Host institution for the Campbell Collaboration: request for proposals

Published on 1 June 2021
Assessment criteria added on 2 July 2021

Introduction

Founded in 2000, the Campbell Collaboration is a well-known and widely-respected international network which publishes high quality systematic reviews of social and economic interventions around the world. Campbell’s vision is ‘Better evidence for a better world’. We aim to achieve this vision through our mission of promoting positive social and economic change through the production and use of systematic reviews and other evidence synthesis for evidence-based policy and practice.

The collaboration consists of a network of Coordinating Groups and National and Regional Centres supported by a small secretariat, overseen by a Board of Commissioners.

The Campbell Collaboration is seeking a new host for the secretariat. As well as being associated with a respected global brand, hosting Campbell would benefit the host in various ways, such as positive reputational effects, exposure and access to international research and policy networks, and as a new platform of fundraising. The new host is expected to maintain the integrity of the Campbell brand.

The transition in hosting arrangements will be at the same time as a transition in the Campbell Chief Executive Officer (CEO), with a new CEO being identified by the host institution in collaboration with the Campbell Board.

Since it was founded in 2000, Campbell has had a variety of funding models and hosts. Currently the secretariat is divided across New Delhi and Oslo, located in host institutions who are paid for their role. Campbell is seeking a new host who will take on the costs of the secretariat, including employing a new CEO and the Editor in Chief. It is anticipated that an academic or research institution host will have access to funds to support infrastructure costs (e.g., NSF in the USA and ESRC and NIHR in the UK) which Campbell does not have with its current legal status and setup.

At a time when using evidence in public policy is taking centre stage, hosting the Campbell secretariat is an exciting opportunity for an organisation wanting to raise its global profile in the growing field of evidence-based policy.

About the Campbell Collaboration

Campbell comprises:

- Coordinating Groups (CGs): manage the editorial process for Campbell publications. CGs include two Co-chairs, at least one Editor, a Methods Editor and a Managing Editor. CG officers are usually academics in universities and research institutions around the world. CGs are also expected to promote Campbell in their subject area – attracting researchers to publish with Campbell, promoting the use of Campbell reviews by decision-makers, and raising funds for their own costs and for the costs of Campbell evidence synthesis products in their topic area.
National and Regional Centres (NRCs): represent Campbell in their geographic area, including events for decision-makers, training workshops for researchers and media engagement. NRCs are usually located in review production centres (i.e. a research team producing Campbell reviews).

Networks: informal groupings of researchers and decision-makers with an interest in Campbell in a particular country. They are not a formal part of the Campbell structure and may not represent Campbell.

Membership: CGs and funders are recognised as Campbell members. The annual Membership Conference is the highest body in Campbell’s governance structure, electing the elected positions in the Campbell Board (see below). The membership comprises: one representative per CG, and one representative per funder.

Board: The Board is responsible for Campbell’s strategic direction, fiscal oversight and performance management of the CEO. Board members are also expected to promote Campbell including identifying funding sources. There are five Board members elected by the membership, who are expected to bring a range of competencies and experience, and two representative members (one from the CGs, and one from the funders). Host representation on the Board can be discussed, and will be subject to Board approval.

A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) which is responsible for technical guidance on Campbell products, as well as two of Campbell’s annual awards.

Secretariat: headed by the CEO, works to support all of the above. Its work is described in the next section.

Campbell’s vision, mission and principles are available here, and the current strategy here.

