

Education Strategy

2025—2028

Advancing musculoskeletal
health with high-quality training
for healthcare professionals

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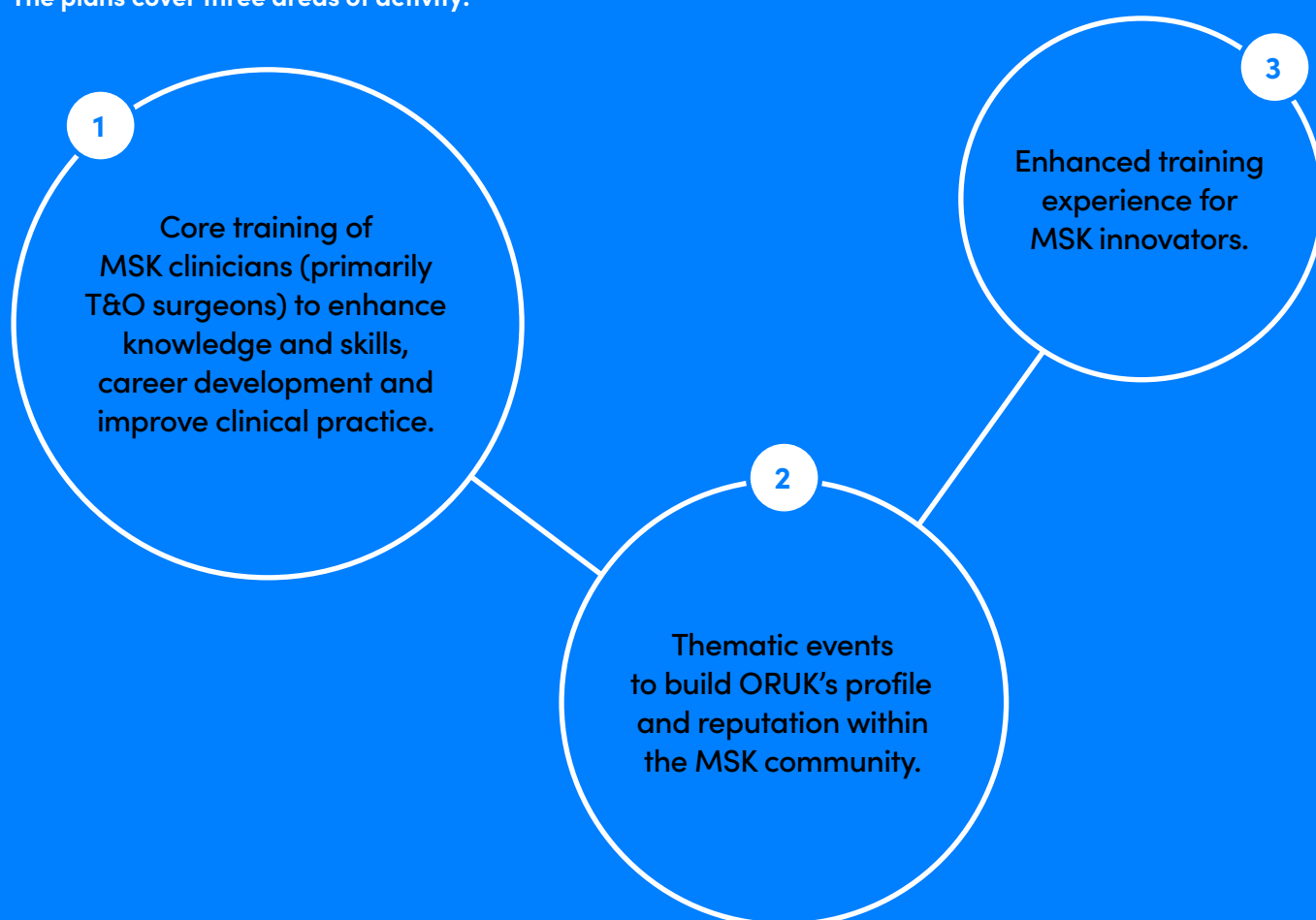
Orthopaedic
Research UK



Strategic priorities

Our strategic plans are informed by the ORUK Board, the Education & Training Advisory Committee and shaped by the work of the Leadership and Management Teams. They aim to strengthen musculoskeletal (MSK) education and training while supporting innovation across the MSK community.

