**Arts Council England Invitation to Tender**

Title: Accessibility of language of Quality Metrics and Participatory Metrics

Reference number: *ART011-0135*

Deadline for receipt of tender proposals: **12 noon on 24 October 2016**

**Background**

***The Arts Council***

Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives.

We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries - from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections.

Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better.

Between 2015 and 2018, we will invest £1.1 billion of public money from government and an estimated £700 million from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country.

**Section 1: Introduction**

Arts Council England is seeking a service provider to work with a range of arts and cultural organisations to test the accessibility of a set of quality metrics and participatory metrics the sector has been developing to help understand and measure the quality of their work.

**Background**

Since 2013 Arts Council England has been supporting the arts and cultural sector in England to develop a set of 12 metrics to help develop a better understanding of artistic and cultural quality. The Quality Metrics have now been tested at over 400 events by around 150 arts and cultural organisations in England through three pilots. Arts Council England will support all National Portfolio Organisations to adopt these metrics in the 2018-22 investment period.

Alongside this work, Arts Council England has also been supporting the sector to develop a set of 31 metrics suitable for participatory work. This includes participatory work produced for, by and with children and young people. The participatory metric align with our CYP [Quality Principles](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/quality-metrics/quality-principles). The participatory metrics have been tested across 26 events by 13 organisations.

The full list of quality and participatory metrics and their descriptors are attached (appendix 1). More information and reports about the development of both sets of work are available on our [website](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/quality-metrics/quality-metrics).

**Purpose of this contract**

Reports from the most recent quality metrics and participatory metrics trials highlighted a number of accessibility issues with the metrics framework. Some of these are technology related and will be addressed when we appoint a service provider to take the work forward.

The purpose of this contract is to better understand the suitability of the existing quality and participatory metrics statements for the diverse audience and participant groups our National Portfolio Organisations work with. This is not an opportunity to develop new metrics.

The work will involve testing understanding of the language of the existing metrics with arts and cultural audiences and participants:

* from different age groups (particularly children and young people)
* with disabilities and other additional or complex needs
* for whom English is not their primary language
* from different socio-economic backgrounds

Each metric is made up of a dimension and statement. For example; *Captivation: It was absorbing and held my attention.* The service provider will be expected to test these metrics with the groups outlined above to determine whether they are commonly understood. Where there is a lack of common understanding, the service provider is expected to work with the groups to develop alternative statements that are more broadly understood but still capture the essence of the dimension.

An accompanying report should detail the process and provide commentary on the specific issues the different groups experienced with the language of the metrics, how these were overcome and any outstanding issues unresolved through the project. It will be important to document and provide case studies of examples where adapting the language of the metrics alone is not sufficient. For example; where a visual aid or personal support may be required to help convey the meaning of the statements.

The successful bidder will be expected to carry out three strands of work.

1. Facilitating a multi-age youth led test to determine age appropriateness of the existing metric sets and producing alternate metrics descriptors where required
2. Working with a number of diversity focused organisations to determine the appropriateness of the existing metrics sets for participants and audiences with learning difficulties and disabilities, dementia or those with complex individual needs and producing alternate metric descriptors where required
3. Testing the appropriateness of the metrics for audiences and participants from different socio-economic backgrounds, with lower levels of educational attainment and where English is not their primary language

The successful bidder will be expected to work with Arts Council England to construct a suitable cohort of arts and cultural organisations to take part in the project. Testing will need to take place with organisations working in a range of areas, artforms and settings to ensure the suitability of the metrics for the diverse audiences and participant groups our NPOs work with. We would envisage this requiring participation from a minimum of 20 organisations.

Although the Arts Council will recommend some organisations to participate and support the service provider to recruit them, bidders should also demonstrate their approach to recruiting and constructing a cohort of a suitable number and range of organisations to ensure coverage of all the audience and participant groups outlined in this specification.

We would expect participating organisations to be largely (although not necessarily exclusively) National Portfolio Organisations. Over 150 National Portfolio Organisations have already trialled the metrics. We would expect and support the service provider to involve some of those organisations in this next phase of work.

