****

# 1.0 BACKGROUND

# The Royal Parks (TRP) has a requirement to undertake a procurement exercise to secure the provision of Research Services. TRP has undertaken research over the past decade to learn more about its visitors. This has primarily been in the form of face-to-face in-park surveys, with an average sample size of approximately 2,500 visitors across the whole estate.

We would like to improve our research by expanding our methods for gaining quantitative and qualitative insights. We want our research to have a greater breadth of respondents (and where appropriate, a larger number), offer more frequent insights with ‘real-time’ and long-term value, and provide more nuanced findings about engaged and unengaged audiences. We want to gauge opinions and actions not only relating to general aspects of the parks and TRP, but also specific projects and activities. We want to ensure that where appropriate our survey samples cover as wide a range of demographic groupings as possible across gender, age, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic status. We are also keen to survey a broad spectrum of people who are more and less engaged with TRP and our parks, from enthusiasts to non-visitors.

Further details, including a copy of our draft specification, are appended hereto (Appendix B). Bidders are requested to note any areas that they would not be able to comply with, or require further clarification as to our requirements.

# 2.0 PROCUREMENT PROCESS

The procurement exercise for the provision of the Services will commence in December 2021, hence this pre-market exercise will be open for a short period only.

Interested providers are advised that one of the main options being considered is to seek competitive tenders via the Crown Commercial Service Research Marketplace (RM 6018). Further details of this are available via the following URL - <https://www.crowncommercial.gov.uk/agreements/RM6018>

# 3.0 PRE-MARKET ENGAGEMENT (PME) PURPOSE

The purpose of the PME is as follows –

* Allows the market to better understand our requirements in advance of the tender.
* Give the market an opportunity to seek clarification from TRP regarding elements of our requirements.
* Allows TRP to gather information on how the market is structured and how it operates.
* Allows the market to better understand TRP from an organisational perspective (in particular, an early understanding of TRP core values, as detailed in the documents we have made available via the Delta portal).
* Allows TRP to obtain feedback regarding our requirements (e.g. possible changes to the draft specification).
* Allows TRP to test the feasibility of our needs against what is available in the market.
* Allows suppliers/ providers time to plan and prepare to respond to a contract opportunity.
* An opportunity for suppliers / providers to partner with others to provide better solutions (e.g. technology partners).
* Generates interest in TRP as a buyer.
* Stimulates competition and innovation.
* Informs TRP of any risks and issues.
* Helps TRP plan the optimal approach-to-market.

# 4.0 NEXT STAGES

# The following key provisional dates have been identified; these will be confirmed within the tender documents. Please note that TRP reserves the right to change these provisional dates. The following key steps are taken from p16 of the CCS guide. A copy of the guide is available by following the below URL -

<https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.crowncommercial.gov.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2FRM6018-Research-Marketplace-Customer-guidance-AB-2-1.odt&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Task** | **Date / Comments:** |
| Pre-Market Questionnaire issued, complete with draft specification | w/c 6 December |
| Return / informal evaluation of questionnaire / alterations to specification | BY 12 noon AT THE LATEST  13 December |
| Tender issued | w/c 13 December |
| Deadline for submission of Capability Assessment | w/c 20 December |
| Evaluation of Capability Assessment | w/c 3 January |
| Shortlisted agencies from Capability Assessment notified | w/c 3 January |
| Deadline for the submission of clarification questions | w/c 10 January |
| Deadline for response to clarification questions | w/c 10 January |
| Deadline for submission of proposals | w/c 17 January |
| Evaluation of proposals | w/c 17 January |
| Shortlisted agencies notified | w/c 24 January |
| Pre-pitch feedback | w/c 24 February |
| Face-to-face presentations | w/c 31 January |
| Evaluation of face-to-face presentation | w/c 31 January |
| Award contract | w/c 31 January |
| Kick off meeting | w/c 31 January |

# 5.0 RESPONDING TO OUR PRE-MARKET ENGAGEMENT

# Please respond via email. Please send your response as an attachment to your message (please don’t use drop box type services)

# Please ensure your response is submitted via email by 13th December (12 noon) at the latest.

# May I take this opportunity to thank you for your interest in this exercise.

# With best wishes.

# Mark Abrahams.

# Head of Contract Management & Procurement.

# [mabrahams@royalparks.org.uk](mailto:mabrahams@royalparks.org.uk)

# APPENDIX A

# PRE-MARKET ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONS

# Please return this document as an attachment to a message via email by 13th December (12 noon) at the latest.

Organisation name:

……………………………………………………………………………………….

