in nature play outside of the early years setting?
- What were the project's key challenges and successes? How can My Nature Play be more effective in the future?

Methodology

The evaluation consultant will propose and finalise the evaluation methodology in partnership with LtL. We anticipate that this will be mixed methods research, with data sources likely to include:

- Pre/post training surveys and follow-up surveys with practitioners measuring confidence levels, knowledge, and frequency of outdoor activities
- Activity logs tracking time spent in nature-based activities

- Semi-structured interviews with practitioners from early career to management level
- Observations by LtL staff and practitioners
- Informal conversations with practitioners, children and parents and carers
- Photo/video documentation by practitioners
- 10 case studies from diverse settings, whose progress will be evaluated across the 3-year duration of the project.

We will collect this data across 6 fortnightly sessions per setting over the course of a term and two follow-up sessions in subsequent terms. For the case study settings, we will conduct further follow-up sessions annually in years 2 and 3.

Data collection will be undertaken by LtL staff, with training, guidance and support from the evaluation consultant. We recognise that participating in the project is in itself a significant commitment from settings, so the research methodology must not put undue burden on setting staff. While we will make it clear to all settings that participation in the evaluation is a condition of receiving My Nature Play training, our target is for 75% of all participating settings to complete the evaluation process.

Timeline & deliverables

Date	Activity
Jan 2026	Confirm evaluation methodology
Feb 2026	Train delivery staff on data collection methods
Feb 2026- Jul 2028	Delivery in settings – support and guide LtL staff with data collection as needed
Oct 2026	Work with LtL staff to identify case study settings
Mar – Apr 2027	Interim evaluation report
Oct 2027	Year 2 follow up with case study settings
Jul 2028	Year 3 follow up with case study settings
Aug – Sep 2028	Final evaluation report

Budget

Our funder has set the budget for our project evaluation at **£30,000 (including VAT)**.

2) Policy Briefing

Purpose

- To share learning from the project evaluation
- To call for specific policy change in Early Years education. LTL will define these during Year 2 of the project (Nov 26-Oct 27) in partnership with a Project Advisory Group of stakeholders.
- To support commercial sales of the programme to nursery chains and local authorities

Context and content

We anticipate that the policy briefing will include:

- Reference to the work and recommendations of the Raising the Nation Play Commission, Best Start Family Hubs, Stronger Practice Hubs and other partners/stakeholders.
- Key insights drawn from the My Nature Play interim project evaluation
- Policy implications and recommendations, developed with input from the Project Advisory Group
- Summary guidance for practitioners on how to transform their settings' culture of playful learning outdoors

