



Invitation to Tender

Strategy Development Research

Ref: NHMF 308

Schedule 1: Invitation to Tender

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SCHEDULE 1 – INVITATION TO TENDER:

1 Purpose of this document:

This Invitation to Tender (ITT) document sets out the requirements of the National Lottery Heritage Fund ('the Fund'), and the instructions for Bidders.

These instructions are designed to ensure that all Bidders are given equal and fair consideration. It is important therefore that you provide all the information asked for in the format and order specified.

The ITT should be read in conjunction with the Specification (Schedule 1), the Fund's Standard Contract (Schedule 3), the Evaluation Model (Schedule 4), and all other Schedules.

2 Fund Core Values:

Our vision and role is that all people's lives are transformed and enriched by heritage that is valued for the positive and lasting change it creates.

We inspire, lead and resource the UK's heritage to create this change for people and communities, now and in the future.

We are inspiring and leading by:

- Building strategic partnerships and collaborations
- Inspiring and supporting innovation
- Championing the capacity and resilience of the heritage sector
- Advocating for the value of heritage to society
- Sharing learning and best practice

We are resourcing the UK's heritage by:

- Working in accordance with our National Lottery Strategic Funding Framework
- Continuing UK-wide grant making
- Making our money go further through loans and social investments
- Developing skills and the diversity of the sector
- New business development: drawing in new sources of funding, alongside National Lottery and National Heritage Memorial Fund grants.

Achieving positive and lasting change:

Through our leadership, support and investment, heritage across the UK's nations and regions will be more valued, inclusive, resilient, enterprising, and in better condition.

This will help heritage to contribute more to the economy and become more connected in local communities and places.

Please visit the Fund website for further information about the organisation at www.heritagefund.org.uk

3 Procurement Timetable:

The below procurement timetable (reproduced from our Briefing Document) will be as follows :

Table 1: Procurement process summary and indicative timetable –

Activity:	Date:
Notice on Contracts Finder / Find a Tender Service	16 June
Briefing document issued	16 June
Invitation to Tender issued	17 June
Contract issued	17 June
Evaluation Model issued (Schedule 4)	20 June
Tender Response Document issued (Schedule 5)	20 June
Deadline for receipt of written questions	Thursday 23 June (by 12 noon)
Fund to upload responses to bidder questions.	TBC
ITT Stage Bidder event	TBC, if held.
Deadline for submitting tender returns	Thursday 7 July (by 12 noon)

Evaluation period	7 – 11 July
Bidder interviews	Clarification meetings may be held with shortlisted consultants and would take place on week commencing: 11 July.
Confirmation of contract with Preferred Bidder	W/C 25 July
Standstill period	If used, the voluntary standstill period is incorporated into the above.

4 ITT Bidder questions:

The objective of the Bidder Questions stage is to give Bidders the opportunity to submit questions to the Fund where they require clarification on the information contained in the ITT.

The ITT Bidder clarification period will be as indicated in Table 1 above. The Fund is unlikely to respond to clarification questions received after the expiry of this period.

Bidders must submit clarification questions via the procurement email address procurement@heritagefund.org.uk

The Fund will endeavour to respond by the date indicated in Table 1 above.

The Fund will distribute all clarification questions raised by Bidders, and corresponding Fund responses, to all other Bidders. These will be anonymised. Please note that the Fund will usually (although not always) respond to questions in one batch, not individually as received.

5 ITT submission:

All bids should be submitted via email to the following address:

procurement@heritagefund.org.uk

IMPORTANT: due to the volume of correspondence that we receive, please ensure that the subject field of your email begins with the following reference number: NHMF 308.

Bidders should use the 'delivery receipt' and 'read receipt' function to verify that their email has been received.

The ITT submission date and time are as indicated in Table 1 above. Failure to return Bids by the due date or in the required format may disqualify a Bidder from the Procurement.

6 ITT Bid clarifications from the Fund:

During the ITT Bid evaluation stage, the Fund may request written clarification from Bidders on their Bid. Any request by the Fund for clarification on Bids shall be made in writing to the Bidder's relevant Authorised Representative. Bidder's responses will normally be required electronically (via email) and within two (2) business days of request, unless otherwise stated.

Failure to respond adequately or within the deadline may be reflected in the evaluation of the Bid and may result in exclusion of the Bidder from further participation in the Procurement process. In exceptional circumstances, the Fund reserves the right to request a meeting with individual Bidders during the ITT Bid evaluation stage to facilitate a rapid clarification of points raised.

7 Selection of a Preferred Bidder:

A single Bidder will be selected to proceed to the Preferred Bidder stage of the Procurement.

The Fund reserves the right not to appoint the Preferred Bidder, or any Bidder. The Fund also reserves the right to cancel the process at any time in its entirety, or to cancel the process and recommence a new process.