In previous pilots the metrics have been administered through a single digital platform. This is not a requirement of this contract. Although the service provider and some organisations may choose to undertake testing of the metrics at specific events, we would envisage this work requiring a number of focus groups with arts and cultural organisations and their audience members and participants.

**Duration of Contract**

The period of the contract is 25 November 2016 to 30 May 2017

**Procurement and Project Timeline**

The indicative timetable for the project is:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Date** |
| Issue ITT | 3 October 2016 |
| Deadline for clarification questions | 15th October 2016 |
| **Deadline for receipt of tender proposals**  | **12 noon on 24 October 2016** |
| Initial review of tenders  | 28 October 2016 |
| Possible clarification meetings | 7 November 2016 |
| Moderate/Finalise scores and identify preferred bidder | 10 November 2016 |
| Contract award | 11 November 2016 |
| Pre Contract Inception meeting | 18 November 2016 |
| Contract commencement  | 25 November 2016 |

**Key Deliverables Due Date**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Inception meeting | 18 November 2016 |
| Minimum of 20 organisations signed up to take part  | 30 January 2017 |
| Regular updates on progress via email or telephone | TBC at inception meeting |
| Interim meeting and progress report | 30 February 2017 |
| Develop the vocabulary of the existing set of quality and participatory metrics and descriptors for use by CYP (over fives) | 30 March 2017 |
| Develop vocabulary of the existing set of quality and participatory metrics for use by audiences and participants with learning difficulties, learning disabilities, dementia and other complex individual needs | 30 March 2017 |
| Develop vocabulary of the current set of quality and participatory metrics for use by audiences and participants from different socio-economic backgrounds, with lower levels of educational attainment and where English is not their primary language  | 30 March 2017 |
| Draft report | 30 April 2017 |
| Final written report | 30 May 2017 |

**Useful weblinks**

* Please refer to our [brand guidelines](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/who-we-are/supplying-arts-council/brand-identity-guidelines/)

**Escalation Procedures**

In the event of a major problem, a list of contacts will be required to manage any problem to a successful conclusion.

**Account Management**

In performing the services required under this contract the supplier will report to Carl Stevens. Please specify in your proposal the named individual who will be responsible for the account management of this contract on behalf of your organisation.

The programme of work will be overseen and guided by Andrew Mowlah, Director, Research

**Management reporting/review meetings**

**Pricing/Budget**

The budget available for this project is between £15,000 and £20,000 inclusive of VAT and all travel and other expenses. **Bids which exceed £20,000 inclusive of VAT and all expenses will be excluded from this procurement exercise as being unaffordable.** Value for money is a key element of the evaluation criteria.

**Payment Structure and billing requirements**

A contract will be awarded for the length of the project. Arts Council England will pay on receipt of each deliverable.

You must indicate any subcontractors you are proposing to use in delivering the services.

**Evaluation criteria**

You are required to respond to **ALL** of the criteria below. To assist our evaluation of your tender submission, please ensure you clearly cross-refer your responses to the assigned numbers. Any relevant supporting tender documentation must also be clearly identifiable by a criteria number.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Pass Fail Criteria A** | PASS/FAIL |
| The Arts Council requires the service provider to have and provide evidence of a minimum of 3 years’ experience in successfully delivering similar services including: * Working with arts and cultural organisations in a research and evaluation capacity

Please provide evidence of 3 years’ experience of undertaking similar projects successfully and supporting references demonstrating this. *(Word limit – 500 words)* |  |
| **Pass Fail Criteria B** |  |
| The Bidder’s total Fixed and Firm Costs do not exceed **£20,000** inclusive of VAT and all expenses. Bidders whose costs exceed this amount will be excluded from further consideration in the tender process. |  |

**If you pass all of the pass/fail criteria set out above, we will evaluate your tender response using the quality and price criteria which are set out below.**

