

A CALL FOR SUBMISSION OF EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (Eoi)

RESEARCH AGENDA 2026/2027

STUDY PROJECT: CONTEXTUALIZING THE NOT IN EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING (NEETs) IN THE HEALTH SECTOR: TRAINING OPTIONS AND EMPLOYABILITY

Research companies are invited to submit expressions of interest to offer research services to the HWSETA to conduct a research study based on the terms of reference attached to this call.	
Date Published:	21 August 2026
Closing Date:	10:00am, 28 August 2026
Reference Number:	HWSETA-2026/27 EvalResearch-04
Service Category:	Evaluation Research
Person to submit EOIs to:	Tshepang Kobue (Sector Skills Planning and Labour Market Researcher)
Email address:	research@hwseta.org.za Expression of Interest (EOI) via a proposal and quotation must be sent by email to research@hwseta.org.za (with attachments not exceeding 100MB or send separate emails once it is above 10MB). We recommend compressing your files when submitting to 100MB-150MB.
Title:	Contextualizing the Not in Education Employment or Training (NEETs) in the health sector: training options and employability

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR PREVALENCE OF DIGITAL LITERACY AMONG SOCIAL
SERVICE PRACTITIONERS (SSPs) IN SOUTH AFRICA**

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1. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

The Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) is mandated to identify and respond to skills development priorities within the health and social development sectors. In alignment with the National Skills Development Plan (NSDP) and the Sector Skills Plan (SSP), HWSETA monitors occupational demand, workforce shortages, and training supply trends within the health sector.

According to Statistics South Africa, approximately 3,6 million out of 10,3 million (35,2%) young people aged 15–24 years were Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET). This represents a substantial pool of youth who remain outside both the labour market and the post-school education and training system.

At the same time, HWSETA's SSP and WSP/ATR analysis indicate demand for selected entry-level and support occupations within the health sector, particularly in community-based services, primary healthcare support, disability services, and elderly care.

Despite the availability of health-related qualifications and skills programmes, limited evidence exists regarding the extent to which NEET youth are accessing these pathways and successfully transitioning into employment within the health sector.

There is therefore a need to generate evidence on how structured, accredited, and workplace-integrated training pathways can facilitate the integration of NEET youth into health-sector occupations.

1.1. Recommended Stakeholder Engagement for HWSETA-Focused.

Sector	Institutional Category	Key Focus Areas	Relevance to HWSETA
Public Health Services	Public Hospitals, Clinics, Community Health Centres	- Entry-level support roles- Workplace-based learning opportunities- Internship and learnership placement capacity- Recruitment requirements for support occupations	Provides insight into absorption capacity and workplace readiness requirements for NEET youth entering the health sector.
Community-Based Health Services	NGOs, NPOs, Home-Based Care Organisations	- Community outreach services- Primary healthcare support- Disability and elderly care services- Mental health and psychosocial support	Identifies community-level employment pathways and training needs aligned to service delivery.

Sector	Institutional Category	Key Focus Areas	Relevance to HWSETA
Private Health Sector	Private Hospitals, Frail Care Centres, Rehabilitation Centres	- Entry-level operational roles- Care support services- Skills shortages and recruitment practices	Assesses private-sector demand and potential employment pathways for NEET youth.
Skills Development Institutions	TVET Colleges, CET Colleges, Accredited Training Providers	- Health-related occupational qualifications- Skills programmes and learnerships- Admission requirements and progression pathways	Evaluates training accessibility and alignment between programme offerings and labour market demand.
Youth Development & Labour Market Activation Agencies	Government Youth Agencies, Employment Services, Career Guidance Platforms	- NEET identification and profiling- Career guidance services- Job placement and employment support	Supports identification of NEET youth pipelines and labour market transition mechanisms.

2. RATIONALE AND PURPOSE

HWSETA is inviting proposals from qualified research service providers to conduct a study aimed at identifying and evaluating suitable training intervention models for NEET youth in the health sector that led to improved employment outcomes.

NEET youth represent a significant untapped labour pool. However, they face multiple barriers including limited access to accredited training, financial constraints, lack of workplace exposure, and misalignment between qualifications and sectoral demand. While various training programmes exist within the post-school education and training system, limited evidence is available regarding their effectiveness in facilitating sustainable employment transitions within the health sector.

This research will provide strategic insights and recommendations to strengthen labour market entry pathways for NEET youth.

