Arts Council England Invitation to Tender

**Title of research project:** Theatre in England Research Project

**Deadline for receipt of tender proposals**: 10:00am: 19 October 2015

**Background to Arts Council England**

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. We believe that art and culture make life better, helps to build diverse communities and improves our quality of life.  Great art and culture can inspire our education system, boost our economy and give our nation international standing.

We invest public money in Great art and culture for everyone, everywhere. We fund major organisations that serve the whole nation as well as, many smaller companies, individual artists and arts-related projects.  Our work is underpinned by our mission [**Great art and culture for everyone**](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/mission/) and our 5 goals.

Between 2015 and 2018, we will invest £1.1 billion of public money from government and an estimated £700 million from the National Lottery in arts and culture to help create experiences for as many people as possible across the country.  Find out more about our [**investment across 2015-18**](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/our-investment-2015-18/).

Section 1: Specification

**Introduction and background: Arts Council England’s investment and support of Theatre**

Arts Council England’s investment in what it classifies as theatre accounts for about 30% of the National Portfolio spend – budgeted to be about £300m for the 2015-18 period. Grants for the Arts awards would be in addition to this figure. Also these figures do not include theatre produced or presented at festivals or arts centres which are predominantly classified as Combined Arts.

Increasing funding challenges, together with the changing nature of the artform and its audiences, mean that we are undertaking an analysis of current data which will allow us to better understand the impact of the organisations we fund and the theatre landscape in its entirety. This will include funded, non-funded, for and non-profit organisations to ensure that we have a current understanding of the role and impact of public investment.

Whilst theatre-going in London is buoyant (the [London Theatre Report](https://www.thestage.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/london-theatre-report.pdf) found that in 2012/13 there were 22 million theatre attendances at London theatres and that it is host to 241 professional theatre spaces - and growing) the appetite for attendance and growth appears not to be the same reflected beyond central London. At the Arts Council we have witnessed a number of theatres admitted to our Financial Intervention Process (which provides financial and specialist support for organisations experiencing financial difficulty). In addition we know that arts organisations outside the capital are being impacted by the financial squeeze on local authorities and they are not able to benefit from corporate and philanthropic monies to the extent that some organisations in the capital can.

In this changing context we want to ensure that we are investing fruitfully in a 21st century theatre industry and that it is delivering for both artists and audiences. We are proposing to commission research that will bring together information about where theatre is being produced across the whole sector, how it is being distributed and attendance levels.

We know that artists are making work and audiences are engaging with it in different ways. Examples include the rise of immersive & site-specific theatre, major festivals having significant theatre (and dance) strands in their programmes, the influence of technology on making of and interaction with theatre and the rise of event cinema such as NT Live and Digital Theatre.

The theatre ecology is complex, with interdependencies between publicly funded and commercial sectors, as well as a strong connection between other artforms and the wider creative industries including television, film and radio. The research should also include the impact that ACE investment has on artist development, audience engagement and audience growth.

**Deliverables and objectives**

We want to commission a consultant/researcher to provide an overview of theatre production, presentation and audiences demand in England to include subsidised, unfunded not-for-profit, and commercial sectors.

The project will provide us with:

* A current profile and analysis of theatre production in England

A map of theatre attendance in England pulling together audience data across the country against geography and population.

* An overview of where theatre is being produced, the nature of what is being produced and the audiences and factors which affect demand for it.
* Trends in audience taste and consumption.
* A comparative cost profile of producing theatre(s).
* A profile of how theatre is being toured/distributed
* A brief overview of how talent is developed in producing theatres
* A range of views from the theatre sector about how we might better target our investment to support theatre production and presentation.

We expect that the review will rely mainly on secondary data. The exceptions to this would be if the consultant decided to commission or co-commission the collection of other primary data as the budget allows

The project will not focus on the following (although evidence relating to this may be uncovered):

* Understanding or improving the ‘resilience’ of the sector or of particular organisations. This includes understanding the role that theatres might play within their communities, a detailed analysis of opportunities to diversify income or audiences, a review of suitability of business or governance models etc.