8 Contract Award and Notification stage:

Once a Preferred Bidder is selected, the Fund will notify the Preferred Bidder of the intention to award a contract to the Preferred Bidder. All unsuccessful bidders shall be informed of the outcome of the evaluation.

During this stage, the Preferred Bidder will work together with the Fund to finalise any outstanding issues in preparation for signature of the Contract.

The Fund reserves the right to re-engage with any other Bidder whose Bids meet the required evaluation standards.

9 Contract signature:

Assuming a successful completion of the Preferred Bidder stage, the Fund and the Preferred Bidder will sign the final Contract. The Fund reserves the right not to award a Contract to the Preferred Bidder, or any bidder.

10 Standard Contract:

The Fund's Standard Contract is located at Schedule 3.

Bidders are advised to carefully read and familiarise themselves with the contract, along with the ITT and all Schedules, before compiling their bids. Bidders must note their compliance within their Bid.

The Contract will be separate to and independent of any existing contract currently in place between a Bidders and the Fund.

11 Unsuccessful Bidder debrief:

Following Bidder notification of the evaluation outcome, the Fund will provide appropriate written feedback to Bidders.

12 Bidder changes:

Bidders are subject to an on-going obligation to notify the Fund of any material changes in their financial or other circumstances. This includes, but is not limited to, changes to the identity of Bidders or sub-contractors or the ownership or financial or other circumstances thereof and solvency of the Bidder. The Fund should be notified of any material change as soon as it becomes apparent. Failure to notify the Fund of any material changes or to comply with any of these provisions may lead to a Bidder being liable for disqualification.

If a Bidder wishes to change information from those recorded in their response to any document already submitted, details must be submitted to the Fund not later than five (5) business days prior to the ITT Bid submission deadline.

Thereafter, any subsequent changes must also be notified. The Fund reserves the right to refuse to allow such a change and to disqualify any Bidder from further participation in the procurement process in the event that such a change is made. In exercising its absolute discretion to either refuse or allow such a change, the Fund may take into account whether such change is material to the delivery of the Services.

In the event that the Fund is prepared to consider such a change, further evaluation of the Bidder is likely to be required and may result in the Fund refusing to allow the change.

13 Compliant Bids:

Bidders are advised to carry out the following steps when compiling their Bids:

- Carefully read this ITT, the Contract, and all other Schedules;
- Compile the required responses to Schedules; and
- Submit their Bid(s) in accordance with the requirements outlined within this document.

A Bid shall only be a Compliant Bid where it:

- Generally complies with the provisions of this ITT;
- Generally complies with the provisions of the Specification;
- Includes responses to the questions set out in the schedules;
- Confirms acceptance of all Contract Terms in the Contract; and
- Is in the required format set out within our ITT.

Bidders who do not submit a Compliant Bid may be liable to disqualification.

All documents must be completed, signed (where required), and returned in accordance with the instructions and by the date at table 1.

14 Information provided in Bids:

In evaluating Bids, the Fund will only consider information provided in response to this ITT (including clarifications and interviews). Bidders should not assume that the Fund has any prior knowledge of their organisation, its practice or reputation, or its involvement in existing services, projects or procurements.

All relevant information required to support the Bid should be included in the Bidder's response, or, where necessary, cross-referenced in it. Documents specific to the Bid, referenced in the Bid and provided to the Fund, will be considered as part of the Bid. General corporate material and non-specific supporting documentation will not be considered and should therefore not be included.

15 General Guidance:

For brevity, clarity, and ease of evaluation, please use bullet points where appropriate within your bid.

As a general guideline to responses, bidders should wherever appropriate –

- Substantiate their ability to deliver by providing any details of where they have used similar approaches before
- Focus upon outcomes
- Detail outcomes they have delivered elsewhere
- Quantify the outcomes (e.g., improvement of 10% against KPIs made)
- Set out clearly any unique and innovative elements

These general guidelines are reflected within the evaluation details given elsewhere within this ITT (Schedule 4).

16 Scoring Mechanism:

The table below shows the scoring mechanism that will be used by the evaluation panel. We reserve the right to ask Bidders to clarify responses (see table 1) and adjust scores accordingly.

Table 2: Quality Questions Scoring Mechanism.

Score	Word descriptor	Description
0	Poor	No response or partial response and poor evidence provided in support of it. Does not give the Fund confidence in the ability of the Bidder to deliver the Contract.
1	Weak	Response is supported by a weak standard of evidence in several areas giving rise to concern about the ability of the Bidder to deliver the Contract.
2	Satisfactory	Response is supported by a satisfactory standard of evidence in most areas but a few areas lacking detail/evidence giving rise to some concerns about the ability of the Bidder to deliver the Contract.
3	Good	Response is comprehensive and supported by good standard of evidence. Gives the Fund confidence in the ability of the Bidder to deliver the contract. Meets the Fund's requirements.
4	Very good	Response is comprehensive and supported by a high standard of evidence. Gives the Fund a high level of confidence in the ability of the Bidder to deliver the contract. May exceed the Fund's requirements in some respects.
5	Excellent	Response is very comprehensive and supported by a very high standard of evidence. Gives the Fund a very high level of confidence the ability of the Bidder to deliver the contract. May exceed the Fund's requirements in most respects.