The study will:

- Analyse the profile and characteristics of NEET youth relevant to the health sector.
- Assess existing training programmes and their effectiveness in equipping NEET youth with market-relevant skills for the health sector.
- Identify and evaluate training intervention models that demonstrate the strongest employment outcomes in the health sector.
- Explore employment transition pathways, focusing on workplace-based learning, employer demand, and regulatory requirements.
- Provide evidence-based policy and programmatic recommendations to improve the integration of NEET youth into the health sector workforce.

3. GOAL

The goal of the study is to analyse the extent and nature of NEET youth in relation to the health sector and explore how training options influence employability and labour market entry. This will inform strategic interventions to enhance training access and employment pathways.

4. OBJECTIVES

The study will address the following objectives:

- a) To quantify the number and demographic profile of NEET youth relevant to the health sector.
- b) To assess the training capacity of education and training institutions offering health-related qualifications and skills programmes accessible to NEET youth.
- c) To evaluate the employability of NEET youth who complete health-related training programmes, identifying factors influencing successful labour market entry.

- d) To analyse employer demand for entry-level health occupations and the barriers affecting absorption of NEET youth.

5. SPECIFIC RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study will focus on evaluating training intervention models for NEET youth in the health sector, assessing their effectiveness in improving employment outcomes, and proposing sustainable workforce integration strategies. The research will employ a mixed-methods approach incorporating quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The study will cover a period of nine years (2017–2025) to ensure a historical perspective on trends in training access and employment outcomes.

- a. **What is the number and profile of NEET youth relevant to the health sector?**
 - i. What is the demographic and geographic distribution of NEET youth?
 - ii. What levels of educational attainment do NEET youth possess?
 - iii. What proportion meet minimum entry requirements for health-related qualifications?
- b. **What is the training capacity and accessibility of the NEET youth to the health sector?**
 - i. How many NEET youth have enrolled in health-related training programmes?
 - ii. What are the completion and dropout rates?
 - iii. What barriers limit access to training opportunities?
- c. **What is employability and extent of transition to employment by the NEET youth in the health sector?**
 - i. What percentage of NEET youth transition into paid employment after completing training?
 - ii. Which occupations demonstrate the highest absorption rates?
 - iii. What factors influence successful employment outcomes?
- d. **What are employer demand and structural barriers to the NEET youth in the health sector?**
 - i. What is the demand for entry-level occupations within the health sector?
 - ii. What skills gaps are reported by employers?
 - iii. How do regulatory and policy frameworks affect the integration of NEET youth into the workforce

6. SCOPE OF WORK

The Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority (HWSETA) seeks to commission a comprehensive research study to identify and evaluate suitable training options and employability pathways for NEET youth within the health sector.

The study will examine the accessibility, relevance, and effectiveness of health-related training programmes in facilitating labour market entry for NEET youth. It will further assess employer demand, workplace-based learning opportunities, and structural barriers affecting the integration of NEET youth into health-sector occupations. The study will adopt a mixed-methods research design, incorporating quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.

6.1. Document and policy review

The service provider must conduct a targeted document review covering:

- NEET definitions, trends and measurement approaches in South Africa (including Stats SA labour market outputs).
- Health workforce entry pathways and entry-level occupational streams relevant to HWSETA.
- Training-to-employment models for NEET youth (local and international good practice).
- Relevant policy frameworks (youth employment, occupational qualifications, workplace-based learning, etc.).

6.2. Primary data collection

a) NEET Youth Survey (Quantitative)

- Assess the quality, relevance, and currency of references.
Sample size: approximately 1,000+ NEET youth (aged as defined in the study scope, e.g., 15–34).
- Method: online survey.
Focus areas:
 - Educational attainment and prior training exposure
 - Awareness of health-sector training and career options
 - Barriers to accessing training (financial, admission requirements, location, information gaps)
 - Work experience and job-search behaviour
 - Interest in health-sector occupations
 - Willingness/ability to participate in workplace-based learning
 - Employability constraints (documentation, transport costs, digital access, etc.).

b) Employer Survey (Quantitative: Health Sector Demand & Absorption)

Sample size: approximately 100+ To be the health-sector employers/workplaces across:

- Public health facilities.
- Private health service providers.
- NGOs/NPOs delivering health services.
- Elderly care and disability care facilities

Method: online survey (with telephonic completion option).