The plans cover three areas of activity:



Background

The evolution of our education activities



Over the last ten years we have established ourselves as a highly regarded provider of continuous learning in MSK health in the UK (see [Appendix 1: Education and training survey, Autumn 2024](#)). We provide a range of training events designed to support MSK clinicians to advance their careers, enhance their knowledge and skills, and improve clinical practice.

Until 2018 we primarily focused on meeting the training needs of surgeons. Subsequently, we gradually expanded our efforts to include physiotherapists, who belong to the Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) category. The pandemic accelerated this shift, encouraging us to develop a series of 6-12 week virtual courses specifically for paediatric physiotherapists.

Prior to the pandemic, all our educational programmes were delivered face-to-face (F2F). During the pandemic, we seamlessly transitioned to a virtual format for core annual events that did not include practical components. Post-pandemic, we have adopted a hybrid model, operating on a 60:40 basis in favour of F2F events, of which we run around 35 a year. We run a limited number of on-demand courses, and offer a selection of 63 free recorded webinars in our 'Online learning library'. The transition to hosting virtual-only events led to a geographic expansion of our audience, with delegates from over 75 countries.

Our current education portfolio is relatively 'niche' and does not cover all orthopaedic specialties. It has evolved organically through partnerships and by identifying training gaps. We are actively engaged in providing educational programmes that support career development for trauma and orthopaedic (T&O) surgeons, such as our FRCS (Tr & Orth) revision courses and mock interview courses.

We receive proposals from MSK clinicians for new educational programmes and selectively partner with those that align with our strategic objectives. We decline proposals that compete with our existing events, are offered by competitors, or lack sufficient demand or impact. When aligned, we support MSK clinicians in achieving their teaching goals and advancing as educators.

See [Appendix 2](#) for our current stats, market analyses and information about how we select our programmes and partners.

Objectives

What we want to achieve



Our key objectives, which are aligned with our broad organisational mission are to:

1. Support the work of clinicians and innovators in improving the prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and management of MSK conditions.
2. Enhance the profile and reputation of ORUK within the wider MSK community.
3. Generate revenue that can be reinvested in the work of the charity.

We will monitor the following quantifiable KPIs to measure our performance:

- Training/event outcomes – number of delegates, satisfaction scores
- Revenue (financial sustainability)
- Reach and engagement generated by training/event related social media content

Strategy

How we want to achieve our objectives



Leverage our networking/convening skills to engage the wider MSK community in debating critical issues for the sector.

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To strengthen our role as a thought leader in MSK health we will leverage our established networking and convening capabilities to bring together diverse voices from across the MSK community. By organising targeted forums, sandpits, roundtables, and panel discussions – both in-person and virtually – we aim to foster dialogue on pressing challenges and emerging trends in the sector. These gatherings will include clinicians, researchers, educators, policymakers, and patient representatives, ensuring a well-rounded exchange of perspectives. Through this approach, we will not only raise the profile of key issues but also catalyse collaboration, inform policy, and help shape the future direction of MSK education and practice in the UK and beyond.

Harness the power of partners to scale and amplify our efforts.

To amplify our impact and extend the reach of our educational initiatives, we will actively seek to leverage the scale, expertise, and resources of strategic partners across the MSK landscape. By partnering with professional bodies, academic institutions, NHS trusts, and industry stakeholders we can co-create and deliver high-quality programmes that address shared priorities. These partnerships will enable us to access broader audiences, enhance content credibility, secure additional funding or in-kind support, and benefit from existing infrastructure and networks. Through aligned efforts we aim to create a more cohesive and efficient educational ecosystem that delivers greater value to MSK clinicians and, ultimately, improves patient outcomes.

There are over 20 million people, accounting for nearly one-third of the UK population, who suffer from MSK conditions. By supporting MSK clinicians through targeted education and training we can enhance their capacity to contribute more effectively to patient care and help reduce long waiting lists within healthcare systems. We aim to evolve our educational provision by identifying areas of unmet need which are not addressed by other organisations, and that we are well positioned to fill. We are committed to supporting entrepreneurs and innovators to strengthen the MSK innovation eco-system in the UK through education, mentoring and other support.