The work of the secretariat

The work of the secretariat involves:

- Promoting Campbell globally to researchers and policy-makers, including promoting the use of systematic reviews in decision-making. This includes Campbell staff speaking at events, meetings with key stakeholders and other interested parties, and media (including social media) engagement.
- Identifying funding sources for evidence synthesis products.
- Encouraging and supporting the growth of the Campbell network of CGs and NRCs.
- Encouraging and supporting the production of reviews and maps by new review groups.
- Providing the Editor in Chief role which includes overseeing editorial processes, including a quality assurance function, and the development of new evidence products.
- Ensuring a regular exchange of information between the CGs, NRCs and the secretariat.
- Managing publication of Campbell research outputs in the journal Campbell Systematic Reviews and the production of plain language summaries.
- Maintaining the Campbell website.
- Managing Campbell social media accounts to promote Campbell publications and events.
- Managing funds on behalf of the CGs.
- Event organisation: an annual conference, a monthly webinar series, and other ad hoc events.
- Administering the annual Campbell awards.
- Identify opportunities for training in evidence synthesis, providing support to selected training events.
- Production of a regular external newsletter and internal newsletter (for CGs, NRCs and Board members).
- Maintaining a management information system providing information on publications, publication times, events, policy influence and other organisational metrics.
- Servicing the Campbell Board.
**Composition of the secretariat:** The secretariat currently comprises a CEO (1-2 days a week on secretariat functions), the Editor in Chief (4 days a week), 1 full-time equivalent (FTE) communications and publications manager, 1 FTE administrative manager, 0.5 FTE financial manager, and 0.5 FTE support to CGs in a Managing Editor role.

The new host is welcome to propose alternative setups for the secretariat which can support the above functions.

**The role of the Chief Executive Officer**

The CEO is responsible for preparing and implementing Campbell’s strategy. This includes:

- Undertaking activities to promote Campbell globally to policy-makers, practitioners and researchers. This includes developing and maintaining relationships with user-commissioners such as the UK-based What Works Centres.
- Facilitating Campbell’s continued growth by fostering the development of new CGs, NRCs, and networks, and identifying funding sources for Campbell reviews and evidence maps.
- Management of the Campbell secretariat and all its functions, notably publication of *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, the Campbell website and event organisation (e.g. monthly webinars and annual conferences).
- Support the work of the Campbell CGs, NRCs and networks including ensuring channels of communications between groups.
- Identifying funding sources for the Campbell secretariat and the work of Campbell more generally, such as grant programmes for maps and reviews, possibly using the Global Pooled Funding mechanism.
- In consultation with the Board, CGs, and NRCs, prepare a strategy for Campbell every 4-5 years, and an annual work plan.
- Reporting to the Campbell Board on progress against the work plan and the strategy.
- Ensure that Campbell meets all legal obligations, such as maintaining registration status, annual tax returns and an annual audit.

**Characteristics of the CEO**

The new CEO will be the fifth CEO in Campbell’s history. Each CEO brings their own personal style, and the same is expected of the new CEO. The Board is looking for a CEO who can consolidate the recent growth of the organisation, whilst overseeing continued expansion. The CEO is expected to have a solid research background, preferably including evidence synthesis, and so have sapiential authority within and beyond the Campbell community. A commitment to engaging with decision-makers, and finding ways to support the use of Campbell publications in decision-making is important. Previous management experience would be an advantage, as would experience in an editorial role for a journal. External representation of Campbell is an important part of the role, in meetings and events.

**Responsibilities of the host**

The host institution will be required to:

- Maintain the Campbell brand as a separate brand from that of the host organisation.
- Employ staff to manage the Campbell secretariat, including, but not necessarily restricted to, CEO, Editor in Chief, Programme Manager, and Communications and Publications Manager. (With the exception of the CEO, the host may consider retaining the existing staff in these positions, at least for a transitional period.)
- Maintain the governance structure of Campbell, as laid out in the organisation’s Bylaws and Plan of Governance. The host institution will be given one seat on the Board.
• To maintain the legal entity status of Campbell. Consideration may be given to creating a new legal entity in a different jurisdiction, though the host should also retain 501c(3) status in the USA which allows Campbell to maintain agreements with US federal funding sources.
• To pay all costs of the secretariat including any fees due to the journal publisher (currently Wiley).¹
• Raise funds to support the above activities, and the activities of Campbell more generally.