**Proposed methodology**

We will commission a consultant/researcher to manage the analysis and undertake or commission the strands of research which are required to achieve the aims set out above. We propose the following strands of research but will also ask those that tender to suggest alternative or additional research which they feel will better meet the project objectives:

A) Analysis of producing theatres in England (including those within ACE’s NPO portfolio) over the last 3-5 years. Where possible, the analysis should include:

* Delivery, including nature and quality of artistic output, touring patterns, audience profile
* Organisational profile, including details about income and expenditure
* Role in nurturing talent and in developing artists, particularly those at the beginning of their career.
* Role in developing audiences
* The diversity of its artistic programme and the range of artists it works with

B) A synthesis of current theatre attendance, presentation and production presented in a way that will allow ACE to better target its investment. This should include;

* Hot and cold spots in terms of production and investment.
* information about audience attendance
* Information which might influence theatre attendance in a particular geographic place.
1. A review of literature, reports, articles about theatre production and attendance in England/UK over the last 10 years. Key lines of enquiry would be
* How theatre production and presentation has changed?
* What are the key factors affecting that change?
* What is the impact of this on audiences for theatre, including their expectations and any change in taste

D) A series of group discussions/interviews with key players within theatre. Groups may be presented with the outputs of activities A, B & C and asked to consider:

* What does this tell us about how public investment might best support those who make theatre in England?
* What does the evidence NOT tell us, but which is considered crucial to support innovation in theatre making? For example, how the current theatre infrastructure and ecology supports development of skills and talent in the theatre sector

We will make the data and information that we collect (about ACE’s investment and the organisations that we fund) available, but will expect the consultant to draw on other sources of data and evidence where possible and available.

*In addition, we would like the consultant to work with industry bodies where appropriate to consider how we might incorporate other data related to English theatre audiences and repertoire, and if necessary commission new collection and analysis*.

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| Suppliers are asked to note the proposed methodology and are welcome to suggest additional or alternative approaches we might take to achieve our aims and objectives listed above. |

**Expected outputs**

After the research has been completed, the consultant will produce a report which we will publish externally. The report will outline:

* Key findings of the research including any gaps in evidence or understanding
* Implications of the research for English theatre, in particular implications for future support of theatre making , attendance and audience development
* Options for Arts Council England and other public funders regarding the focus of future investment or support for theatre production/making

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| Suppliers are asked to note the proposed research outputs expected, and are welcome to suggest additional or alternative outputs they feel could be useful for Arts Council England |

**Scope of service**

It is anticipated that the service provider will attend meetings with the Arts Council England project team at the Arts Council’s London offices. At a minimum, the consultant will need to be available for the meetings outlined in the proposed timetable below. The consultant may be required to travel to other locations as part of the consultation process, if this is proposed as part of the research methodology.

**Proposed Project Timetable:**

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| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Timescales** |
| Inception meeting  | Late October/Early November\*  |
| Progress report and presentation to steering group | January 2016 |
| External focus groups | Feb - March2016 |
| Draft Research report and presentation | April 2016 |
| Final research outputs signed-off | June 2016 |

\*Further detailed meeting and reporting schedule to be agreed at inception meeting.

The supplier should provide weekly project updates via email throughout the length of the project. Additional meetings can be scheduled as and if required in discussion with the project manager at the Arts Council.

**Account and Project Management**

In performing the services required under this contract the supplier will report to The Director of Theatre at Arts Council England with day to day contact with a project manager at the Arts Council (to be confirmed at contract stage). Please specify in your proposal the named individual(s) who will be responsible for the account management of this contract on behalf of your organisation.

There will be a steering group made up of the following

Neil Darlison, Director, Theatre

Mark Ball Joint Executive Director, Arts and Culture

Michelle Dickson Director of Touring

Phil Gibby Area Director, South West

Project Manager (tbc)

Amy Turton, Senior Officer, Policy

Cassie Chadderton, Director Media and Stakeholder Relations

Richard Russell Director of Policy and Research

Full details of key project personnel at Arts Council England will be explained during the project set-up meeting.

**Service Levels**

The supplier(s) are expected to meet key milestones and produce all outputs agreed at contract set-up.

**Payment Structure and billing requirements**

Payment for each element will be agreed in advance and linked to delivery of key milestones as per an agreed project plan.