Programme activities

1. Core training

- **Streamline existing programme** – maintain a blended offer, but discontinue low demand/ impact activities and transfer some activities from face-to-face to low cost e-learning format.
- **Review partnership activities** – we already collaborate with some providers of MSK training, such as the Orthopaedic Academy and the British Orthopaedic Association (BOA), but (encouraged by ETAC) we are exploring what further value we can derive from our partners. This might include collaborating on content creation, marketing and delivery.
- **E-learning** – we are testing a Learning Management System (LMS) that will facilitate the provision of online/ on-demand content, reduce costs for delegates (most of whom self-pay, Appendix 1), provide more data on our educational activities and improve administrative efficiency. This will also increase the number of international delegates. We have noted the direction of the Board that our international offer should evolve organically and cautiously.
- **Practical courses (e.g. cadaveric training)** – these are highly rated by delegates but expensive to deliver. We are exploring whether these can be delivered in partnership with industry.
- **Primary care** – To deliver broader societal impact there is a strong argument to extend our training offer beyond MSK surgeons to include First Contact Practitioners (FCPs) and other community-based roles. This also aligns us with the strategic direction outlined in the forthcoming NHS 10-Year Plan. Any initiatives in this space will be explored in collaboration with organisations such as the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) and the Royal College of Nursing (RCN).

2. Thematic events

- Our events are intended to align ORUK with important topics within MSK health, build our networks and open-up future funding and other opportunities.

3. Entrepreneurial training

- We focus on ways to support the MSK innovation pipeline within the UK, with a particular emphasis on Early Careers Researchers (ECRs).
- The number of available places for the MSK Innovation Accelerator programme, hosted by MedTech SuperConnector (MTSC), has doubled from 10 to 20 for the 2025/26 programme.
- We are developing an online training programme for MSK entrepreneurs (Joint Venture Academy), developed and hosted by Imperial College London, which will be tested in Q1 2026.

4. Cost tracking & revenue

- To improve the department's financial oversight we have implemented a data collection process to accurately assess the true costs of running each event, including indirect expenses such as staff salaries. This will help us make informed decisions about refining our education portfolio and improving its financial performance.
- The department plans to establish sustainable revenue sources through sponsorship, increased delegate fees, administration fees and funding bodies.



Summary



Our new strategy reaffirms the evolution of our education department and philosophy over the past 10 years, whilst being true to our primary objective of providing MSK health training opportunities that translate to improved patient care.

It plays to our strengths:

- Our established networks with a wide range of individuals, organisations, institutions, and companies within the MSK community who have the resources to amplify our educational provision
- Our neutrality within MSK health – unlike most MSK charities we are not focused on a specific health condition, giving us the freedom to focus our efforts where we believe there is a learning need

- Our entrepreneurial heritage – by enhancing our commitment to innovation and entrepreneurialism in MSK health. Through targeted training events and dynamic networking opportunities we aim to foster a culture that empowers individuals to develop and implement transformative ideas within the field
- Our expertise as a learning provider – giving us the ability to support MSK clinicians to become educators and pass on their knowledge and expertise. Our experience allows us to facilitate varied and accessible training opportunities

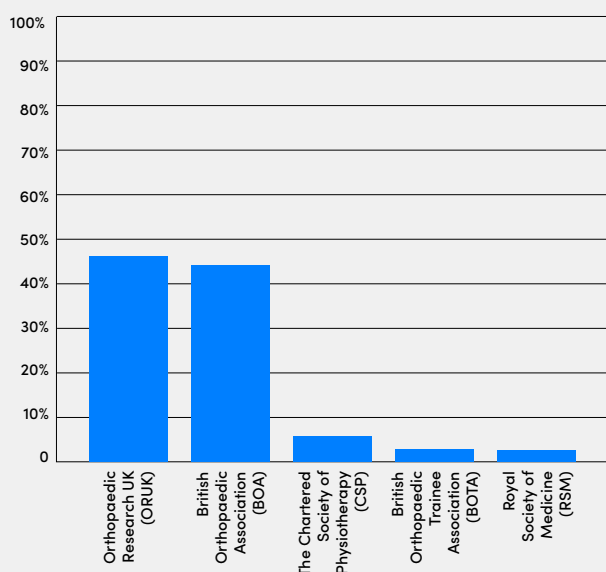
Our strategy will deliver a positive societal outcome by helping the millions of people suffering from poor MSK health, through providing high-quality educational training opportunities to the healthcare professionals that treat and support them.

