

## System Maturity and Resources surveys for Configurational Comparative Analysis: Frequently Asked Questions



September 2025

### 1. Why are we asking Place Partnerships to complete these surveys?

[Configurational Comparative Analysis](#) (CCA) is a research method that can combine both qualitative and quantitative data and enables us to compare patterns across a large number of Places and identify which conditions, or combinations of conditions, tend to lead to a desired outcome. By combining this with the deeper insight taken from Evaluation and Learning reports we can explore how and why change takes place in these contexts.

The System Maturity Matrix (SMM) survey, using an online format, enables systematic data collection, helping to consistently capture an understanding of the current conditions within Places. This will draw on both perceptions of partners and stakeholders and examples of local contexts and the changes taking place. **This year we have separated the SMM survey from the Resources Survey** (Part One questions in last year's survey). NELP will use responses to both of these surveys, together with other data collected, for its CCA.

**Please note: responses to the Resources survey will be shared with Sport England (SE), but the SMM survey responses will not be shared with SE**, without permission of the appropriate Place partnership representative. Aggregated data and patterns of maturity across Places, based on SMM responses will be shared with SE.

Further information on CCA is available [here](#), including the [survey guidance](#).

### 2. When is the deadline to submit our completed survey?

You will need to submit a completed online survey by the end of 15 October 2024.

### 3. Will I have to complete the survey in one go?

Each Place will have a unique survey link that will save your progress as you complete the survey. This allows you to close the survey and return to it at a later point without losing the information submitted.

### 4. Can more than one person in a Place fill in the survey?

We recommend one/two people completes the final survey submission. You will be provided with a survey link that is unique to your Place. However, your response should be based on input from stakeholders across the Place – **see question 5**.

### 5. Should we include data from a range of stakeholders in our completed survey?

Before you complete the survey, we recommend engaging with a range of stakeholders from your Place to collate data/examples to help you complete the survey. It is important to gather a diverse range of perspectives and experiences of the Place-based Systemic Approach to PA in

your Place. Further recommendations and resources for engaging stakeholders in the process are included in the [CCA survey guidance](#).

## **6. What do we mean by a Place?**

We consider each Place as the Local Authority area in which it operates. Therefore, if you are representing multiple Places, you should complete 1 survey per Place. For example, if an Active Partnership represent three different Local Authority areas, they will submit three separate sets of survey responses. Each Place will be provided with unique survey links to complete the two surveys.

## **7. Do I need to complete all the System Maturity conditions?**

We ask you to submit a response for all conditions, but we recognise that some conditions may be less relevant or less well developed in your Place and therefore have less examples/data available than others. Please include an explanation for your assessment for each condition, supported where possible with examples, to enable the NELP team to understand your survey response.

## **8. How much information/ how many examples do I need to include?**

It is important that responses reflect the experiences and perceptions of a range of stakeholders in the Place. Please provide a short explanation of your reasoning for your maturity assessment, including consideration of contextual conditions as well as the activity taking place in this field and include examples to demonstrate this. Contextual conditions may relate to the demographics and histories of the Place, and/or the organisational relationships and contexts within which this work is taking place. Your examples may come from community organisations, operational teams, and senior leaders in your Place. One example may relate to more than one condition, and we do not need detailed descriptions, but rather a brief explanation of what is happening or has happened, and how this relates to the particular system maturity conditions.

## **9. What should we do if there is no agreement of the maturity rating between stakeholders.**

The maturity rating should reflect the overall Place, so it is important that examples are collected from a range of stakeholders in the Place. The maturity rating should reflect the data and examples gathered during this process so if there is not a clear agreement on the scoring it may be beneficial for a few people with detailed understanding of the work to review the data available and decide on an appropriate rating. The NELP team will also look across cases and moderate the ratings based on a range of information and examples.

## **10. Can we collect and submit responses in another format?**

Some people may find it easier to capture and collate information in another format such as Word or Excel, and that's fine, but we would ask you to copy the information into the online survey response to enable us to process it effectively. If you have any technical difficulties with using the online survey, please contact us by email: [nelp@shu.ac.uk](mailto:nelp@shu.ac.uk)

For any further information please contact: [nelp@shu.ac.uk](mailto:nelp@shu.ac.uk)