



THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

EXTERNAL BOARD EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW (BER)

INVITATION TO TENDER

DEADLINE FOR TENDER SUBMISSIONS – 5PM (UK TIME), 2 NOVEMBER 2022

1 ABOUT US

- 1.1 The National Archives is a non-ministerial government department. The Chief Executive of The National Archives is the statutory Keeper of Public Records who reports to the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. We incorporate the Office of Public Sector Information and Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office. We also perform the Historical Manuscripts Commission's functions in relation to private records.
- 1.2 As the government's national archive for England, Wales and the United Kingdom, we hold over 1,000 years of the nation's records for everyone to discover and use and are guardians of some of our most iconic national documents.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 We are an accredited archive service and, in 2011, responsibility for archives across England was transferred to The National Archives from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). Our expertise in the

effective management, use and re-use of information makes us a valuable resource for government and public sector bodies.

- 1.5 Our strategy [Archives for Everyone](#), sets out how we intend to become the 21st century national archive: the inclusive, entrepreneurial and disruptive archive. In 2021, we restated our belief that archives are for everyone by foregrounding our commitment to [Becoming the Inclusive Archive](#), available to all and enriched by those who work with and for archives of all kinds. As the living, growing and trusted home of our nation's stories, our obligation is to be an archive for everyone, past, present and future.

2 PURPOSE

- 2.1 We are looking to appoint a supplier to undertake an external board effectiveness review (BER) of The National Archives' Board, in line with the expectations and guidance in the ['Board effectiveness reviews: principles and resources for arm's-length bodies and sponsoring departments'](#) issued by the Cabinet Office in April 2022.
- 2.2 The last external review was undertaken before 2016. In the intervening years, internal reviews have been undertaken annually.

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 The National Archives' Board is the key strategic advisory body of the organisation and is responsible for ensuring that the leadership of the organisation:

- Sets the strategic direction and makes strategic choices
- Maintains the highest standards of corporate governance and has adequate systems and controls in place
- Provides leadership in the delivery of statutory, corporate, and business responsibilities
- Makes key investment, procurement and project decisions that withstand scrutiny
- Identifies and manages risks effectively
- Reviews financial information and encourages improvements in performance across the organisation
- Takes corporate responsibility for its decisions and their implementation.

3.2 The Board is made up of fourteen members and is composed of the Chief Executive and Keeper, eight Executive Directors, the Chair of the Board and four further Non-executive Board members. Meetings are chaired by the Chair of The National Archives' Board.

3.3 A new Chair of The National Archives' Board was appointed in April 2022.

3.4 The Board typically meets ten times a year, which includes one or two strategy days. Over the last two years, the Board has been meeting virtually with a return to in person/hybrid meetings starting to take place from November 2021 onwards and as COVID-19 restrictions allowed. The Board plans to continue to hold hybrid meetings going forwards, with encouragement to attend in person wherever possible. Board meetings are not open to the public; however, [minutes](#) are published on our website.

3.5 Board meetings are typically attended by the Head of Strategy and Chief Executive's Office and the Head of Governance, who is also the Board

Secretary. Other senior managers and colleagues attend meetings as and when required to present papers.

- 3.6 All Board members also meet formally and informally with other senior managers and may be members of specific project and programme boards, as required. We have an active group of Non-executive Board members, who also engage closely with the business to give strong assurance and governance.
- 3.7 The Board has established two subcommittees: the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) and the Nominations and Governance Committee (N&GC). The ARC also includes one independent member, who is not a member of the wider Board.
- 3.8 The National Archives is committed to upholding the very highest standards of governance, with this external review providing an important pillar of continuous improvement and in line with governance best practice.
- 3.9 Further details on the Board and The National Archives' governance, including terms of reference for committees and governance policies are available on the [website](#).
- 3.10 The National Archives is based in Kew, in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames in south-west London. The building is open to the public with regular staff presence.

4. REQUIREMENTS

4.1 Overarching principles:

1. The BER must review whether the Board has the structure, processes, people, and performance to support the delivery of the organisational strategy.
2. It must consider how the Board interacts with the Executive and other stakeholders, and whether respective roles are clear, and should focus on both outcomes and behaviours.
3. It must involve feedback and perspectives from outside the Board and consider best practice elsewhere.
4. It should focus on both outcomes and behaviours.

4.2 Specific areas of focus:

Strategic direction and delivery

1. How the Board and its committees support the Accounting Officer in meeting the requirements set out within [Managing Public Money](#).
2. Whether the Board provides sufficient scrutiny and challenge, as well as support, to the Executive Directors in the delivery of the organisational strategy.
3. The extent to which there is a shared understanding of respective roles and responsibilities; clear agreement on the overarching culture and tone set by the Board; and clarity of, and leadership given to, the purpose, direction, and values of The National Archives.
4. How the Board has appropriately considered whether The National Archives' policies and actions support Ministers' strategic aims.

Relationships

5. The quality of relationships between all Board members and the Board's relationships with The National Archives' stakeholders. In particular, relationships between the executive and non-executive members, the Board, and its sponsoring department (DCMS).
6. How the Board communicates with, listens to, and responds to, The National Archives' organisational and other stakeholders –

specifically The National Archives Trust, The Advisory Council on National Records and Archives and The Friends of The National Archives.

7. How the Board's practices, relationships and cultural norms compare with other arms-length bodies and good governance.
8. Clarity in the roles and responsibilities of The National Archive's Board and The Advisory Council on National Records and Archives and the quality of the relationship between these bodies.