Appendix 1

Education and training survey 2024

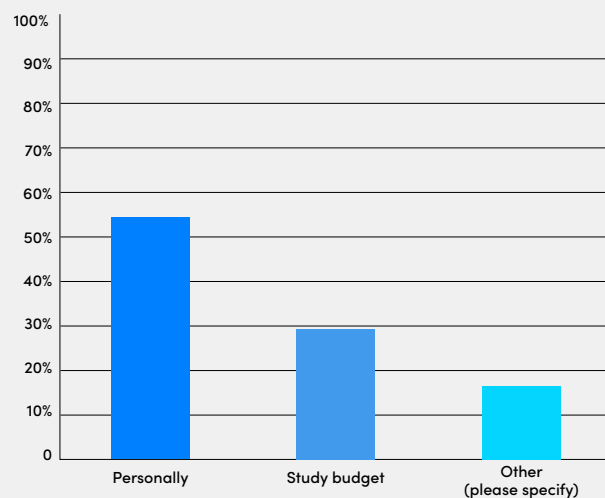
Please select or state your go-to organisation for education and training

Answered: 96 Skipped: 16



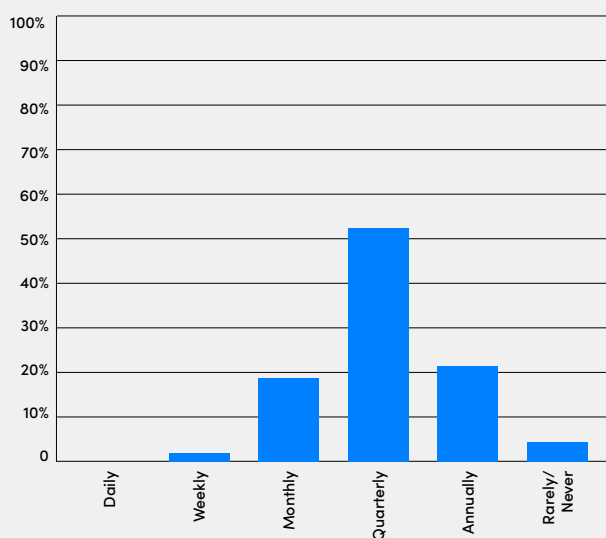
How do you fund your training courses and events?

Answered: 110 Skipped: 2



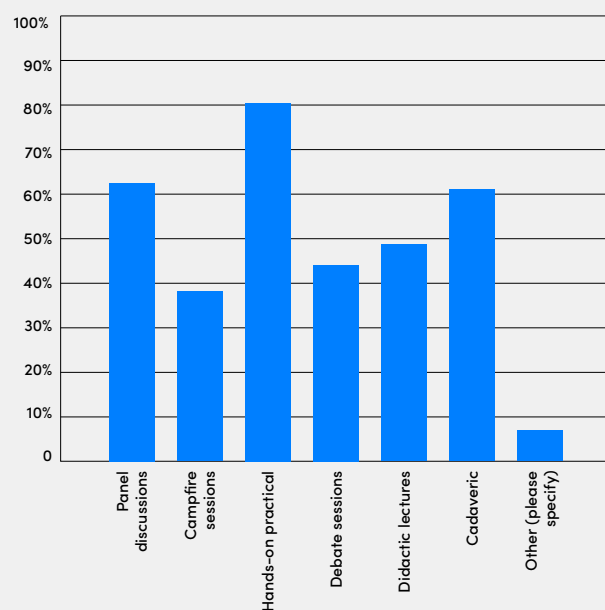
How often do you attend education events and training courses?

Answered: 110 Skipped: 2



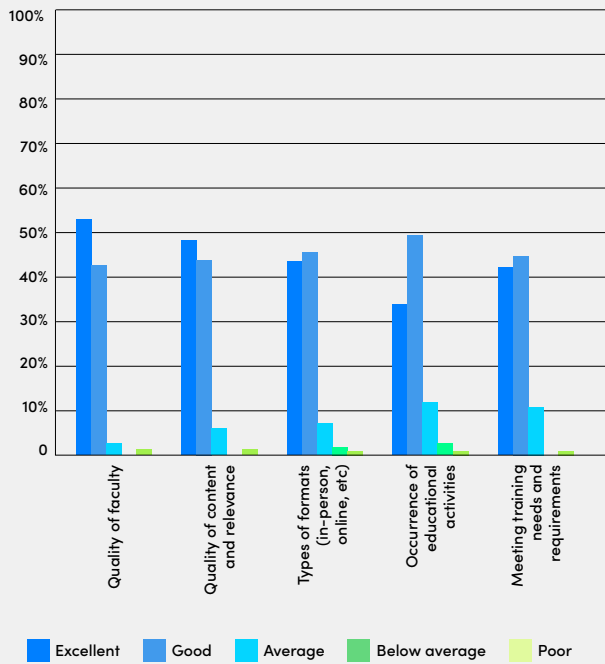
What types of events are you interested in attending?

