

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

SECTOR LEADERSHIP CONSULTATION

INVITATION TO TENDER – OPEN COMPETITION

DEADLINE FOR TENDER SUBMISSIONS – 5PM (UK TIME), 5 AUGUST 2021

1 ABOUT US

- 1.1 The National Archives (TNA) is the official archive and publisher for the UK government, and for England and Wales. We are the guardians of some of our most iconic national documents, dating back over 1,000 years. We are an accredited archive service.
- 1.2 Our 21st-century role is to collect and secure the future of the government record, both digital and physical, to preserve it for generations to come, and to make it as accessible and available as possible.
- 1.3 Our long-term strategy, [Archives For Everyone](#), commits us to lead the archives sector to fulfil the vision set out in the strategic vision for archives, [Archives Unlocked](#), promoting our shared values of trust, enrichment and openness. It also sets out our aim to lead in reimagining archival practice for the 21st century, pioneering new and ethical approaches to appraisal and selection, description, digital preservation and access.
- 1.4 TNA took on the leadership role of the archives sector in England in 2011, following the closure of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council. We have been acting in this capacity for ten years, during which time the needs and requirements of the cultural heritage sector have changed

considerably for both service providers, users and funders. It is therefore timely to carry out a review of our approach to this role, not least in view of our collective experience of the past 15 months, which encompasses both the COVID-19 pandemic and the renewed debate within the sector on equality, diversity and inclusion.

- 1.5 This tender is intended to support us by undertaking an independent investigation as part of the wider leadership review process, and providing the space to undertake a full and frank review of the sector leadership role through the eyes of archives services and professionals, collecting bodies, sector partners, strategic partners and funders.

2. PURPOSE

2.1 This invitation to tender specifies our requirements for provision of the following services:

- Develop an approach for a facilitated conversation, and suggest different research methods, with the archives sector and its stakeholders on the role of sector leadership
- Run a series of facilitated sessions for the purposes of gathering views and intelligence. Given the timeframe and other considerations, the sessions should be run on a virtual platform
- Provide a follow up report summarising views and detailing recommendations resulting from the discovery process.

2.2 We seek to explore, but are not limited to, discussion on what the sector and its stakeholders require from a sector lead in the following 6 areas:

- Advocacy
- Funding
- Regulatory role
- Standards and guidance
- Workforce development, training, and skills
- Archival research and thought leadership

2.3 The conversation should take place across all areas of the sector including, but not limited to:

- Representatives from all areas of the sector within which we currently work: business, independent, local authority, charity, HE, museum run archives
- Representatives from community groups and collecting bodies
- Consideration of archives organisations, with which we may not currently work or hold a relationship
- Strategic partners including the professional body, the Archives and Records Association; sector bodies including the British Records Association; Arts Council England; Museums, Libraries and Archives Wales, CILIP, Chief Leisure Officers Association, Jisc, RLUK, Business Archives Council, Digital Preservation Coalition, Local Government Association.

- Funding partners and organisations including the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Pilgrim Trust, the Wolfson Foundations and the Friends of the National Libraries
- Sector leadership ultimately supports archives services to deliver the best possible service to their end users. Please also consider how this research might engage end users (including non-users) of archive services to ensure their views are represented.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 As sector lead, we are responsible for developing government policy on archives and for delivering support to the sector in line with this policy. Sector support is predominantly delivered by our Archives Sector Development department (ASD), who also discharge a range of duties set out in the Royal Warrant, which appoints the Keeper as the sole Historical Manuscripts Commissioner. These include work on export licensing, cultural property and archive accreditation.
- 3.2 Our leadership priorities are informed by the Government's vision for the archives sector in England, [Archives Unlocked](#), which was launched in 2017. The three themes of this vision are trust, enrichment and openness. The priority areas identified are building digital capacity, creating a more resilient sector and making impact, which we seek to address through our offer of workforce development, training, guidance and our funding programme, [Archives Revealed](#).
- 3.3 Through our recent programme of surveys and continued development work with archival organisations and networks we have identified a series of current and future risks to the sector, which include sustainability, collection management and preservation; skills shortages in digital archiving; a lack of diversity in the workforce; and collecting practices.

4. REQUIREMENTS, OBJECTIVES AND DELIVERABLES

4.1 Project deliverables are:

- A designed programme for a series of facilitated events with stakeholders. NOTE: The conversations will be held with representative types of archive organisations across the sector, strategic partners and funders. The National Archives' team can provide relevant contact details, however please note the importance of reaching additional archives sector bodies and stakeholders on which we do not currently hold any intelligence; you should provide evidence on how you propose to do this in your methodology.
- An interim report, to be delivered by end October 2021.
- A full report, to be delivered by mid-November 2021.

4.2 In order to save time and reduce costs, we anticipate the facilitated events to be held virtually online. We also expect at least one to be an open call.

