



THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

REFRESH OF ARCHIVE SERVICE ACCREDITATION STANDARD AND APPLICATION GUIDANCE: PHASE TWO

INVITATION TO TENDER – OPEN COMPETITION

DEADLINE FOR TENDER SUBMISSIONS – 5PM (UK TIME) 24 June 2024

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 Her Majesty's Stationery Office. We also perform the Historical Manuscripts Commission's functions in relation to private records.
- 1.2 TNA is the official archive and publisher for the UK government and guardians of over 1,000 years of iconic national documents. Archives can be used in a variety of ways, from enabling insightful and pioneering research, and inspiring art and literature, to informing decision making in all types of organisations.
- 1.3 Since 2012 TNA has held the responsibility for leadership of the archives sector. Part of its purpose is to ensure sustained or improved preservation of and access to the nation's archive collections across the private, public and voluntary sectors.

- 1.4 The Archive Sector Leadership department (ASL) is responsible for leadership of the archive sector in England, comprising over 2500 archives. Our work is framed by the strategic vision, [Archives Unlocked, currently being refreshed](#). Our approach to the leadership role is a collaborative one, supporting partnership working to encourage a sustainable and innovative archive sector.
- 1.5 The National Archives is one of seven partners who collaborate to deliver the [UK Archive Service Accreditation programme](#) as a management standard and awards programme for all types and sizes of UK archive service. The other partners are: Archives and Records Association (UK & Ireland), Archives and Records Council Wales, National Records of Scotland, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, Scottish Council on Archives and the Welsh Government. The programme is governed by a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) between partners, and by a Committee composed of members nominated by partners and recruited from the archives sector. There is open communication with the parallel Museum Accreditation programme managed by Arts Council England.
- 1.6 Archive Service Accreditation was developed collaboratively through a co-creation process with archives across the UK in 2012-13. The first awards were made in November 2013. As the programme has passed its 10th anniversary, the Accreditation programme partners are in the process of reviewing and updating the programme through further sector co-creation, addressing areas which have been identified as requiring further focus, and ensuring its ongoing currency and utility across UK archives.

2 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The purpose of this procurement process is for The National Archives (TNA) on behalf of the Accreditation partners to select a supplier to update Archive Service Accreditation in collaboration with the programme partners and committee, and with sector input where required.
- 2.2 The work is taking place across two phases. The first phase involved sector discussion and consultation, resulting in reports and a set of recommendations which have been largely accepted by the programme's governing Committee for implementation. This contract will cover only Phase two. The Phase one report executive summary, recommendations and Committee response to the recommendations are published at <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/archive-service-accreditation/archive-service-accreditation-10-year-review/>. We attach the full phase one report for information. Further background materials relating to Phase one will be shared with the appointed supplier.
- 2.3 The budget is **£12,000**, exclusive of VAT, but inclusive of travel and all other expenses.

3 REQUIREMENT

- 3.1 The supplier will engage in a drafting process to develop Archive Service Accreditation as a relevant, current national standard after 10 years of implementation. This will deliver the findings of the first phase of the review relating to inclusive practice and audience expectations, as amended by the programme's governing committee and where necessary after additional external research, delivering an updated programme comprising edits to the Accreditation standard, application form and guidance for applicants.
- 3.2 The supplier will work closely with the Accreditation team at The National Archives to:
- Draft options for including equality, diversity and inclusion at requirement level within Archive Service Accreditation, whether standalone or as part of other requirements within the existing standard, and report these to the governing Archive Service Accreditation Committee for a decision as to which option to progress.
 - Draft updates to the standard, guidance and application form which reflect the selected option for the above, along with wider updates to continue the process of embedding equality, diversity and inclusion across the three modules of the Accreditation standard, its supporting guidance and application form, including scalable good practice.
 - Draft updates to the standard, guidance and application form for module 3 (Stakeholders and their experiences) based on the phase one report and recommendations, including using consistent language, and to support a wide range of responses reflecting the programme's focus on scalability and deliverability across different types and sizes of archive service and the different communities served.
 - Engage with updates being drafted within the Accreditation team and partners covering updates regarding sustainability and digital preservation which also formed part of the phase one recommendations, to provide a consistent product ready for piloting

with test archive services, offering a consistent experience across the entire standard, guidance and application form

- Present this redraft to partners and the Committee in a clearly marked up format suitable for piloting of changes across a range of applicants and for subsequent ease of translation into Welsh.

3.3 Initial discussions with programme partners, the Accreditation Committee and at sector gatherings identified four substantive areas where some content change is required. Consultation in phase one resulted in recommendations for improvement, which are broadly accepted by the Committee for development in phase two.