Answered: 111 Skipped: 1



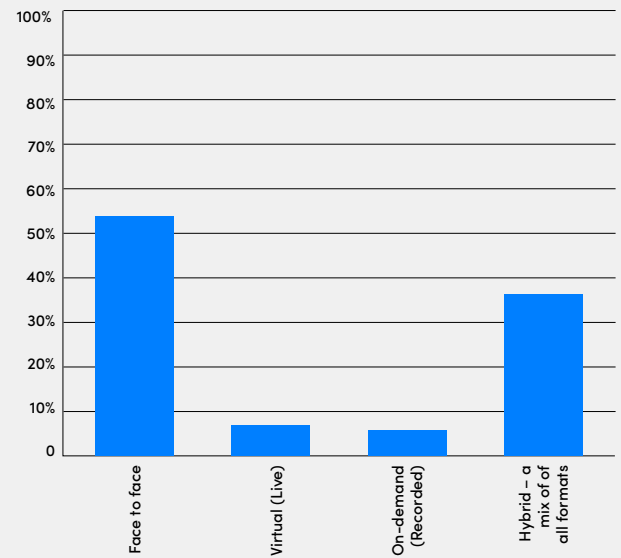
Please rate your views on ORUK events in the following areas

Answered: 99 Skipped: 11

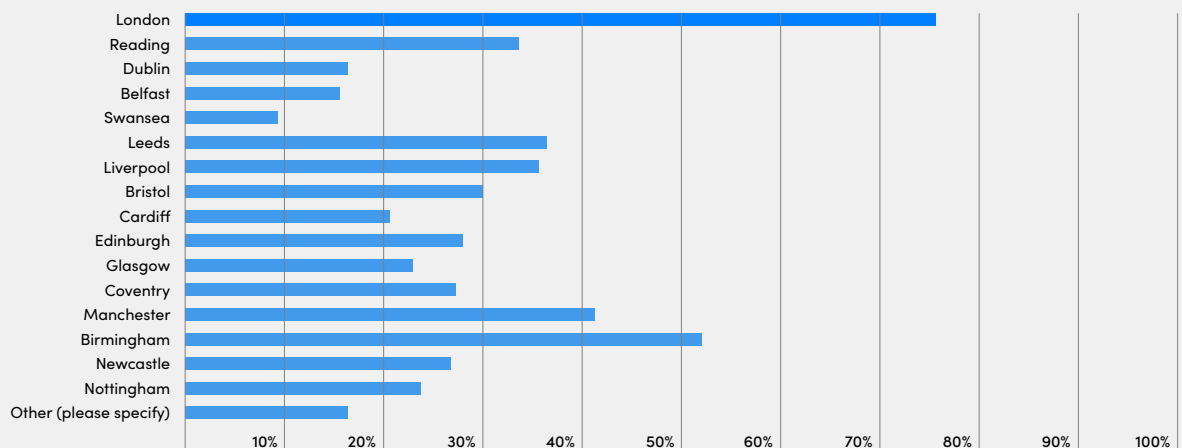


Which delivery format do you prefer when attending educational events and training courses

Answered: 110 Skipped: 0



Which locations would you be happy to travel to for events and training?



Appendix 2

Current market data and our programme selection process

Since September 2020 we have:

- Staged 243 in-person and virtual events
- Trained 17,859 Healthcare professionals
- Collaborated with 2,153 MSK clinicians to deliver education and training

Certificate of Completion of Training (CCT)
in Trauma & Orthopaedics (T&O)

ORUK course offering at each stage

Medical students

(1x) Research series

Foundation training

(1x) X-ray interpretation course
(1x) Research series

Core surgical training

(2x) ST3 interview courses
(1x) X-ray interpretation course
(1x) Neck of femur fractures course

Higher surgical training

(9x) FRCS revision courses (Tr & Orth)
(1x) Shoulder and elbow meeting
(1x) Education series for data management
(1x) Emergency medicine course
(1x) Hip and knee meetings
(1x) London shoulder meeting