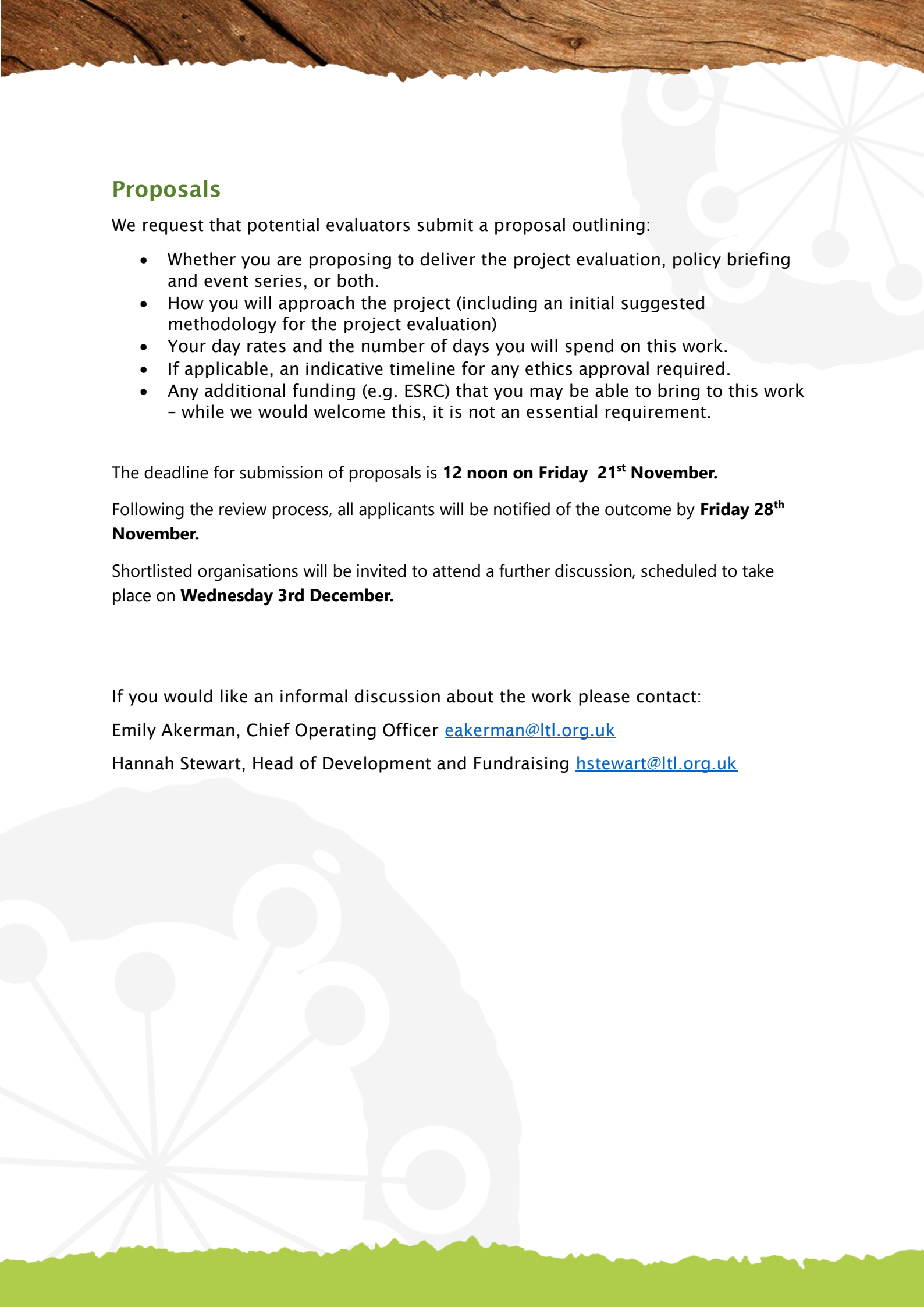
We would also be interested in exploring the social value of My Nature Play by analysing the cost of the project versus the long-term social benefits on children and families.

Timeline & deliverables

Date	Activity
May – June 2027	Sit on Project Advisory Group to define policy goals
Dec 2027	Project briefing
Jan 2027	Infographics and comms collateral
Feb – Apr 2028	Policy event series
Mar – Apr 2027	Interim evaluation report

Budget

Our budget for the briefing paper and event series is **£40,000 (including VAT)**



Proposals

We request that potential evaluators submit a proposal outlining:

- Whether you are proposing to deliver the project evaluation, policy briefing and event series, or both.
- How you will approach the project (including an initial suggested methodology for the project evaluation)
- Your day rates and the number of days you will spend on this work.
- If applicable, an indicative timeline for any ethics approval required.
- Any additional funding (e.g. ESRC) that you may be able to bring to this work – while we would welcome this, it is not an essential requirement.

The deadline for submission of proposals is **12 noon on Friday 21st November.**

Following the review process, all applicants will be notified of the outcome by **Friday 28th November.**

Shortlisted organisations will be invited to attend a further discussion, scheduled to take place on **Wednesday 3rd December.**

If you would like an informal discussion about the work please contact:

Emily Akerman, Chief Operating Officer ekerman@ltl.org.uk

Hannah Stewart, Head of Development and Fundraising hstewart@ltl.org.uk

My Nature Play – Logic Model

DRAFT – to be reviewed and developed with evaluation partner

Inputs	Outputs			Impacts	
	Activities	Participation	Outcome	Medium-term impact	Long-term impact
Funding from Worwin UK LtL delivery team time and expertise Resources and session plans from LtL's Early Years work (including Nurturing Nature , LSNG and National Education Nature Park)	6 My Nature Play training sessions per setting Outdoor clothing library for each setting (children & staff) Follow-up sessions after 3 and 9 months Termly webinars for ongoing CPD and peer support	170 settings will participate in the programme: - England – 81 - Wales – 4 - Scotland – 44 6,800 children and their families will benefit (average of 40 per setting)	Practitioners more confident in supporting playful learning in nature	Settings continue to implement their learning from My Nature Play with new cohorts of children Settings benefit from further outdoor learning and play CPD	Playful learning outdoors is embedded into the practice of the setting and of individual practitioners
			Children spend more time playing in nature	Children experience positive outcomes linked to increased time in nature: - Personal, social and emotional development - Language development - Wellbeing Children's connection to nature increases	Levels of school readiness increase
			Parents and carers better understand the importance of playful learning outdoors at setting	Parents and carers are inspired to play in nature with their children more often	Regular play in nature becomes part of day-to-day life for families