1. **Quality criteria (70 marks available**

The table below gives the criteria that will be used to evaluate the quality of the tender proposals received.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Weighting** |
| 1 | Demonstrate your understanding of the brief and set out your detailed proposals for delivering against our requirements to time and to budget.  | 30% |
| 2 | Demonstrate your experience of successfully delivering similar projects with arts and cultural organisations. Provide copies of two reports to demonstrate this. | 15% |
| 3 | Detail your knowledge and understanding of * Arts and cultural practice in England including participatory work and work produced for, by and with children and young people.
* The development of the quality metrics and participatory metrics to date
* Arts Council England’s CYP Quality Principles and how they relate to this proposal.
* Diversity in arts and cultural practice and how this relates to this proposal
 | 15% |
| 5 | Detail the relevant experience of your proposed delivery team by providing copies of their CVs. | 10% |

  Each criterion will be scored using the methodology in the table below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 0 | Very Poor  | No response or partial response and poor evidence provided in support of it.  Does not give Arts Council England confidence in the ability of the Bidder to deliver the Contract and/or our requirements are not met in most respects. |
| 1 | Weak  | Response is supported by a weak standard of evidence in some areas giving rise to concern about the ability of the Bidder to deliver the Contract and/or our requirements are not met in some respects.  |
| 2 | Satisfactory | Response is satisfactory and supported by a satisfactory standard of evidence. Gives Arts Council England confidence in the ability of the bidder to deliver the contract, meets the requirements in most respects. |
| 3 | Good  | Response is comprehensive and supported by good standard of evidence. Gives Arts Council England a high level confidence in the ability of the Bidder to deliver the contract and meets Arts Council England ’s requirements. |
| 4 | Very Good | Response is comprehensive and supported by a very good standard of evidence meeting Arts Council England requirements and may exceed them in some respects. Gives Arts Council England a very good level of confidence in the ability of the Bidder to deliver the contract. |
|             5 | Exceptional  | Response is very comprehensive and supported by a high standard of evidence. Gives Arts Council England a very high level of confidence in the ability of the Bidder to deliver the contract.  May exceed Arts Council England’s requirements in several respects.  |

1. **Price criteria (30 marks)**

30 marks will be awarded to the lowest priced bid and the remaining bidders will be allocated scores based on their deviation from this figure. Your fixed and firm total costs figure including VAT and expenses will be used to score this question.

For example, if the lowest price is £100 and the second lowest price is £108 then the lowest priced bidder gets 30% (full marks) for price and the second placed bidder gets 27.6% and so on. (8/100 x 30 = 2.4 marks; 30 – 2.4 = 27.6 marks)

**The bidder with the highest score when the quality and price marks are added up will be the preferred bidder.**

**Schedule of Charges**

VAT is chargeable on the services to be provided and this will be taken into account in the overall cost of this procurement contract.

Bidders shall complete the schedule of charges Table A below estimating the number of days and travel and subsistence costs associated with their bid. The total fixed price will be inclusive of VAT and inclusive of expenses and all costs to be incurred.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Role Description and Day Rate** | **Total Days** | **Total Firm and Fixed Price shall not exceed (£)** |
| **TABLE A:** | **e.g. Project Manager/ Director [name individual]** | **e.g. Researcher****[name individual]**  | **Other****[name individual]** |
|  | ***e.g. £500*** | **e.g. £300** | **e.g. £200** |  |  |
|  |  | ***Quantity*** |  |  |
| Pre contract inception meeting with Arts Council England |  | *e.g. 0.5* | *1* | *1.5* | *3* | *850* |
| Construction of cohort  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Support to 20 organisations  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Learning Activities:Please include rows below for each deliverable i.e. case studies, events etc. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Contract Management Meetings |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Interim meeting and progress report |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Production of alternate metric descriptors |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Final Report |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Please include any other deliverables you are proposing to meet our requirements in section 3.** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Travel and subsistence |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Other (non-staff) costs – *Please specify* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| *[Add as necessary]* |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Sub-total** | £ |
| **VAT** |  |
| **Total Fixed Price including VAT and expenses shall not exceed (this figure will be used for the purposes of allocating your score for the price criterion)** Please note: bids that exceed £20,000 for all the services (including VAT and expenses) will be excluded from this tender process as unaffordable.  | £ |

Notes: Arts Council England reserves the right to reject abnormally low tenders.