CCT Trauma & Orthopaedics

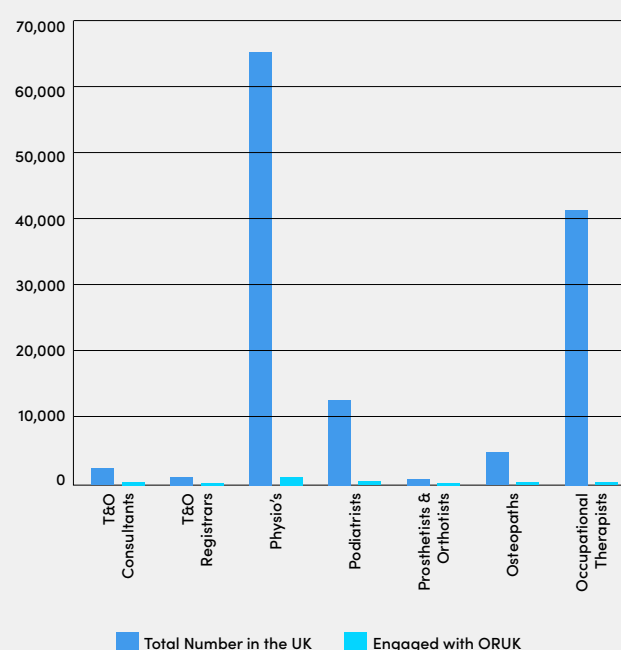
(1x) Consultant preparation course
(1x) Education series for data management
(1x) Emergency medicine course
(1x) Hip meeting
(1x) London shoulder meeting

Consultant and orthopaedic surgeons

(1x) London shoulder meeting
(1x) Shoulder and elbow meeting
(1x) Education series for data management
(1x) Emergency medicine course
(1x) Hip meeting

This graph shows the number of MSK clinicians in the UK, alongside the number of participants we trained in 2023. It illustrates that we are engaging with a small fraction of the total market for MSK education.

UK market size vs. current engagement



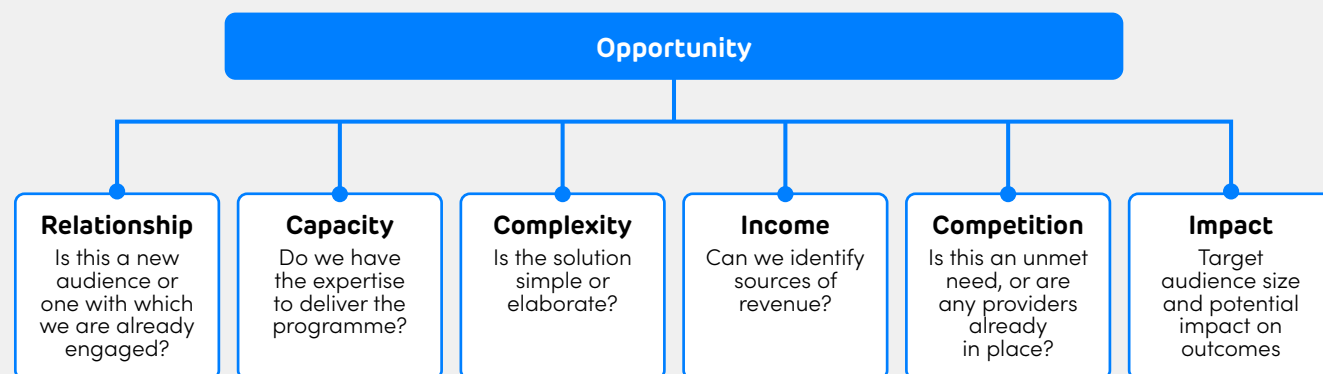
Additional stakeholder groups not included in the chart include:

- Students and researchers: Although these groups benefit from attending some of our events, there is no reliable data available to quantify how many are currently active
- Entrepreneurs/Innovators and are not included in the summary, but are included in our strategy
- Nurses: Although our current provision does not include nurses, this is a market we would like to explore

Competitors / partners

When exploring new programme opportunities, we conduct market research to ensure our offerings are unique and not duplicating competitors. From the outset, we seek partnerships with organisations that share our goals, allowing us to exchange knowledge and expertise for successful programme implementation.

Strategic opportunity assessment scorecard



Evolving our programme and identifying opportunities

To effectively prioritise these opportunities, we have developed a "scorecard" system. This tool will help us allocate time and resources efficiently, in accordance with our available capacity, ensuring that we focus on the most impactful and strategic opportunities.



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