Main point of contact name:

……………………………………………………………………………………….

Main point of contact email address:

……………………………………………………………………………………….

Main point of contact mobile number:

……………………………………………………………………………………….

Q1 – Would you be able to submit a bid as part of RM 6018, as indicated at 2.0 above?

……………………………………………………………………………………….

Q2 - Are you able to meet the timescales outlined within our timetable at 4.0 above?

……………………………………………………………………………………….

Q3 - Do you envisage submitting a bid?

……………………………………………………………………………………….

Q4 - Will you bid as a stand-alone bidder, or with a partner/sub-contractor? If the latter, please briefly clarify your role and the partner’s/sub-contractor’s role:

……………………………………………………………………………………….

Q5 – Are you able to broadly deliver against our specification as detailed at Appendix B, in particular points 3.1-3.12?

……………………………………………………………………………………….

Q6 – Please indicate if you samples for the Parks Panel and/or ad hoc surveying are likely to be drawn from pre-existing data sets, or will require wholly new recruitment of respondents.

………………………………………………………………………………………….

………………………………………………………………………………………….

Q7 – Please highlight any areas of our specification that you would not be able to comply with, or where you require clarification (add additional lines below if necessary).

……………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………….

……………………………………………………………………………………….

Q8 – Do you envisage any other challenges, e.g. recruitment of staff, compliance with data legislation, etc.?

……………………………………………………………………………………….

Q9 - How would you devise a pricing model to deal with ad-hoc work that will be commissioned at a later date.

……………………………………………………………………………………….

Q10 – Are you a London Living Wage (LLW) employer?

……………………………………………………………………………………….

APPENDIX B - SPECIFICATION

Brief for TRP audience research programme - Draft

# INTRODUCTION

* 1. The Royal Parks (TRP) is responsible for managing and preserving over 5,000 acres of historic parkland across London, including valuable conservation areas and important biodiverse habitats for wildlife. Our parks are among the most visited attractions in the UK and can mean different things to different people at different times. They are free and accessible for everyone to enjoy.
  2. For most visitors, our parks are an important escape from urban life in which to enjoy peaceful recreation and connect with the beauty of nature. Many take pleasure in the varied activities we host, from ceremonial events and summer concerts to sporting fixtures and art exhibitions, or in participating in our learning and volunteering programmes. For some, particularly those from outside London and the UK, it is their first visit to a Royal Park. Others may visit regularly during the week, whether as part of their daily commute, to enjoy the landscape on their own or with their families, or to use our cafés as a meeting place for friends.
  3. TRP cares for London’s eight Royal Parks: Bushy Park, The Green Park, Greenwich Park, Hyde Park, Kensington Gardens, The Regent's Park & Primrose Hill, Richmond Park and St James's Park. We are also responsible for a number of other important green spaces in London, including Brompton Cemetery and Victoria Tower Gardens. 77 million visitors a year visit the Royal Parks. More information on TRP can be found on our website: <https://www.royalparks.org.uk/>.
  4. We are a charity, created in March 2017. We took over the role of managing the Royal Parks from The Royal Parks Agency (a former executive agency of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport) and the Royal Parks Foundation, which fundraised for the parks and provided educational activities. Our charitable status offers us greater opportunities for income generation by being more attractive to large and small donors, by having a greater likelihood of attracting more volunteers, and by exploring commercial partnerships.
  5. In 2021 TRP launched our new five-year corporate strategy, which has four overarching objectives:

1. Welcome the visitor
2. Conserve and enhance
3. Build a secure future
4. Strengthen people and partnerships
   1. Improved market research will help TRP track how we are performing against our objectives and will help shape some of the activities that sits within each objective, by deepening our understanding of our current and potential audiences. We want to identify and segment our visitors and non-visitors, and to ascertain their attitudes, behaviours, needs and knowledge of TRP in order to better direct our work and measure its impact. Thorough audience research will inform and improve our strategic and management plans, as well as maintaining our competitiveness in the charity landscape.
   2. The focus of this tender is to appoint a specialist agency or agencies to establish a ‘Parks Panel’ for longitudinal surveying and to conduct ad hoc pieces of research for more targeted and time-sensitive projects. We envisage the ‘Parks Panel’ consisting of a large sample that reflects the views and behaviours of visitors and non-visitors across a wide range of demographic groupings. This panel will provide an annual survey of visitors and non-visitors, gathering information for a number of areas that are important to TRP over the long term. A schedule for ad hoc research will be developed with the winning agency to inform specific pieces of work, which will likely vary year-to-year and involve different scales of sample; we anticipate this primarily qualitative research will require a variety of methodologies, for which we would like specialist oversight and analysis.
   3. The Parks Panel and ad hoc surveys will form vital parts of TRP’s new research and insight programme. Another element of the programme will be a brand tracking service, which is out of the scope of this brief.

# BACKGROUND

* 1. TRP has undertaken research over the past decade to learn more about its visitors. This has primarily been in the form of face-to-face in-park surveys, with an average sample size of approximately 2,500 visitors across the whole estate.

2.2. These surveys are limited in a number of ways:

1. They ask a relatively narrow set of prescribed questions designed to fulfil KPT requirements about visitor satisfaction, which are set by and reported to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.
2. They are conducted in four-yearly cycles, with the last being in 2017-18. We feel this is not frequent enough for us to understand shifting visitor attitudes, knowledge and needs, as well as visitors’ responses to specific initiatives undertaken by TRP that may affect the visitor experience in the parks and/or people’s perceptions of TRP as an organisation.
3. Their methodology does not allow for continuity in measuring changes over time, because individuals are surveyed randomly and there is no demographic ‘stability’ to the samples. We would like to shift our focus to a longitudinal form of research that will allow us to better evaluate the impact of our projects and campaigns both in the short term and long term.
4. Because they are carried out in-park, the views of non-visitors are not represented. We are keen to understand the reasons why people do not use the Royal Parks, in order for us to direct our efforts to ensuring under-represented groups feel welcome and we fulfil our commitment to serving everyone equally.

2.3. We have also conducted online surveys in-house to gather attitudes towards our website and our interpretation (physical and digital). These have garnered a large number of responses – over 3,000 and 7,000 respectively – but we are aware that in-house writing, dissemination and analysis of the surveys has limited some of the conclusions we can draw about our visitors demographically, behaviourally and attitudinally.

2.4. Details of our surveys in the public domain can be found on our website: [Visitor satisfaction research - The Royal Parks](https://www.royalparks.org.uk/managing-the-parks/visitor-research). To inform the new research programme, the winning bidder will also be given access to research and strategies that are commercial and confidential.

2.5. We would like to improve our research by expanding our methods for gaining quantitative and qualitative insights. We want our research to have a greater breadth of respondents (and where appropriate, a larger number), offer more frequent insights with ‘real-time’ and long-term value, and provide more nuanced findings about engaged and unengaged audiences. We want to gauge opinions and actions not only relating to general aspects of the parks and TRP, but also specific projects and activities. We want to ensure that where appropriate our survey samples cover as wide a range of demographic groupings as possible across gender, age, ethnicity, disability and socio-economic status. We are also keen to survey a broad spectrum of people who are more and less engaged with TRP and our parks, from enthusiasts to non-visitors.

2.6. Our research programme must provide certain pieces of information to measure progress against corporate KPTs and KPIs. These are top-line measures of visitor satisfaction, brand awareness, brand sentiment, advocacy, and likeliness to donate. However, there are more detailed insights we would like gather to support our work across various Directorates – namely, Communications & Engagement, Commercial, Parks Operations, and Estates & Projects. This includes more specific aspects of satisfaction pertaining to facilities, services and barriers to visiting; audience segmentation; demographics; visiting habits; learning habits; brand loyalty; special projects; and peer comparison. Please see Appendix A for a thorough breakdown of essential and desired insights, including anticipated methodologies for gathering them. N.B. Appendix A includes information that will be obtained through a brand tracker, which is outside the scope of this brief.

