

Invitation to Tender: National Trust

Contract Title	Urban Green Space: Policy and Fiscal Incentives Research and Economic Modelling
Nature of Contract	Best practice review and options analysis
Organisation	National Trust
Main point of contact	Victoria Bradford-Keegan
Budget	Up to £70,000 ex VAT
Deadline for Tender Returns	16 th February
Inception Meeting	W/C 26 th February (Online)
Key Dates	Draft Final Report required by 28th March

Background

Natural England, National Trust and National Lottery Heritage Fund are collaborating on a new initiative to inspire, incentivise and support UK towns and cities to take ambitious action to improve urban green space.

We believe access to high quality, nature-rich, connected green and natural infrastructure will drive significant benefits for people, place and climate. We want more urban areas to use nature recovery and nature-based solutions to tackle health inequalities and climate change, and to put nature at the heart of communities to grow their prosperity, connection and resilience. Please see Annex for our Desired Outcomes

It is likely to be a 10-year initiative, delivered in three-year phases. The primary audience for the first three-year phase is Local Authorities and their partners. It comprises five inter-related core elements:

1. An inclusive network to help local authorities design, develop and implement change by providing access to knowledge, demonstrating the art of the possible and facilitating great collaboration.
2. A grant to provide much needed capacity.
3. Wrap around support and learning resources to help partnerships and organisations make progress quickly.
4. An accreditation scheme to benchmark progress and provide assurance to funders and investors.
5. An incentives package to enable ambitious delivery on the ground.

The purpose of this commission

We are looking for a suitably experienced consultant to conduct research into potential fiscal and policy innovations that would unlock funding and incentivise urban local authorities, and their partners, to invest in the transformation of urban green space, accelerating the delivery of green infrastructure projects in cities and towns for the benefit of people, place and climate.

Cities and towns currently benefit from fiscal and policy innovation in other policy areas for example Freeports; Enterprise Zones, which also sometimes bring with them Tax Increment Finance mechanisms (TiFs); Business Improvement Districts; Investment Zones; and Levelling Up Zones. Mayoral development corporations also enjoy additional freedoms and flexibilities and the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act will see these extended more widely.

Other policy innovations such as the Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS); Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme (SEIS); and Social Investment Tax Relief (SITR); UK Aid Match; VAT relief for not-for-profits on some public service delivery (e.g. hospice care) and Business Rate Retention also offer interesting precedents. We would like to explore whether these or

similar innovations could be developed to fund transformative upgrades to UK green infrastructure.

We would like to explore whether any existing or new policy and fiscal mechanisms or innovations could be used or developed to help fund and accelerate transformative upgrades to UK green infrastructure at scale and in particular deliver for the Environment Improvement Plan and help to embed the Green Infrastructure Standards.

We wish to identify possible fiscal and policy changes at the UK, devolved nation, City-Region/Mayoral and Local Authority level and to understand how these might work as well as the advantages and disadvantages and the possible impact of any changes.

We also wish to explore disincentives and barriers for local authorities and their partners and find solutions to overcoming these barriers. For example, the inability to securely plan and budget for long term green infrastructure improvements.

The consultants should make recommendations which include analysis of 'deliverability', likelihood they will be adopted by the relevant bodies and whether any innovations will help to achieve our stated aims, amongst other things.

For any recommended options we would like to see a high-level economic model, which sets out the potential value of the changes as well as the impact on HMT or other key stakeholders and should align with Treasury green book.

Methods:

Consultants are invited to suggest methodologies and approaches. However, we anticipate a research and idea gathering, time to pause and sense-check early findings and a period to develop potential solutions and recommendations. Roundtables and interviews will be a necessary part of this work, as well as desk-based research.

Stakeholders and Consultees:

We can help provide some access to local authority stakeholders and can facilitate introductions, where necessary, to senior officers and elected members but would also anticipate the successful consultant having their own links to such consultees.

Deliverables should include:

- A concise written report detailing findings and recommendations, including an executive summary.
- High level economic modelling of the impact of any recommended options.
- Presentation of findings to National Trust, Natural England and National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Budget

The budget available for this work is up to £70,000 excluding VAT.

Timescales:

Deadline for submission:	12pm 16 February 2024
Inception meeting:	W/C 26 th February

Other Key Dates	
Draft Final Report	28 th March 2024
Draft Final Economic Model	28 th March 2024

Submission process

The tender response should include details of the following:

- Outline of your proposed approach to the research project including details of methodology and proposed outputs – including how you will manage this as a UK-wide, geographically dispersed project.
- Description of your relevant experience and CV, including examples of at least two pieces of similar work you have carried out.
- Proposed budget breakdown
- Details of any matters or concerns not covered by this brief.

Proposals should not exceed 10 pages in length.

We recognise one individual or organisation may not feel able to deliver all strands of this evaluation and are therefore happy to accept applications from a group of individuals or partner organisations. We will want one of these individuals or organisations to be identified as the lead contact.

Please submit proposals by email before the deadline of 12:00 noon on 16th February 2024 to the following contact: Anne.MacKinnon@nationaltrust.org.uk

Insurance:

National Trust requires contractors to hold a minimum of £2million in public liability insurance and £1million in Professional Indemnity insurance. The latter should be maintained in force for the period of the contract plus an additional five years. We will seek evidence of this at an inception meeting or upon signing contracts.

Selection criteria:

All submissions will be judged on both the quality of the submission and the overall cost. Quality will consider the skills and experience of individuals and team who will be undertaking the work and the proposed approach to undertaking the work.

We may wish to interview prospective contractors, depending on their submission. If this happens, we will arrange for a mutually convenient time, and it will take place online.

If you have any questions on this brief, please contact:

Anne.MacKinnon@nationaltrust.org.uk and she will direct your enquiry to the most suitable person.

All other details for submission are as follows:

Submit responses to:	Anne.MacKinnon@nationaltrust.org.uk
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Long Term Outcomes

Wellbeing for all

- Everyone has access to quality green & blue space within 15 minutes' walk or wheel from home (ambition 5 minutes)
- Everyone spends 15 minutes outdoors in nature everyday (ambition 30)

Community focused

- Everyone feels welcome, safe and able to use green space
- Everyone, especially children and young people, feels able to act for nature and climate
- Communities are involved in making decisions about natural infrastructure where they live

Pride in place

- People have pride in their local green and blue spaces, at a neighbourhood and city level.
- People feel greater connection to the nature and heritage of green spaces

Thriving places

- Urban natural infrastructure is central to local governance, planning and investment.
- Nature, culture and heritage of green spaces create a thriving urban landscape

Nature's recovery

- At least 30% of green and blue space network contributes to nature's recovery.
- Increased proportion protected for people and nature

Climate Resilience

- Urban residential neighbourhoods have at least 40% blue or green cover
- An uplift in tree canopy cover, informed by tree equity

Connected places

- Communities are served by a network of connected green spaces and green routes.
- Over half of short journeys are by foot and bike on green routes