- **Inclusive practice:** consultation identified potential for a new requirement within the standard, or expansion of existing requirements, specifically to reflect expectations on inclusive practice; a range of requirements of the standard, supporting guidance and application form need to be updated to reflect inclusive practice effectively and to set expectations/model good practice for different types and sizes of archive service.
- **Audience development and audience needs:** consultation identified a need for clearer, more consistent language and a more inclusive approach reflecting the range of different audience engagements undertaken by archive services. This potentially changes language in the Accreditation standard, and requires updates to the application form and guidance for applicants to reflect this effectively and to set expectations/model good practice for different types and sizes of archive service. The phase one report contains a range of areas which can feed into developing this area more fully to reflect expectations in this area, particularly a greater focus on impacts and a reduced focus on inputs.
- **Delivery of digital preservation:** This area will be addressed by the Accreditation partners and the team at The National Archives
- **Sustainability and carbon cost:** This area will be addressed by the Accreditation partners and the team at The National Archives
- **Other programme developments:** This area will be addressed by the Accreditation partners and the team at The National Archives

- 3.4 The programme partners wish to support the review throughout. Support will be given through regular contact with the Accreditation team at The National Archives, through partner communication channels and hosting online meetings/webinars if relevant. A special meeting of the Committee can be scheduled for autumn/winter 2024 if required, and interim reporting to the committee on options for redrafted requirements is a requirement of the contract, although format can be agreed by discussion with the appointed supplier.
- 3.5 The final elements of the work must be completed and submitted to TNA by 31st March 2025.

4 HOW TO RESPOND

- 4.1 If you have any clarification questions related to your response, please submit these to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk by **5pm (UK time) on 7 June 2024**.
- 4.2 Please submit your response to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk by **5pm (UK time) on 24 June 2024**.
- 4.3 It is for you to determine what format your submission should take so as to describe your offer in a clear, comprehensive and convincing fashion; however, you should note that the information you supply may be used, in whole or in part, to populate the Contract Schedules. As such, please make clear and unambiguous statements about the commitments you are making.
- 4.4 Your response should as a minimum include the following:
- 4.4.1 Your **understanding** of the project and deliverables, and how you would phase the deliverables.
 - 4.4.2 Details of your prior **experience** suited to the project, including understanding the needs of the UK archive sector and how standards can support this, and of delivering high quality consultation and guidance products.
 - 4.4.3 Your proposed **methodology** for delivery of the project outcomes in collaboration with the Accreditation Team and the programme partners and Committee.
 - 4.4.4 Names and experience of **individuals** assigned to the project, and their involvement with each phase or unit of the work.
 - 4.4.5 Your contract price**, including breakdown for costs of each phase or unit of work, day rate of each team member and other costs or expenses.

Please note your submitted pricing must include any and all duties and levies (except UK VAT, which should be excluded) which may be payable

on your proposed solution as submitted. If some or all of your proposed solution includes goods or services which are sourced from outside the UK, you must tell us (a) which goods/services are sourced from outside the UK, (b) the associated duties and levies payable and (c) confirmation that your contract price includes all such duties and levies (except UK VAT). For the avoidance of doubt, your pricing should reflect the equivalent of Incoterm DDP (Delivery Duty Paid) and therefore the full cost to the customer/TNA.

5 EVALUATION

5.1 Submissions will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Category	Maximum Score Available	Weighting	Maximum Available Weighted Score
Your understanding of the project and deliverables	10	2	20
Details of your understanding of the specific needs of the archive sector and Accreditation standards	10	2.5	25
Your proposed methodology for the work	10	2.5	20
Names and experience of individuals assigned to the project, and their knowledge of the archives sector, standards and guidance.	10	1.5	15
Price	10	2	20

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:

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

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 – $((10,000/10,000) \times 10) = 10$

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

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

5.2 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	<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 new and innovative service approaches
--------------------	--

5.3 Following evaluation of written submissions, we reserve the right to shortlist and interview a number of potential suppliers. After interview, those shortlisted submissions will be re-scored taking the findings of the interviews into account.

6 PROCUREMENT TIMETABLE

6.1 The procurement timetable is as follows:

Ref.	Description	Date
1	Invitation to Tender published	21 May 2024
2	Deadline for Potential Suppliers to submit clarification questions to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk *	5pm (UK time) 7 June 2024
3	Deadline for Potential Suppliers to submit Tender Responses to procurement@nationalarchives.gov.uk	5pm (UK time) 24 June 2024
4	Timebox for interviews with shortlisted potential suppliers	8-10 July 2024

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

7 CONTRACT TERMS

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