Greater Manchester Moving

Expression of Interest

Understanding the Conditions for Creating Active Mosques in Greater Manchester

Issued: November 2026

Closing date: 3pm 4th January 2027,

submit by emailing your EOI to below inbox

Kay Jarrell-Searcy | Research & Evaluation Lead

kay@gmmoving.co.uk

GM Moving in Action

GM Moving is a leading Greater Manchester charity. Across our city region, we play a strategic leadership role in support of GM Moving in Action, Greater Manchester's whole system strategy for physical activity. Read more here gm-moving-in-action-gm-moving-strategy-2021-31.pdf

Nationally, we are one of 42 Active Partnerships. Together, we work to create the conditions for an active nation. We work closely with Sport England to support the local implementation of the Uniting the Movement Strategy.

Our purpose: GM Moving exists to change lives through movement, physical activity and sport.

Our vision: Thriving communities that are happier, healthier and more active.

Our mission: We lead, support and connect a Greater Manchester system that creates the conditions to enable **Active Lives for All**.

Read more about Our business plan - Greater Manchester Moving

Why this research matters

Across Greater Manchester there is growing interest in supporting physical activity within mosque settings. Mosques are trusted community spaces that play an important role in the social, cultural and spiritual lives of Muslim communities. Alongside worship, many already provide education, social support and community services, making them significant assets within local neighbourhoods.

We want to understand not only what happens within individual mosques, but how mosques connect with their wider community and local places, relationships resources and ways of working that shape what is possible.

We are interested in how change happens in different contexts, what can be built on locally and where wider support or change is needed. This will help us understand how GM Moving and its partners can add value, support, support locally shaped approaches and focus investment where it is most likely to make a difference.

We are seeing promising activity emerge across Greater Manchester, but we do not yet have a shared understanding of:

- What an Active Mosque could mean in practice
- The perception of physical activity within faith settings
- What enables or constrains this work
- Where opportunity and responsibility for change sits across communities, mosques and wider faith systems.

We do not want to prescribe a single model of an Active Mosque. We want to understand the different ways mosques can support movement and physical activity, including through their own activities, their role in community life and their relationships with wider local partners. Approaches should reflect the needs, priorities and circumstances of each community.

Importantly, this work has been shaped by a Greater Manchester Faith Steering Group, who have challenged us to ensure that community voices sit at the centre of the research. We are therefore keen to adopt some element of peer research. The recruitment of peer researchers will be a role for the steering group. The appointed researchers will work alongside the recruited peer researchers who will help develop relationships, ensure meaningful engagement and thus the collection of relevant data and insight. The Greater Manchester Faith Steering Group is made up of individuals with lived experience of Islam, including mosque teachers, community leaders and people who hold strategic leadership roles within mosques across Greater Manchester. The group provides advice, guidance, challenge and support to help us engage effectively with Muslim communities to embed movement and physical activity into mosque settings. They will play a key role in the

recruitment of Mosques and help initiate engagement. We are therefore looking for a research partner who shares this collaborative approach and can help generate practical learning (peer research) that informs future investment and action alongside the Faith Steering Group.

The partnership

We want to work alongside a partner who will help shape the work with us.

GM Moving will contribute:-

- access to partners and local networks
- communications and engagement support
- research and evaluation expertise
- collaboration with the Faith Steering Group.

Purpose of the research

The research aims to build a shared understanding of what enables mosques (2-3 Mosques per borough) to support physical activity and movement in ways that are meaningful, inclusive and sustainable for their communities and how these conditions can be strengthened across different places. We are focussing this research in 3 specific boroughs; Bolton, Trafford and Rochdale, as this is where our Steering group have existing connections and relationships.

Specifically, we want to explore:

- what Mosques look like in different contexts
- the barriers and enablers to physical activity within mosque settings
- how experiences differ across gender, age and communities
- what support, partnerships and system conditions are needed to enable this work sustainably.

The findings should help GM moving, the Faith Steering Group and local partners identify practical recommendations for action, understand where different forms of support are needed and inform investment and partnership working.

Our Programme Theory

If we work with an independent research partner, the faith network, peer researchers and Muslim communities to understand how active mosques approaches work in different contexts;

By exploring lived experience, existing activity, local relationships and the conditions that enable or constrain change, and involving communities and partners in interpreting the findings;

Then we will develop a shared, practical understanding of what is needed to support the growth/creation of Active Mosques, where opportunities exist, and how different people and organisations can contribute;

Because sustainable change depends on more than individual activities or the commitment of individual mosques. It is also shaped by relationships, resources, leadership, local circumstances and the wider conditions in which mosques operate.
This will inform future investment, partnership working and the role GM Moving and others can play in supporting locally shaped, sustainable approaches.