2.7. We have divided the research needs outlined in this brief into two lots. You are invited to tender for both lots or just for one, depending on your specialisms. The lots are:

I) The Parks Panel

II) Ad hoc research – various methodologies

# LOT I) PARKS PANEL

## REQUIREMENTS

* 1. We would like an agency to build a ‘Parks Panel’ comprising thousands of people to reflect the views of visitors and non-visitors to The Royal Parks across a wide range of demographic groupings. We would like to be able to survey the whole panel regularly and to also subdivide the panel into smaller cohorts for more targeted surveying and analysis when necessary. The findings will enable us to identify issues, plan actions and measure results, informing strategies, management plans and campaigns across the organisation.
  2. We require the tenderer to oversee both the formation of the panel and the surveying process on our behalf.
  3. Ideally the panel will be built or substantially built by 31 March 2022.
  4. Ideally the panel will be demographically representative of people living locally to each Royal Park (i.e. within 3 miles of a Royal Park), and of people living across London. We also want to make some provision for nation-wide representation if possible, with this cohort primarily being surveyed to gain an understanding of brand perception that could help us develop commercial opportunities on a national scale. We welcome guidance on what proportion of the panel should be comprised by each cohort.
  5. For the park-local cohort, we envisage the panel having a sample size in accordance with published government guidance. We would ideally like a sample of at least 500 people per park to yield statistically reliable results, though we would prefer a figure closer to 1,000 for the major parks. We are keen to ensure that this cohort includes non-visitors and unengaged/less engaged visitors, in order to explore the needs and interests of those we do not currently provide for. Ideally, the London-wide and nation-wide cohorts would also include non-visitors, but unengaged people living close to the parks are a priority for us.
  6. We would like to survey the panel online at least once a year, though we welcome advice as to how frequently we may be able to survey and for what cost. We want to gauge panel members’ attitudes, behaviours and knowledge, with a focus on visitor satisfaction, audience segmentation, demographics, visiting habits, learning habits, and brand loyalty. Please see Appendix A for a more detailed breakdown of insights we would like to glean from the panel. We anticipate a relatively stable large-scale sample that we repeatedly return to will provide us with a greater continuity of results than a random sample, enabling longitudinal insight to understand changes and trends over time. For the main annual survey, we envisage the bulk of questions being standard ones we ask each year to assess change, with an additional ‘rolling’ section asking more topical/time-sensitive questions relating to current TRP initiatives.
  7. A vital purpose of the panel is audience segmentation, developing personas for key types of visitor to The Royal Parks. Ideally these personas will be nuanced enough to incorporate psychographic insights about values, interests and behaviours (including commercial habits), as well as demographic characteristics and uses of the parks.
  8. Tender responses that show provision for guidance and support with structuring and phrasing survey questions will score more highly.
  9. We require the tenderer to provide a thorough analysis of the survey results, according to criteria agreed between the tenderer and TRP during the development stage. Whether this analysis can be carried out by the tenderer themselves, or would need to be sub-contracted out, should be specified in the tender response.
  10. We require a report and ideally a presentation detailing findings from the Parks Panel survey/s to be produced at least annually, which will be shared with TRP’s Executive Committee and Board of Trustees.
  11. We recognise that the panel will probably not be able to capture the views of overseas tourist visitors. Given the lingering impact of Covid-19 reducing tourist travel, financial pressures necessitating more overt messaging about our charitable status, and TRP launching several strategies that will affect people’s everyday experiences in the parks, our priority is understanding our local and London-wide audiences. But we still value international perspectives and seek guidance as to how we might reach this audience through the ad hoc research (Lot II).
  12. We welcome any recommendations about methodology in the tender response, which can include approaches to compiling the panel not discussed here.

**BUDGET:**

3.13. The amount budgeted for initially building the Parks Panel is £40k-60k, with anticipated ongoing costs for panel retention and surveys of £20k-30k p/a. We envisage a contract length of 3 years, with the option to extend to 5 years; to be confirmed at tender stage.