Focus areas:

- Entry-level recruitment practices and requirements
- Workplace-based learning capacity (WIL placement feasibility)
- Demand for entry-level roles and support occupations
- Barriers to recruiting first-time job seekers
- Willingness to host NEET youth and conditions required
- Minimum competencies expected for entry roles

c) Qualitative interviews (Key informant interviews)

Total interviews: at least 15 in-depth interviews (virtual/telephonic) focusing on regulatory constraints, funding mechanisms, and scaling feasibility. These will comprise of:

- Employers/workplace hosts
- Training institutions/providers
- Youth development / employment facilitation stakeholders
- Policy / system stakeholders
- Relevant government or sector bodies (e.g., health workforce planners, youth policy implementers).

6.3. Secondary Data analysis

The service provider must analyse available national datasets to quantify NEET context and triangulate pathways into training and work, including:

- Stats SA labour market datasets (e.g., QLFS) to profile NEET youth (distribution, education levels, geography).
- DHET / PSET system data (where accessible) for enrolment/completion trends in relevant health programmes (TVET and higher education where applicable).
- HWSETA administrative data (where relevant) for programme participation outcomes among unemployed beneficiaries (e.g., learnerships, internships, skills programmes) noting that this does not equal NEET but supports training outcome analysis.
- Any other credible youth/employment datasets available to the service provider (e.g., youth programme datasets), subject to lawful access.

7. COMPETENCY AND EXPERTISE REQUIREMENTS

Prior to the bidder being subjected to the competency/ functional criterion, it is mandatory for the bidder to have the research ethics approval capacity where at least two names (team leader and any team member) are confirmed to have an active certificate of Training and Resources in Research Ethics Evaluation (TRREE) for Module 1 (Introduction to research ethics) and Module 3 (Informed consent). For more information on TRREE: <https://elearning.trree.org/>). The certificates should be provided.

NB: If a bidder does not meet these mandatory requirements, they will be disqualified immediately without undergoing the competency/functional criterion.

The successful bidder must have the following competencies:

FUNCTIONAL CRITERION	KEY COMPONENTS	MAXIMUM POINTS AVAILABLE															
1. Team composition and relevant experience	1.1 The team leader must have a minimum of 8 years of experience in research. A minimum of at two (2x) team members are required. Each team member must have at least 4 years of individual work experience. The research service provider must submit CVs of all team members listed below. <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Name & Surname</th><th>Title/Position</th><th>Years of experience in research</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td><td>Team members (at least two) [5*2=10]</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>Project/Team leader [10]</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>NB: Project/Team leader cannot be team member</td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td></td><td>Total [20]</td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> - Table above not provided in the proposal = [0] - Table completed with individual team member with less than 4 years of experience = [0] - Table completed with team leader with less than 8 years of experience in research = [0] - Table completed with at least two team members with each having 4 years of experience in research specified = [5*2=10] - Table completed with a team leader with a minimum of 8 years of experience in research = [10]	Name & Surname	Title/Position	Years of experience in research		Team members (at least two) [5*2=10]			Project/Team leader [10]			NB: Project/Team leader cannot be team member			Total [20]		[20 points]
Name & Surname	Title/Position	Years of experience in research															
	Team members (at least two) [5*2=10]																
	Project/Team leader [10]																
	NB: Project/Team leader cannot be team member																
	Total [20]																
2. Professional Qualifications of the Research Team	The Project/Team leader should be in possession of the following qualifications (provide a certified copy of the team leader's qualification; the stamp must not be more than 6 months): A minimum of a Master's degree in the field of Public health and Social sciences. - Qualifications below Master's degree = [0] - Master's degree = [10] - PHD = [20] NB: International qualifications must be verified by SAQA and a copy of letters confirming verification. Total [20 points] The research service provider must submit the qualifications of at least two (2x) team members that will be involved in this project <u>listed on the team composition and relevant experience table</u> above in possession of the following qualifications (excluding team leader). A minimum of an Honours degree in the field of public health and social sciences. - Qualifications below Master's degree = [0] - Honours degree = [10] - Masters or PHD = [20] (Provide a certified copy of the qualification listed. The stamp must not be more than 6 months). NB: International qualifications must be verified by SAQA and a copy of letters confirming verification. Total [20 points]	[40 points]															

