

Evaluation Consultant Brief

INVITATION TO TENDER

Light and Inspiration: Transforming the Royal West of England Academy

Introduction

Founded in 1844 as the Bristol Academy of Fine Arts, the RWA (Royal West of England Academy, independent charity no. 1070163) is one of the oldest purpose-built galleries in the country. Its Grade II* listed top-lit galleries have been described by Sir Nicholas Serota (Chair, Arts Council) as “one of the most beautiful galleries in the country” and now play host to an increasingly acclaimed and innovative exhibitions programme. It is England’s only regional Royal Academy of Art - one of only five in the UK, including those in London, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

The Academy’s objects are “to advance the education of the public in the fine arts and, in particular, to promote the appreciation and practice of the fine arts and to encourage and develop talent in the fine arts”.

The RWA has been successful in securing National Lottery Heritage Funding towards a major repair and access project, *Light and Inspiration*, which addresses the key risks facing the RWA whilst addressing barriers to engagement, and increasing our organisational resilience and business sustainability. Following the award of a Round 2 grant in September 2020, we are mobilising the design team and contractors. We intend to start the capital works in June 2021 for completion by December 2021. The Activity Plan will run from November 2020 until September 2022 with a final evaluation report due by December 2022.

1.0 Project aims

Our aim is to connect more people with our collections and the unique organisational history and ethos of the RWA and the beautiful Grade II* listed building. We will enable diverse audiences to collaborate with us to develop, experience, and benefit from our world-class exhibitions, education programmes and creative activity.

Our proposed capital investment, and work with a variety of strategic partners, and far-reaching audience engagement programmes, will reposition the RWA as a welcoming, vibrant centre of community creativity and cultural heritage in Bristol.

The project **aims** are to:

- Address urgent capital issues that threaten our sustainability and the heritage asset
- Make the RWA more accessible and welcoming, addressing barriers to entry and access issues
- Diversify audiences and increase visitor numbers
- Strengthen and widen partnerships and opportunities for collaborative working
- Deepen and expand our community engagement, in particular supporting young people and those with mental health and wellbeing challenges
- Increase opportunities for volunteering, participation and skills development
- Raise the profile of the RWA locally and regionally (and develop the USP of the RWA within the city of Bristol)
- Create opportunities for urban nature within the re-landscaped public space and gardens
- Futureproof utilities and improve revenue generation
- Create long term financial sustainability through increased business activity and operational improvements.

We will deliver a range of Outcomes, across heritage, people and communities, and these are listed in the Activity Plan and Action Plan.

2.0 The evaluation

2.1 Evaluation approach

We wish to appoint evaluation consultants to work with us to develop and deliver an evaluation framework and tools which will enable us to assess the success of the project as well as lessons learnt. The evaluation should include:

- The development of a monitoring and evaluation framework in line with the NLHF Logic Model and Evaluation Guidance
- The provision of baseline data and monitor of qualitative outcomes

- The development of evaluation tools and advice on data collection methodology and reporting format working with RWA staff and volunteers and with reference to the approved NLHF Action Plan
- Development of a timetabled programme of monitoring, analysis, evaluation and reporting in line with the overall project programme and key milestones for capital and activity programmes
- Work with the project staff to set up the evaluation tools in year one including recommendations on lessons learnt, collecting data and programme review for the capital phase of development
- Ensure staff and volunteers have the right training to collect the data as required by delivering appropriate workshops, guidance, tools and mentoring support
- Provide ongoing support with analysis and evaluation at 6 monthly intervals
- The writing of yearly evaluation reports
- Review the evaluation strategy each year to ensure it is fit for purpose and make recommendations accordingly
- Production of the final evaluation report to an agreed format/content.

2.1.1 Proposed sequence for expected outputs

Create monitoring and evaluation framework

- Document which will set out how outputs and outcomes will be monitored
- Procedures agreed for data collection and reporting
- Indicators identified for different types of evidence
- A reliable framework for measuring impact of the whole project and discrete projects within the wider project.

Develop evaluation toolkit

- Set of documents and templates developed that the delivery team are able to use confidently to gather data from a range of activities
- Able to collate qualitative and quantitative data
- Incorporation of wellbeing data capture for sample groups and audiences, gathered before, during and after engagement, in collaboration with Centre for Thriving Places
- Variety of data-gathering techniques that are suitable for the wide range of smaller projects and activities within the project work.