1. **LOT II) AD HOC RESEARCH – VARIOUS METHODOLOGIES**

**REQUIREMENTS**

* 1. Every year ad hoc pieces of research are conducted by different teams across TRP, such as gauging support for certain commercial events and understanding community engagement for specific parks and projects. The research is a mixture of outsourced and insourced work, and often the results are used in isolation by individual teams and Directorates without being shared more widely. We would like centralised oversight of these various surveys to ensure a greater consistency of approach, higher quality of reach and insight, and stronger interconnections between pieces of research that can yield useful information for staff org-wide.
  2. We require an agency to produce a schedule for ad hoc surveys each year, in response to strategic priorities identified by TRP and within a designated budget. The agency will organise the research and analyse the findings, and will produce a summary report for each piece of work to be presented to the commissioning team and wider relevant staff in a timely manner.
  3. At this stage, the exact research requirements for 2022-23 have not been determined, but we would like to develop and begin scheduling these with the agency in Q4 of the 2021-22 Financial Year. Please see Appendix A for further detail on the types of information we would like to obtain, and where we envisage ad hoc research will be necessary.
  4. We can currently identify two key areas of insight that we would like to cover in the first year of the new research programme:

1. Attitudes, awareness and motivations of non-visitors and unengaged visitors, in order to understand actual and/or perceived barriers to enjoying the parks.
2. Attitudes, awareness and behaviours of international visitors, who are not covered by the Parks Panel (see 3.6 above).

Tender responses that consider possible research solutions to these two needs will be scored more highly.

* 1. We envisage a range of qualitative and quantitative methodologies will be required for different types of insight, including focus groups and in-park surveying. We would like specialist guidance on the most appropriate forms of research for our various needs.
  2. Samples for targeted pieces of research with specific park users and demographic groups could be derived from the Parks Panel (see Lot 1), if the tenderer bids for both lots. However, there may be instances where respondents need to be recruited in other ways – e.g. for focus groups involving pre-existing TRP community contacts.

# BUDGET:

4.7. £20k-30k per year is budgeted for surveys. We envisage a contract length of 3 years, with the option to extend to 5 years; to be confirmed at tender stage.

**5. OUR TEAM**

The winning tenderer will work closely with members of The Royal Parks’ Communications and Engagement Directorate. These include:

Lucy Kellett, Interpretation Manager

Heather Carr, Brand and Intellectual Property Manager

Head of Visitor Experience (new role, from January 2021)

Research and Insight Manager (new role, from February 2021)

**6. SCHEDULE**

6.1. The following timetable is proposed for the tender process:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACTION** | **DATE DUE** |
| Invitation to tender issued | TO BE CLARIFIED |
| **Tender submission deadline** |  |
| Clarification interviews |  |
| Formal award |  |
| Contract start |  |

**7. CONDITIONS OF THE TENDER PROCESS**

7.1. **Tender return:** Tenders must be sent to:

[procurement@royalparks.org.uk](mailto:procurement@royalparks.org.uk)

**By 14:00 on XXX.**

Tenders received after this time will be automatically rejected.

7.2. **Highest scoring tender:** The Royal Parks does not bind itself to accept the highest-scoring tender, or any tender.

7.3. **Basis of prices:** All prices must be quoted in accordance with the accompanying documents and should **exclude VAT**.

7.4. **Award criteria:** The contract will be awarded to the tenderer who makes the Most Economically Advantageous Offer (MEAT). The tenders will be marked using the criteria and weightings as detailed in the tender response document.

7.5. **Confidentiality of tenders:** Please ensure that the following confidentiality requirements are adhered to:

1. All documents and information provided, by whatever means, are kept strictly confidential.
2. Confidential information is disclosed only to those of your employees who need to evaluate it in order to submit a response.
3. All documents and information provided are not disclosed nor allowed to be disclosed to any third party.

7.6. **Expenses and losses:** TRP will not be liable for or pay any expenses or losses incurred by the tenderer in preparing its tender.

7.7. **Freedom of information act:** TRP is committed to meeting our legal responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Accordingly, all information submitted to us may need to be disclosed by us in response to a request under the Act. We may also decide to include certain information in the publication scheme, which we maintain under the Act. If you consider that any of the information included in your tender is commercially sensitive, please identify it and explain (in broad terms) what harm may result from disclosure if a request is received, and the time period applicable to that sensitivity.

7.8. **Trading names/invoicing:** Where invoices will be rendered by or payments are required to be made to an entity whose title differs in any respect from the title in which the tender is submitted, full details must be provided in a letter accompanying the tender. If a successful tenderer fails to provide this information at tender stage they may well experience delays in settlement of their account.

**8. QUERIES AND POINT OF CONTACT**

8.1. If tenderers have any queries or would like any clarifications made during the tender period, please contact TRP via the Delta portal.

8.2. The deadline for submission of queries will be detailed in the tender timetable.