Core research question

What conditions enable mosques to support physical activity in ways that are inclusive, meaningful and sustainable for their communities, and what needs to change at community, mosque and wider system levels to strengthen these conditions?

1. What does an 'Active Mosque' mean in practice?
   How is physical activity currently understood, valued and supported across different mosque and Muslim community contexts?
2. What enables or constrains Active Mosques?
   What are the key barriers and enablers across community and cultural factors, mosque leadership and governance, resources, facilities and infrastructure, relationships and the wider system, shape what's possible?
3. How do experiences and needs differ?
   How do needs, experiences, opportunities, barriers and enablers differ by gender, age, community and local context? What does this mean for developing approaches that are inclusive and shaped by the people they are intended to benefit?
4. What needs to change, and who can help it happen?
   What can be influenced within mosque and community settings, what requires support or change from wider partners and what role should GM Moving and other partners play? Where are the opportunities to build on existing assets, relationships and activity?

What we're looking for

We're looking for an organisation, or partnership that can bring together independent research expertise with experience working with a diverse community.

We are particularly interested in proposals that:

- work collaboratively with our Faith Network Steering Group
- centre lived experience throughout the research process
- Experience in engaging with Muslim communities

We are open to qualitative approaches but we do invite researchers to recommend the most appropriate method and explain why, including how they will involve relational work to build rapport with Mosques, and how they will design in methods that look to capture lived experiences from a range of voices. We envision this project would take 6 months with the research process beginning by March 2027.

We expect the work to produce:

- A clear synthesis of findings and recommendations, addressing the core research questions.
- A practical account of the conditions that enable or constrain Active Mosque approaches, including how these interact across mosques, communities and wider local contexts.
- Grounded examples that illustrate different approaches, experiences and learning across Greater Manchester.
- A facilitated session with the Faith Steering Group and relevant community and local partners to test the findings and explore their implications.
- Clear recommendations for GM Moving and partners, identifying opportunities for action, areas requiring wider change, and potential priorities for future support and investment.
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Expression of Interest

We're asking interested organisations to submit a concise response (**maximum 4 pages**) covering:

Section	Guide
About you	Your organisation and relevant experience, who will be involved and what will they bring. Brief team biographies are sufficient; full CVs are not required.
Why this matters	Why you're interested and how this aligns with your work
Your approach	How you would deliver collaborative, community-centred research

Budget	Indicative costs and timescales. Please include an outline budget covering all anticipated costs, including staff time, workshops, room hire, refreshments, peer researcher recruitment, training and payment, travel and other expenses.

Please aim to keep each section to one page. A separate, more detailed budget may be included as an appendix if needed and will not count towards this page limit. Other appendices should be kept to a minimum, as assessment will focus primarily on the four core sections.

EoI Content Requirements:

Requirements		**Guideline (A4 pages)**	**Weighting**
Team	Outline who will be part of the team detailing the organisations and individuals that you would like to involve. Explain the relevant knowledge and experience that you would bring to this partnership. Demonstrate how the team shares the values of GM Moving (Passion / Integrity / Purpose) Include experience of community led research and working with faith communities.	1	20%
Purpose and alignment	Tell us why you are interested in this approach and why you think it is important. What are our collective ambitions? How will your approach with accommodate peer research principles? What experience do you have with working in faith settings and Mosques?	1	20%
Delivery	What are you going to do? Tell us your ideas. How will you approach the aims of the research and what methods would you recommend? What outputs you will feel to be valuable to generate practical learning and inform future action? How will you work alongside GMM, peer researchers and the Faith Steering group in shaping the research, engaging communities and interpreting findings? How would you explore the different conditions that enable or constrain active mosque approaches, including the role of mosques within their wider communities and local places? **Please Include ethical considerations with regards to the data collection process.**	2	40%

Cost	The budget available to the appointed research partner is £12,000 Please provide a breakdown of how you would allocate this budget, including staff time, research activities, workshops or focus groups, room hire, refreshments, travel and any other expenses. GM Moving will fund peer researcher costs separately. Please explain how your proposed approach will involve and support peer researchers, but do not include their recruitment, training or payment costs within your £12,000 budget. Please identify any assumptions, exclusions or additional costs associated with your proposal.	1 Appendix	20%
Total		Max. 4	100%

Indicative timeline

Activity	Timing
EOI closes	January 4th 2026
Interviews	W/C 18th January 2027
Partner appointed	February 2027
Research begins	March 2027

If you'd like to discuss the opportunity before submitting an expression of interest, please contact:

Umar Ahmed

Umar@gmmoving.co.uk