Mid-term review – review progress and methods

- A short, 'light' review of progress on project impact
- Ensuring that monitoring tools are fit for purpose and are in use by project team
- Confirm what has been achieved to date. Consider how project legacy is developing at project and local levels
- Review efficiency and effectiveness of project team and wider project partnership
- Ensure delivery plans and evaluation plans for second half of project remain fit for purpose, including recommendations for any changes needed.

Final project evaluation

- Summary of what has been achieved
- Assess to what extent the project has achieved its stated outputs and outcomes – where targets have been met, exceeded, or where they have not been realised.
- Present an assessment of project legacy – the longer-term impacts beyond the life of the project delivery and plans to ensure legacy is sustained.
- Review project delivery – how effective has project delivery been?
- What has been learnt – could things have been done in a different way?
- How can we share this learning?
- The evaluation report must be an honest and accurate assessment of the project, ensuring that it captures both the successes and failures.

2.2 Evaluation questions

We wish the evaluation to answer the following questions:

- Has the visitor experience been transformed through capital works which enhance the welcome, access, facilities, orientation and environment of the RWA?
- Have the threats to the heritage asset been removed?
- Has the RWA diversified audiences and increased visitor numbers reflective of the targets set?
- Do the programmes, activities and interpretation meet the needs of target audiences?
- Do programme partners and visitors see the RWA as collaborative, accessible and welcoming?
- Have the activities had a positive impact on the wellbeing and happiness of individuals taking part, including staff and volunteers?

- Has the volunteer base been expanded and diversified? Have volunteers had a positive experience and learnt new skills?
- Are Bristol residents more aware of the RWA and its offer?
- Has the experience of working with the RWA been a positive one for partners?
- Has the organisation grown its capacity and skills to continue to engage with different audiences?
- Has the project created opportunities for urban nature?
- Has business resilience been improved and staff been developed to support future sustainability?

Note: We are partnering with a number of organisations who work with young adults and adults with mental health challenges, support needs and/or dementia. We therefore require consultants to have a good understanding of the issues and methodologies associated with evaluating wellbeing impacts and to be sensitive to the requirements of our audiences. We expect the consultants to discuss appropriate evaluation techniques with our partners prior to implementing them.

3.0 Skills and experience required

The Evaluation Consultant will be expected to have:

1. Previous experience researching and writing final evaluation reports for National Lottery Heritage Fund grants.
2. Proven track record of providing evaluation services to the cultural sector.
3. An understanding of heritage projects including wellbeing evaluation.
4. Experience of bringing together internal and external stakeholders to undertake review exercises.
5. Understanding of working on a mixed capital and activity project.
6. Experience of community project work, particularly working with diverse communities and ages.
7. Experience in the voluntary sector.
8. Excellent communication skills and ability to work with a wide range of people .

4.0 Budget and timetable

The total budget for this work is £22,000 excluding VAT. The project will run from December 2020 to December 2022.

5.0 How to apply

Applicants should submit their proposal by 9.30am on Wednesday 25 November 2020. The proposal, of no more than 6 sides of A4, should include information on:

1. Key issues and opportunities identified for the work
2. Approach to the brief and outline methodology and timetable
3. Details of relevant experience including 2 references from recent work
4. Fee proposal, including a day rate and number of days proposed
5. Summary CV of the team proposed (as an appendix).

N.B. Where applications are received from organisations, the individual(s) proposed to undertake this work must be named and all information regarding skills, knowledge and experience must relate to that individual, who will be expected to attend the interview.

Proposal scoring will be undertaken at both initial assessment and at interview and will be weighted according to Value for money (15%) and Quality (85%), relating to the nominated individual or specified project team, broken down as follows:

Experience – assessed from the stated experience and references of comparable projects: weighting (30%)

Skills – assessed from clarity of application; proposed methodology; style and content of communication, and evidence demonstrated in application, interview and references (30%)

Knowledge – assessed from demonstration of thorough understanding of our needs in the context of the particular nature of the project: weighting (25%)

Value for money: assessment of the resource allocation within the fee: weighting (15%)

Interviews will be held via zoom on Friday Monday 30 November 2020 and we anticipate that the appointed individual or team will commence as soon as possible after appointment.