4.3 In order to assist with your methodology and for information only, we anticipate the work plan may be as follows:

- Phase 1:
 - Project initiation
 - Sign off design framework for facilitated conversation
 - Plan for the events and how they will operate
- Phase 2:
 - Run events and gather information
 - Interim report on findings and recommendations (see timings below)
 - Discussion of interim report with TNA stakeholders
 - Final report (see timings below)
 - Sign-off

Timings: The interim report must be delivered to TNA by the end of October 2021, with the final report delivered by mid-November 2021.

4.4 The maximum available budget for this contract is £25,000 excluding VAT but including all other taxes or expenses. Our expectation is for events to be held virtually online, in order to save time and reduce costs.

5. HOW TO RESPOND

- 5.1 If you have any clarification questions related to your Tender Response, please submit these to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk by **12 noon (UK time), 20 July 2021**.
- 5.2 Please submit your Tender Response to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk by **5pm (UK time), 5 August 2021**.
- 5.3 It is for you to determine what format your Tender Response should take so as to describe your offer in a clear, comprehensive fashion. However please ensure your Tender Response includes as a minimum:
- Your **understanding** of the project and deliverables;
 - Details of your prior **experience** suited to this project, including understanding of sector-related guidance and standards;
 - Your proposed **methodology and timetable** for delivery of the project outcomes;
 - Names and experience of the **individuals** you will assign to the project, and their involvement with each phase of unit of the work;
 - Your **contract price**, including breakdown of costs for each phase or unit of work, day rate for each team member and other costs or expenses.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

6.1 Your Tender Response will be evaluated using the following criteria:

| Category | Maximum pre-weighted score | Weighting | Maximum weighted score |
|--|----------------------------|-----------|------------------------|
| 1. Extent to which proposal demonstrates an understanding of the brief | 10 | 2 | 20 |
| 2. Knowledge and experience relevant to the project, including understanding of the specific needs of the archive sector | 10 | 2.5 | 25 |
| 3. Quality of methodology and experience in relation to desk-based research and stakeholder engagement | 10 | 2.5 | 25 |
| 4. Names and experience of individuals assigned to the project | 10 | 1 | 10 |
| 5. Contract price | 10 | 2 | 20 |

6.2 Price scores will be based on a comparison between each Supplier's price offer, based on the percentage difference from the lowest bid price. The lowest offered price will receive the maximum pre-weighted score of 10 points, a price which is 20% higher will receive a score of 8 (i.e. the maximum score minus 20%).

6.3 Other categories will be evaluated according to the table below:

| | |
|------------------|--|
| 10 Points | Outstanding: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Potential Supplier has provided a response that addresses all parts of the requirement• Potential Supplier has provided evidence to support all elements of their response• The evidence supplied is convincing and highly relevant to the requirement• Potential Supplier's response is clear and easy to understand |
|------------------|--|

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where relevant, Potential Supplier has demonstrated a high level of capability to deliver new and innovative service approaches |
| 7 Points | Good: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential Supplier has provided a response that addresses all parts of the requirement Potential Supplier has provided evidence to support most elements of their response The evidence supplied is good and relevant to the requirement Potential Supplier's response is clear and easy to understand Where relevant, Potential Supplier has demonstrated some level of capability to deliver new and innovative service approaches |
| 4 Points | Average: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential Supplier has provided a response that addresses some parts of the requirement Potential Supplier has provided evidence to support some elements of their response, but not all The evidence supplied has some limited relevance to the requirement Potential Supplier's response is not always clear and easy to understand Where relevant, Potential Supplier has demonstrated limited capability to deliver new and innovative service approaches |
| 1 Point | Poor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential Supplier has provided a response that fails to address most parts of the requirement Potential Supplier has provided little or no evidence to support most elements of their response The evidence supplied is very weak and has very limited relevance to the requirement Potential Supplier's response is not always clear and easy to understand Where relevant, Potential Supplier has demonstrated little or no capability to deliver new and innovative service approaches |

7. PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

7.1 The procurement timetable is as follows:

| Ref. | Description | Date |
|------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Invitation to Tender published | 7 July 2021 |
| 2 | Deadline for Potential Suppliers to submit clarification questions to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk * | 12 noon (UK time) 20 July 2021 |
| 3 | Deadline for Potential Suppliers to submit Tender Responses to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk | 5pm (UK time) 5 August 2021 |
| 4 | Contract award | 10 August 2021 (anticipated) |

* Any clarification question received that TNA deems to be relevant to more than one Potential Supplier may be shared with all Potential Suppliers.

8. CONTRACT TERMS

- 8.1 The contract will be awarded subject to our standard terms and conditions, which can be found [here](#).
- 8.2 TNA reserves the right not to award and to complete its objectives through other means.