**Tender Response Requirements**

* Experience of facilitating consultation with theatre professionals
* An understanding of Arts Council’s strategy and funding streams which are available to theatres
* An understanding of how and why local authorities in England fund theatres/theatre activity
* A current knowledge contemporary theatre production and presentation in England.
* An explanation of the stages that will be followed when conducting the research and detail of the research methodology.
* A description of the experience, expertise and credentials of the researcher (s) or associates working on the research
* A project timetable, and details of the key milestones when undertaking the project
* A full breakdown of project costs, including total projects costs, costs for separate elements of the project, daily rates, travel fees and other project costs.

**Evaluation Criteria**

Each tender will be awarded scores for quality and price. This will be weighted 70% **quality** and 30% **price.**

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| **Quality Criteria (70 Marks)** | **Weighting** |
| Understanding of the research proposed and the aims and objectives | 25% |
| Demonstrable research skills required to deliver the outputs through the suggested methodology. | 25% |
| Demonstrable knowledge of the English theatre sector  | 20% |
| Understanding evidence relating to the theatre ecology | 20% |
| Accuracy, conciseness and structure of written research proposal | 10% |
| **TOTAL** | 100% |

Quality evaluation methodology

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 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.  |

**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.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Role Description and Day Rate** | **Total Days** | **Total Firm and Fixed Price shall not exceed (£)** |
| **TABLE A:** | **e.g. Senior Researcher/ Director [name individual]** | **e.g. Researcher****[name individual]**  | **Other****[name individual]** |
|  | ***e.g. £500*** | **e.g. £300** | **e.g. £200** |  |  |
|  |  | ***Quantity*** |  |  |
| Pre contract set up meeting |  | *e.g. 0.5* | *1* | *1.5* | *3* | *850* |
| Field work |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| etc |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Contract Management Meetings |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Draft Report |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 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 **£70,000** 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 appendixes, or any other communication made between Arts Council England and any other party, can be considered a contract or agreement at this stage.

All correspondence in relation to this tender, including tender submissions, should be addressed to:

**Name**: Amy Turton Senior Manager, Policy

**Tel:** 020 7268 9558

**Email**: Amy.Turton@artscouncil.org.uk

**Tender Timetable**

Please see below a timetable of when specific events will take place and specific deadlines which must be met in order to participate in this tender.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Event** | **Date/Time** |
| Research brief issued | Week of 28 September 2015 |
| Deadline for receipt of tenders | **10:00am: 19 October 2015** |
| Evaluation and scoring of tenders | Week of 19 October 2015 |
| Appointment of successful supplier | Week of 19 October 2015 |
| Feedback to suppliers | Week of 26 October 2015 |

**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.

Arts Council England reserves the right to evaluate proposals on a variety of criteria. The tender with the lowest price will not automatically be accepted.

**Prices**

The budget for this work is in the region of £60-70k including VAT and expenses, and we welcome bids within this amount. Please note that, while not the only criteria, value for money is a key element of our evaluation criteria.

You should provide an informed estimate of the cost of the proposed procurement. Submit all prices in pounds sterling and indicate VAT separately, if applicable. Prices should be fixed and firm for the duration of the contract.

Please note: Arts Council England reserves the right to purchase all or any parts of the tendered goods or services at the prices and specifications submitted in your response.

**Contract and duration**

The contract will commence in October 2015 and is expected to terminate in June 2016.

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**

You must offer your tender for acceptance for 60 days from the deadline for tender submission.

**Tendering**

If we need to amend any tender documents before the closing date, we will write to you with any changes. If we extend the deadline for tender responses, we will advise you.

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, post-tender negotiations or interviews.

**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.

For large tenders, we may appoint a tender team (e.g. technical evaluators) that tenderers may have controlled access to. If so, we will provide names, contact details and control criteria.

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 provided to all suppliers via the contracts finder website.

**Site visits**

Send electronic copies of your tender including all documentation by no later than 10am  **19 October 2015 to**

**Amy Turton (****Amy.Turton@artscouncil.org.uk****)**

**Amy Turton**

**Arts Council England**

**21 Bloomsbury Street**

**London**

**WC18 3HF**

Any tender delivered after that time for any reason may be discounted.

In your tender response, clearly indicate the names and addresses of any sub-contractors you intend to use to provide the services, and the scope of work you will employ them for.

The Arts Council is not responsible if all or part of your tender is not received. You should use a traceable dispatch system. In the event of a dispute, you are responsible to prove the tender was delivered.

**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.