Decision-Making

9. Review of the processes for identifying, reviewing, and managing risks (bearing in mind the Board's role and the authority delegated to the Audit & Risk Committee).
10. Evidence that the Board is strategically focused and is using high quality performance data to assess whether outcomes and KPIs are being achieved, and how the Board is challenging whether the data it is provided with is optimally fit for purpose and represents best practice.
11. Quality and timing of papers and presentations to the Board, and the general quality of information provided on The National Archives and its activities and performance, including KPIs used to monitor delivery.
12. Quality of discussion of individual proposals and the time allowed. The process the chair uses to ensure sufficient debate for major decisions or contentious issues, including how constructive challenge is encouraged.
13. Review of the processes and systems supporting the management of business and meeting records, procedural arrangements, and the management of conflicts of interest.

Composition

14. The composition of the Board and its Committees, including the balance of skills, experience, knowledge, level of inclusion felt by Board members in terms of decision making and/or Board operations, and diversity (including diversity in its broadest sense, i.e diversity of place, social mobility, organisational/sector experiences, as well as the nine protected characteristics).

15. Review of succession and development plans.

Committee Effectiveness

16. Effectiveness of the committees reporting to the Board, including their Terms of Reference and information flows.

Board Operations

17. How the Board should be approaching hybrid working now and in the future.
18. The overall efficiency of the Board.

4.3 The approach to the BER must include:

- Desk-based review of evidence (board papers, governance policies, minutes, etc.)
- 1 x 30 - 45 min interview with each Board member and key stakeholders (can be undertaken virtually)
- Observation of at least one Board meeting and an Audit and Risk Committee
- An interview with the Chair (can be undertaken virtually)
- Desk-based review of previous self-assessments by Board members, and associated action plans
- Regular updates regarding the progress of the review throughout the process and discussion of main findings.

4.4 Alternative approaches or additional work may be proposed but should be clearly explained.

4.5 The required outputs consist of the following:

- A high-quality written report highlighting areas of good practice and areas for development, with clear recommendations for follow up by the Board, which will then inform a Board Effectiveness action plan.
- A presentation to the Board on the report (can be undertaken virtually).
- The National Archives is subject to the Freedom of Information Act and is committed to operating in a transparent way. Consideration should be given to the publication of a summary of the report.

- Please note that the final report may be made available to relevant officials at DCMS.
- The processes and findings of the BER may be included in The National Archives' Annual Report and Accounts.

5. BUDGET

- 5.1 Bids are expected to fall between £20,000 and £30,000. Bids should clearly indicate if they include VAT or not.

6. PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

6.1 The procurement timetable is as follows:

Ref.	Description	Date
1	Invitation to Tender published	23 September 2022
2	Deadline for Potential Suppliers to submit clarification questions to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk *	5pm (UK time), 14 October 2022
3	Deadline for Potential Suppliers to submit Tender Responses to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk	5pm (UK time), 2 November 2022
4	Identification of shortlisted suppliers	Week beginning 14 November 2022
5	Shortlisted Potential Supplier Presentations/interviews	Week beginning 21 November 2022
6	Contract award	December 2022
7	Chosen Supplier Commences	January 2023

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

7. POST PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

7.1 The post procurement timetable is as follows:

Ref.	Description	Date
1	Kick off meeting with Chair of The National Archives' Board, CEO & Keeper and Head of Governance	January 2023
2	Desk Based Research	January/February 2023
3	Interviews	February 2023
4	Observation of Audit and Risk Committee meeting	2 February 2023
5	Observation of Board meeting	20 March 2023
6	Report writing	April 2023
7	First review of the report by Chair/CEO	May 2023
8	Report adjusted by supplier	May 2023
9	Final presentation	25 May 2023

7.2 Weekly virtual update meetings are expected to take place with relevant stakeholders.

8. TENDER EVALUATION

8.1 Tender Responses will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Criteria	Maximum available unweighted score	Weighting	Maximum available weighted score
Quality criteria (see Section 9.3)	10	X6	60
Price (see below)	10	x4	40

8.2 A qualitative assessment will be made by reviewing the Tender Responses and applying the scoring guide 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• Where relevant, Potential Supplier has demonstrated a high level of capability to deliver the requirements
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 the requirements
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 the requirements
1 Point	<p>Poor:</p> <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 the requirements

8.3 Price scores will be evaluated as follows:

The bidder submitting the lowest compliant price will be awarded the maximum of 10 (unweighted) points. All other bidders will be awarded a (unweighted) points score by applying the following formula:

*((lowest submitted price/bidder's submitted price)*10)*

To illustrate this via a worked example:

Bidder 1 submits a price of £10,000

Bidder 2 submits a price of £17,000

Bidder 3 submits a price of £31,000

Bidder 1 is awarded 10 (unweighted) points – $((10,000/10,000)*10) = 10$

Bidder 2 is awarded 5.88 (unweighted) points – $((10,000/17,000)*10) = 5.88$

Bidder 3 is awarded 3.23 (unweighted) points – $((10,000/31,000)*10) = 3.2$

- 8.4 Once tender responses have been evaluated, we envisage that a maximum of 4 potential suppliers will be shortlisted to present their proposals to us in the week commencing 21 November 2022. Tender responses from those shortlisted suppliers will then be re-evaluated, taking the presentation into account for quality score purposes.

9. TO RESPOND

- 9.1 If you have any clarification questions related to your Tender Response, please submit these to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk by **5pm (UK time) on 14 October 2022**.
- 9.2 Please submit your Tender Response to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk by **5pm (UK time) on 2 November 2022**. Responses submitted to other addresses or beyond this time will not be accepted.
- 9.3 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 the following as a minimum:
- A description of how you would work with us, the key people that will work with The National Archives and their background, experiences and skills.
 - A description of how you will meet the service specification requirements listed in section 4 above.
 - A breakdown of costs should be provided, including where appropriate the different costs of different staff members.
- 9.4 Failure to provide any of the above details may lead to bids being disregarded with no further evaluation.

10. CONTRACT TERMS

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