17 Evaluation:

The evaluation model is detailed at Schedule 4.

18 Tender Return Document:

The Bidder must answer the questions in the Tender Return Document (see Schedule 5) fully, and to provide as much detail as possible, but taking note of any word limits set.

Some questions may require the submission of additional supporting documents. Where requested, please ensure that you clearly mark which schedule and schedule question number any additional documentation refers to. However, please do not provide information that has not been requested as the evaluators may ignore such information.

All questions should be answered in English and the answers should be relevant to the question asked.

The responses given may be used as a basis for the final contract if you are selected as the Preferred Bidder.

19 Procurement process:

The Fund reserves the right not to consider any Bid received after the above deadline. Bidders are strongly recommended to submit their bid earlier to avoid IT system issues. The Fund will not usually allow bids to be considered after the deadline has expired.

The Fund reserves the right to reject abnormally low scoring tenders. The Fund reserves the right not to appoint, and / or to achieve the outcomes of the ITT through other methods.

The Fund reserves the right to alter the above timetable.

As noted above, the Fund will upload response to clarification on our website, usually on Contracts Finder or the Find a Tender Service. Details regarding our transparency policy are available at the same location. Please note that we will make the anonymised questions, and our responses to them, available to everyone on the website.

We reserve the right to carry out clarifications if necessary; these may be carried out via email or by inviting bidders to attend a clarification meeting. In order to ensure that both Fund's and Bidder's resources are used appropriately, we will only invite up to three (the ultimate number will depend on the closeness of the scores) highest scoring bidders to attend a clarification meeting. Scores will be moderated based on any clarifications provided during this meeting. You are responsible for all your expenses when attending such meetings.

Your tender proposals must be sent electronically via e-mail before the tender return deadline.

20 Freedom of Information:

The Fund is committed to open government and meeting its legal responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Accordingly, any information created by or submitted to the Fund (including, but not limited to, the information contained in the application and the submissions, and clarification answers received from Bidders) may need to be disclosed by the Fund in response to a request for information under FOIA.

In making a submission or application or corresponding with the Fund at any stage of the procurement, each Bidder, acknowledges and accepts that the Fund may be obliged under the FOIA to disclose any information provided to it:

- Without consulting Bidders or
- Following consultation with Bidders and having taken its views into account.

Bidders must clearly identify any information supplied in their response to the application that they consider to be confidential or commercially sensitive and attach a brief statement of the reasons why such information should be so treated and for what period.

Where it is considered that disclosing information in response to a FOIA request could cause a risk to the procurement process or prejudice the commercial interests of any Bidders, the Fund may wish to withhold such information under the relevant FOIA exemption.

However, all Bidders should be aware that the Fund is responsible for determining at its absolute discretion whether the information requested falls within an exemption to disclosure, or whether it must be disclosed.

Bidders should therefore note that the receipt by the Fund of any information marked “confidential” or equivalent does not mean that the Fund accept any duty of confidence by virtue of that marking, and that the Fund has the final decision regarding the disclosure of any such information in response to a request for information under the FOIA.

21 Disclaimer:

The information contained in the ITT is presented in good faith and does not purport to be comprehensive or to have been independently verified. Neither the Fund, nor any of their advisers (if used) accept any responsibility or liability in relation to its

accuracy or completeness or any other information which has been, or which is subsequently, made available to any Bidder, funders or any of their respective advisers, orally or in writing or in whatever medium.

Bidders, their funders and their respective advisers must therefore take their own steps to verify the accuracy of any information which they consider relevant and are not entitled to rely on any statement or representation made by the Fund or any of their advisers.

22 Financial 'Bid' Model:

The estimated budget for this research work is £85,000 (this figure is incl. VAT) .

Bidders will, of course, be expected to submit their keenest prices within the ITT.

Bidders should refer to the tender evaluation details (see Schedule 4) in order to understand the importance of quality against price.

Bidders must include all expenses and VAT.

In order to ensure that your proposal is financially robust, a financial bid model may be requested. If Bidders are requested to submit a financial 'bid' model as part of their tender submission, this will be stated within the Tender Response Document.

If requested, Bidders should demonstrate that their bid is financially viable. The financial bid model should show the costs associated with the work, and include number of staff and the amount of time that will be scheduled to work on the contract with the daily charging rate, the number of working days, and travel and subsistence costs associated with their tender submission.