

Invitation to Tender:

2D and 3D Exhibition Design for new exhibition in the Keeper's Gallery.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 As the UK Government's official archive and publisher for England and Wales, [The National Archives](#) (TNA) is the guardian of more than 1,000 years of the nation's records. Our site at Kew is open to everyone, for free. Some of the UK's most iconic public records are held by TNA, including Domesday Book; Magna Carta; Nelson's will; and service records or war diaries from a range of conflicts. Each year we provide access to such historical documents to millions of people globally, both online and in person.

1.2 Our users come from many different backgrounds and have a wide range of interests. We have built a strong reputation for our expert advice, the efficiency of our services and our work to bring the records to life. Our collection covers 2D and 3D objects; photographs and artworks; film and sound; as well as digitised versions of older records and digital items from more recent times. It provides evidence of the stories of some of the major social movements of the last century: votes for women; environmental campaigns; trade unionism and gay rights.

1.3 Our role is to collect and secure the future of the government record, both digital and physical, to preserve it for generations to come and to make it as accessible and available as possible. Our aim as part of our strategy '[Archives Inspire](#)' is to inspire the public with new ways to use and experience our collections. Key elements of this strategy relating to this exhibition development are to:

- develop new and exciting public programmes and services that rival those of other pre-eminent institutions,
- inspire curiosity about The National Archives and different ways of revealing the hidden gems and stories told in our collection,
- reshape the services we offer and devise fresh and exciting ways to engage and reach out to our visitors, both existing and new,
- provide a new visitor experience that is accessible to all – physically, intellectually, aesthetically, socially and emotionally.
- Over the next four years we will change the way you think about archives.

1.4 The National Archives is a non-ministerial government department, whose parent department is the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. We are expert advisers in information and record management; a cultural and heritage institution; an independent research organisation; and an award-winning educational hub. We work to bring together and secure the future of the public record, both digital and physical, for future generations. Our collection is accessible to anyone all over the world. Further information about our role, plans, policies, performance and projects can be found on our website [here](#).

1.5 The National Archives seeks an exhibition design company to work with our in-house exhibition and interpretation team on the development and delivery of a new exhibition for the Keeper's Gallery space at Kew. The exhibition will engage visitors with the stories held in our collection through innovative and interactive displays; a diverse range of objects and documents; tangible and intangible heritage; and will form the backbone of the new visitor experience at TNA.

2. THE REQUIREMENT

2.1 We wish to appoint an exhibition designer to undertake the 2D, 3D and graphic design for the new exhibition, working through Concept, Developed and Technical Design stages of the project.

2.2 An initial piece of scoping and audience research work has led us to develop the basic idea and themes for the exhibition, under the working title of 'Turmoil.' A brief outline of themes and suggested stories and objects is attached in the appendices.

2.3 The design should use and complement the range of material in our collection relating to this theme, taking into account and being sensitive to the conservation requirements of such original objects. We would expect to display original objects and documents in conservation-grade exhibition cases with appropriate environmental controls, alongside graphic and digital interpretation and facsimile objects to handle and interact with. We would like to create immersive, interactive and engaging experiences for our visitors, offering them a sense of place in the history of the UK as well as giving them a mirror for their own lives and experiences in the stories from the past. All solutions should consider accessibility to be a very high priority; socially, emotionally, visually and physically.

2.4 We anticipate the deliverables comprising (at a minimum):

- Design reports including sketches and/or computer-generated visualisations with written descriptions of how they reflect the interpretive plans (produced by TNA) at the end of each of the project stages.
- Technical drawings and product specifications for construction/installation of all furniture and fixtures at the end of the Technical Design stage.
- A complete graphic design package ready for use/implementation, including templates for use on our digital, web or publicity materials, at the end of the Technical Design stage.

2.5 Our maximum available budget for this piece of work is **£25,000** (ex VAT).

2.6 The work should be completed between July 2017 and February 2018, to a programme agreed with the Project Team on awarding the contract.

3. INFORMATION SOURCES

3.1 A plan and 3D drawing of the Keeper's Gallery space are available by application to procurement@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk and after signing a confidentiality agreement. The Keeper's Gallery floor space is approximately 250m² and is highlighted in blue on the drawing. The walls of the space are mostly MDF panels fashioned as stud walls with small voids behind, currently covering cupboards housing IT/AV equipment or other fixtures. There is currently an enclosure in the centre of the plan, around case 1, and we anticipate that this will be removed as part of the new design, to open up the space as shown on the drawing. There is one structural concrete column at a corner of this enclosure, shown on the plans, which cannot be removed. For scaling information, the centres of the concrete columns as shown on the plans are 9.6m apart. All cases on the plan can be moved and/or discarded, as only case 1 and some of the other freestanding cases are currently suitable to hold original collection items. There are currently stud walls covering the windows and doorway on the right-hand side in the drawing, and so the only entrance and exit available to visitors is the opening at the front of the image, with a black shaded area on the floor in front of it. The double doors at the back are a fire exit for use in emergencies only, which must remain clear. We anticipate that the existing flooring, ceiling and lighting provision will remain in place, but could potentially be amended or enhanced as part of the exhibition design.

3.2 The intended audience for this exhibition is mostly new to TNA, and our audience segmentation profile is also attached in the appendices.

The primary target audience for this project will be 'Cultural Devotees' – those who attend other exhibitions and cultural events, but would not necessarily be interested in coming to TNA for research purposes. They want social and interactive entertaining experiences, with choices as to how they engage with our content. Secondary to this audience are 'Family for Me' groups coming for an educational and fun day out, and a group called 'Curious Minds', who are more intellectually-minded, but also want to attend public programmes. Our new exhibition programme and public offer is aimed at new audiences, but should of course consider and not infringe upon the needs of our existing research audiences.

3.3 The budget for the whole exhibition development is currently funded as a core business priority by TNA, for the 2017-2018 financial year. The overall exhibition budget is £105,000, to include design fees; so as you can see we have prioritised design and awarded a larger-than-usual portion of the budget to ensure we get the highest-quality result.

3.4 An open session to visit the TNA site and the Keeper's Gallery, where questions may be posed to the Project Team, will be held in the afternoon of **Tuesday 13 June, from 3pm to 5pm**. Please advise by 12pm on Monday 11 June if you wish to attend and/or any advance questions you would like to submit, to procurement@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

4. HOW TO RESPOND

4.1 Please submit your tender response – specifying how you will meet the requirement described in Section 2 above – to procurement@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk by **12pm on Friday 23 June 2017**.

4.2 It is for potential suppliers to determine what format this response should take so as to describe their offering in a clear, comprehensive fashion, and to include at least one visual response in their proposal. However, potential suppliers should note that the information they 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.

4.3 Please also ensure that your response describes your proposed deliverables, methodology, programme and price; how your creative design solution will engage our target audiences; and includes evidence of your expertise and experience in this area and the key team members proposed to work on the project.

4.4 If you have any clarification questions, please submit these to procurement@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk by **5pm on Wednesday 14 June 2017**.

4.5 Submissions will be evaluated as follows:

- **Quality of Response 80%**
- **Price 20%**

4.6 The successful supplier will be required to accept TNA's contract terms and conditions for services, published [here](#). More general information for TNA suppliers is [here](#).

5. TIMESCALES

5.1 TNA anticipates evaluating tender responses and making an award decision during the week commencing **26 June 2017**.

5.2 TNA requires the appointed supplier to begin work as soon as possible after 30 June 2017, with the Technical Design reports being completed by **28 February 2018**.