You should not submit additional assumptions with your pricing submission. If you submit assumptions you will be asked to withdraw them. Failure to withdraw them will lead to your exclusion from further participation in this competition.

**Section 2: Instructions to tenderers**

Please submit your tender offer in accordance with all of the instructions, requirements and specifications set out in the enclosed documentation.

You must treat these documents and any further information provided by Arts Council England as confidential at all times and only disclose them if necessary to prepare a compliant response to the tender.

Nothing in the enclosed documentation or any other communication made between Arts Council England and any other party, can be considered a contract or agreement at this stage.

**Compliance**

Arts Council England reserves the right to disqualify or reduce the evaluation score of any tenderers who do not fully comply with the requirements in the tender documentation, in particular the closing time and date.

If you propose alternative goods or services for consideration, you must clearly mark these as non-compliant. Arts Council England reserves the right to reject any proposals with non-compliant alternatives. Tenders that are received are not automatically accepted.

The Arts Council’s standard terms and conditions for services will form part of the contract to be awarded. These can be downloaded and reviewed from our website: <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/pdf/>

**There are terms and Contract\_for\_Services\_over\_10K and those for Contracts for Services below £10k. You should review the terms applicable to this tender.**

 The Arts Council may also require further terms to be included in the contract that are specific to the successful supplier‘s application.. **The Preferred Supplier will not be permitted to enter into any negotiations on the terms of the Contract. Any attempt to negotiate amendments will breach the terms of this ITT and will result in the Preferred Supplier being excluded from the tender process. In such circumstances Arts Council England reserves the right to invite the next highest scoring Bidder to enter into the Contract.**

Please note that Arts Council England are required to publish online the final awarded contract and any associated documentation. If you have any concerns about the future publication of sensitive information you should raise these within your tender proposal, highlighting which areas within your proposal you consider may be subject to exemption, and subsequent redaction, in line with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). More information about FOIA can be found at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).

**Validity of offer**

Please note that by submitting a tender response for consideration you are confirming that, as an officer for the company/organisation that you represent, you have read and understood the tender documents and that your offer to Arts Council England is open for acceptance for 60 days from the tender closing date.

**Tendering**

Arts Council England reserves the right, in its absolute discretion, to cancel or suspend this tender process at any time and for any reason. If we need to do this we will notify you in writing as soon as reasonably practicably.

Arts Council England is not responsible, and will not pay for any expenses or losses you incur during, but not limited to, the tender preparation, site visits, or clarification meetings.

**Information and questions**

If you need us to clarify the documentation or if you have further questions regarding the tender process, write to the lead officer quoting the tender reference number. We will try to respond to reasonable requests for further information within the timescale of the tender.

Arts Council England reserves the right to advise all other tenderers of material questions and the answers supplied without disclosing the source of the enquiry. These will be issued via the Contracts Finder website ((https://online.contractsfinder.businesslink.gov.uk/) if the contract value is estimated to be above £10k including VAT. It is the bidder’s responsibility to check the website regularly for any clarifications.

## Return of Tender

You must complete and submit your tender response/proposal electronically by the tender response deadline of **12 noon on 24th October 2016 to** **procurement@artscouncil.org.uk****.**

We will not accept any responses received before the deadline. Any tender delivered after the closing date and time for any reason may be discounted. The Arts Council is not responsible if all or part of your tender is not received.

**Post-tender clarifications**

Arts Council England reserves the right to ask you to attend a post-tender clarification meeting.

Arts Council England reserves the right to conduct post-tender clarifications with one or more tenderers depending on the closeness of a bidder’s score to the highest scoring bidder.