



THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

INVITATION TO TENDER – OPEN COMPETITION

DEADLINE FOR TENDER SUBMISSIONS – 5PM (UK TIME), 15 MARCH 2024

Title: Research into the barriers, opportunities and solutions related to career mobility and leadership skills within the record keeping¹ sector

Return to: procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk

1 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this procurement process is for The UK National Archives and the Archives and Records Association to select a supplier to undertake research to identify barriers, opportunities and solutions to address issues related to career mobility and gaps in leadership skills within the record keeping sector. The research will help both The National Archives and the Archives and Records Association to develop future training opportunities for the sector.

2 About us

2.1 [The National Archives](#) is the official archive and publisher for the UK government, and for England and Wales. In 2011, The National Archives took on leadership responsibilities for the archive sector in England, working with over 2,500 archives across the country. Its current strategy, [Archives for Everyone](#), sets out The National Archives' ambition to become the 21st-century national archive, one that is inclusive, entrepreneurial, and disruptive. The government's strategic vision for the sector, [Archives Unlocked](#), outlines the leadership priorities under the themes of trust, enrichment and openness, and describes its work to encourage a sustainable and innovative archives sector.

The National Archives also has responsibility for the management of Public Records held locally across England and Wales, and performs the Historical Manuscripts Commission's functions in relation to independent archives across the UK. Its support and advice help archives to develop and enhance their services, facilities and collections.

2.2 The Archives and Records Association (ARA) is the UK and Republic of Ireland's lead professional membership body for archivists, records-managers and archive conservators. It is not a trade union: its several thousand members work across the public, private and voluntary sectors and are specialists. ARA promotes continuing professional development and professional standards, encourages innovation in the sector with a range of partners locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. The Archives and Records Association also provides members with a range of services, including training, workplace research, professional registration, competency frameworks and policy advocacy. It represents those with professional interests in record keeping. It promotes working together to maximise heritage collections and to offer the best possible services in access, outreach and collections' stewardship.

3 Background

- 3.1 On 20 June 2023, The National Archives and ARA entered into a Collaboration Agreement for 2023 – 2025. This Collaboration Agreement builds on the desire for cooperation and collaborative working between The National Archives and ARA. The agreement outlines how both organisations will continue to build on their relationship to date to ensure strong leadership and clarity for the archive, records management and archive conservation disciplines.

- 3.2 Both organisations are committed to finding solutions to challenges related to workforce development. It is an acknowledged problem that archivists are not rising to leadership roles outside of the archive. Additionally, the role of chief archivist in local government has been continually downgraded over the last ten years. For example, the senior post at Lancashire County Council went from the former role of County Archivist to Head of Collections and is now Archive Resource Leader. We have less data on this problem in the records management and archive conservation disciplines but we want to equally explore the issues in these disciplines. Before any training is offered, we need to understand available training provision, current and future barriers and opportunities, and possible solutions to help mid to senior career professionals.

4 Requirement

4.1 The project deliverables are:

- Understanding current and future management and leadership opportunities available to midcareer and senior career record keeping professionals:
 - *consider what career opportunities are currently available.*
 - *consider how the sector might change over the next 10 years by identifying the future roles and functions of public and third sector archive services/records offices in the UK and Ireland*
 - *consider what career opportunities these changes might bring.*
- Understanding current and future barriers
 - *Identify and explain current and possible future barriers for midcareer and senior professionals looking to progress in the record keeping sector.*
 - *How do these barriers change once leadership skills/training have been acquired?*
- Research existing provision of leadership training to identify what is needed by the sector, what is available, what has worked and what has not.
 - *what currently exists in the leadership development space that we are not utilising?*
identify key experiences and learning from similar or existing schemes offered by Libraries Connected, the Museums Association, the Institute of Conservation, CILIP, the Library and Information association and others.
 - *How were record keepers able to apply their training and progress their careers? What opportunities became available?*
- Recommendations on what training solutions need to be provided to sector professionals to develop them into leaders.
 - *What leadership skills do recordkeeping professionals need to develop to progress into leadership positions?*
 - *Are training providers offering the training needed to address these leadership skills? Identify any gaps in skills provision.*
 - *Consider current capabilities and opportunities between ARA, TNA and the wider sector.*
 - *What funding exists for this development work and how can it be leveraged for the sector?*

4.2 This research should consider archivists, archive conservators, records managers and those working in the digital preservation field. It should consider how digital skills across these four areas, and should also look into equality, diversity and inclusion outcomes.

4.3 **It is for you to decide how you choose to undertake this research and present your findings, but these should be in writing. Please clearly outline your intended approach in your tender response. Your response will be marked according to the criteria in section 6 below.**

5 Budget

- 5.1 The budget for this piece of work is £10,000 (exclusive of VAT, but inclusive of all other taxes and expenses).

6 How to respond

- 6.1 If you have any clarification questions related to your response, please submit these to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk by 12 noon (UK time) on 8 March 2024.
- 6.2 Please submit your response to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk by 5pm (UK time) on 15 March 2024.
- 6.3 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.

7 Evaluation

7.1 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

7.2 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:

$$((\text{lowest submitted price} / \text{bidder's submitted price}) * 10)$$

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 $-((10,000/31,000)*10) = 3.23$

7.3 Quality 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.• 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.
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8 PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

The procurement timetable is as follows:

Ref.	Description	Date
1	Invitation to Tender published	Week commencing 26 February 2024
2	Deadline for Potential Suppliers to submit clarification questions to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk	12 noon (UK time) 8 March 2024
3	Deadline for Potential Suppliers to submit Tender Responses to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk	5pm (UK time) 15 March 2024
4	Contract award	22 March 2024 (anticipated)

9 CONTRACT

- 9.1 The contract will be awarded according to our [standard terms and conditions](#).
- 9.2 The National Archives reserves the right not to award, and to achieve its aims by other means.