Governance

As an independent legal entity registered as a non-profit organization (501c(3)) in Pennsylvania, USA, Campbell has a Board of Commissioners, to which the CEO reports. Under the hosting arrangement, the Board will retain a role in strategic direction, performance management of the CEO, and fiduciary oversight. The host may have a representative on the Board. The Campbell Bylaws and Plan of Governance are available here.

The Board welcomes proposals from potential hosts as to how to align the hiring and performance management of the CEO of these Board requirements with those of the host institution.

Grant management

The Campbell Collaboration currently manages a number of sub-grants to third parties. This is one source of income for the collaboration. The host will need to decide whether to:

• Fully take over management of these grants, incorporating grant management into the host’s own procurement and disbursement systems.
• Take over grant management, but run it through Campbell’s existing grant management system.
• Wind down grant management operations. The existing grant management system will be used to manage any on-going grant programmes until completion.

In addition, there are contracts for services to be delivered by the Campbell secretariat, which include substantive research work by the CEO and Editor in Chief. These activities will be continued by the current staff until completion, though there may be research opportunities for staff from the host if desired. The administrative arrangements for management of these activities will be discussed with the host.

Benefits of hosting the Campbell Collaboration

Established in 2000, Campbell has established a global reputation for high quality systematic reviews.

The last five years have seen substantial growth in Campbell, with a growing number of publications in Campbell Systematic Reviews, the formation of more CGs, and the establishment of the first NRCs and Campbell Networks.

Campbell reviews and maps are widely used by decision-makers. The Campbell policy influence tracking system, managed by the secretariat, shows over 70 uses of Campbell reviews, such as references in national and international policy documents, mentions in parliament, and being used to inform decisions about policy and practice. The What Works movement commonly use Campbell reviews in their work. Many of these stories are captured in a brochure published in 2020. Campbell reviews are also commonly covered in the media.

¹ The current business plan for the Campbell secretariat includes moving to a full article processing charge (APC) model, possibly with exceptions for developing country researchers, during 2023.
The new host institution will be in a position to draw on the positive reputational effects of the above, gaining international exposure to those who work with Campbell directly, those who seek to engage with it as researchers, and decision-makers wanting to use evidence from Campbell publications.

With a secure funding base in the new host, Campbell is well placed to continue to grow under a new leadership, thus building the reputation of the CEO and the host institution.

**Transition**

If required, Campbell will cover the cost of the existing CEO supporting the new CEO for three to six months (subject to the CEO being available). If a new person is appointed as Editor in Chief, Campbell will cover the cost of a transition of up to three months (subject to the Editor in Chief being available).

**Duration of the agreement**

It is hoped to find a permanent home for the Campbell Collaboration with the new host. The initial agreement should be for at least five years, with appropriate termination clauses.

**Questions and timeline**

Questions on this request for proposals may be sent to info@campbellcollaboration.org until 25 June 2021. Answers to all questions received will be posted on the Campbell website by 30 June 2021.

Applications are due on 31 August 2021.

The new host is expected to assume work by 1 November 2021 and be fully operational (i.e. all staff in place) by 1 January 2022. An alternative timeline may be discussed.

**Details of application**

The application to host should include:
1. Details of the proposed host, naming department in which the secretariat will be hosted, if appropriate. General details on the proposed host may be provided by links to an existing website or other materials.
2. One- to two-page note on how the work of the proposed host aligns with Campbell’s mission.
3. Statement of the proposed host’s vision for Campbell’s development in the next five years.
4. Staffing plan: naming staff to be recruited, with CVs. If it is planned to retain current staff, please indicate that. If people will be recruited for certain positions, please indicate expected timeline for filling these positions.
5. Business model and financing plan for the first five years. The financing plan may include different scenarios.
6. Any proposed changes in governance, legal registration or organisational arrangements.

**Assessment criteria**

The proposals will be assessed against the following criteria:
- Understanding shown of Campbell’s mission and operations (30%)
- The fit between the proposed host and Campbell (10%)
- The qualifications of the staff (30%)
- The viability of the business model and financing plan (30%)