FUNCTIONAL CRITERION	KEY COMPONENTS	MAXIMUM POINTS AVAILABLE					
3. Reference Letters	The service provider must submit a minimum of 2 (2x) reference letters with contactable references in <u>provision of research services</u>. The reference letter should be between 2020 and 2026. Each reference letter must have the following to meet the minimum requirements. <table border="1"><tr><td>Key elements of the reference letter</td></tr><tr><td>It must be dated</td></tr><tr><td>It must specify the research project study undertaken</td></tr><tr><td>It must be signed</td></tr><tr><td>The organization, position, and contact details of the signatory must be stated</td></tr></table> No reference letters = [0] Minimum of two (2x) reference letters = [20] In addition to meeting the <u>minimum of two (2x)</u> reference letters, <u>bonus points</u> will be added when the follow aspects are stated within a valid reference letter. - Reference letter must at least confirm the ability of the research service provider in using <u>mixed methods</u> (both qualitative and quantitative research methods) [10] - Reference letter must at least confirm the exposure of the research service provider to <u>Labour Market research or SETA landscape research</u> [10]	Key elements of the reference letter	It must be dated	It must specify the research project study undertaken	It must be signed	The organization, position, and contact details of the signatory must be stated	[40 points]
Key elements of the reference letter							
It must be dated							
It must specify the research project study undertaken							
It must be signed							
The organization, position, and contact details of the signatory must be stated							
Subtotal for Functionality (maximum) 100%		100 points					
NB: A service provider must score <u>a minimum of 80 points on functionality</u> [competency and expertise requirements] to be considered.							

8. TIMELINES OF THE PROJECT

The duration of the project will be eighty (80) working days from the signature date of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). However, adjustments for longer duration may be accommodated for the purposes of the research ethics approval process which is outside the direct control of HWSETA and the service provider.

9. EXPECTED DELIVERABLES

The service provider will be required to deliver the following:

No.	Deliverable
1	Conceptual Proposal including methodology
2	Literature Review & Contextual Analysis
3	Ethical Clearance (Service Provider to source Ethical Clearance from a recognised institution)
4	Survey Design & Data Collection Plan

No.	Deliverable
5	Raw survey data (quantitative and qualitative)
6	Data Analysis Report (including graphical representations)
7	Final Research Report & Presentation

10. QUALITY AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The service provider will report directly to:

- HWSETA Researcher (Project Lead)
- HWSETA Research and Information Manager

Regular progress meetings will be required to ensure quality control and adherence to research standards.

11. PRICING

Service providers must submit an **all-inclusive VAT pricing breakdown**.

Outcome/Output	Activity	Team members(s) involve (Name and position)	Cost inclusive of VAT
Conceptual Proposal including methodology			
<u>Literature Review</u> (includes document review analysis)			
<u>Ethical Clearance</u> (Service Provider to source Ethical Clearance from a recognised institute)			
<u>Data collection</u> : (one-on-one virtual qualitative interviews) [15x]			
Qualitative <u>data analysis</u> from one-on-one virtual qualitative interviews (Including Raw data collected from interviews)			
Secondary quantitative <u>data analysis</u> a) Enrolment datasets b) Completion datasets			

Outcome/Output	Activity	Team members(s) involve (Name and position)	Cost inclusive of VAT
c) Employment profile dataset (WSP) d) and hard-to-fill-vacancies dataset (WSP)			
<u>Report writing and presentation</u>			

12. MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

- Company registration documents
- Service provider's business address
- Service provider's contact person (name, email address, and telephone number)
 - Proof of registration on the Central Supplier Database (attached relevant documents)
 - Signed POPI Consent (**Refer to Annexure A below**)

ANNEXURE A: CONSENT IN TERMS OF SECTION 11 OF THE PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION ACT, 2013 ("POPIA")

In order for the Health and Welfare Sector Education and Training Authority ("HWSETA") to consider the applicant's response to the advertisement to become a service provider of the HWSETA, it will be necessary for the HWSETA to process certain personal information which the service provider may share with the HWSETA for the purpose of the bid, including personal information.

The HWSETA will process the Service Provider's Personal Information in accordance with its Privacy Policy. Access to your Personal Information and purpose specification: Personal Information will be processed by the HWSETA for purposes of assessing the service provider's submission in relation to the advertised EOI and the purposes of assessing current services required by HWSETA. We may also share the service provider's Personal Information with third parties within the Republic of South Africa, including to carry out verification and background checks. In this regard, the service provider acknowledges that the HWSETA's authorised verification agent(s) and service providers will access Personal Information and conduct background screening.

Consent:

By [ticking] "Yes" and signing below, you agree and voluntarily consent to the HWSETA's processing of your Personal Information for the purposes of evaluation, including to confirm and verify any information provided in the submission and service provider gives HWSETA permission to do so. The service provider understands that it is free to withdraw its consent on written notice to HWSETA, and the service provider agrees that the Personal Information may be disclosed by HWSETA to third parties. Please note that if you withdraw your consent at any stage, we may be unable to process your bid submission.

Yes ☐ No ☐

_____	_____	_____
Supplier Name	Date	Signature