Arts Council England Invitation to Tender

**Title:** The Livelihoods of Visual Artists in England – work, life, money

**Reference number:**ART011-0072

**Deadline for receipt of tender proposals:** 5pm, Friday 6 November 2015

**Section 1: Background**

Arts Council England champions, develops and invests in artistic and cultural experiences that enrich people's lives. We support a range of activities across the arts, museums and libraries - from theatre to digital art, reading to dance, music to literature, and crafts to collections.

Great art and culture inspires us, brings us together and teaches us about ourselves and the world around us. In short, it makes life better. Between 2015 and 2018, we will invest £1.1 billion of public money from government and an estimated £700 million from the National Lottery to help create these experiences for as many people as possible across the country.

The Arts Council’s policy and research team work to produce knowledge to inform the organisation’s future strategy and improve delivery. The team sits within the Arts and Culture department at head office, which is responsible for providing a national overview, policy development, equality and diversity leadership, specialist advice, long-term strategic thinking, research, and managing national strategic partnerships.

**Arts Council England’s 10-year strategic framework and Goal 1**

Arts Council England has recently published its refreshed strategic framework, *Great Art and Culture for Everyone,* which describes how the Arts Council’s vision for England will be achieved. This refreshed strategy runs until 2020 and brings together previous strategies for the arts and for museums and libraries.

At the heart of this document are five inter-related strategic goals, which guide the Arts Council’s activity and investment:

1. Excellence is thriving and celebrated in the arts, museums and libraries
2. Everyone has the opportunity to experience and to be inspired by the arts, museums and libraries
3. The arts, museums and libraries are resilient and environmentally sustainable
4. The leadership and workforce in the arts, museums and libraries are diverse and appropriately skilled
5. Every child and young person has the opportunity to experience the richness of the arts, museums and libraries

[*Great Art and Culture for Everyone*](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/Great_art_and_culture_for_everyone.pdf)describes Arts Council England’s aspirations for Goal 1, and in particular that ‘Artists, arts organisations, museums and libraries are delivering artistic work and cultural experiences that represent the height of ambition, talent and skill.’

Section 2: Specification

**Introduction**

Arts Council England is the national agency for the development of individual visual artists, and yet there is a lack of information to help us understand the implications of our funding on visual artists’ careers.

There is a lack of any comprehensive data and analysis on how professional practicing visual artists in England are operating financially, how they derive economic benefits from their practice and other related and non-related activity, to be able to work and live.

The ACE Research team in their evidence review: “The value of arts and culture to individuals and society” found that whilst there have been a handful of research studies cited that considered the plight of the artist, in terms of their economic security and social and economic conditions that enable them to thrive and flourish. Better understanding of artists’ individual trajectories, of their economic and social status and rights, and of the factors that sustain or place constraints on their development would be an interesting theme for future research.

A significant proportion of successful, and unsuccessful, applications to Grants for the Arts are from visual artists. Typically, income from Grants for the Arts sits within a portfolio of activity which makes up an individual visual artist’s practice.

The limited data on artists’ income, which does exist, indicates annual income levels for many, at a low or subsistence level. A-N’s Big Artists’ Survey, 2011 and Paying Artists Research First Phase Findings, 2012-13, found that the majority of their UK artist members turnover was less than £10k per annum from their practice.

Goal 1 of our strategy, as described above, means it is essential we know and understand the implications of the economic and associated social welfare circumstances of individual visual artists in England. Examples include unsatisfactory pay arrangements and practices, as highlighted and evidenced in a-n’s recent Paying Artists Review. This is being increasingly debated and questioned at a political level.

This understanding is essential to inform our investment in talent if it is to have meaningful and lasting impact. This is equally relevant to being able to achieve the Creative Case and Goal 4 workforce development aims.

This research is proposed in the context of a continuing challenging economic climate, with further reductions in available public funding anticipated, not only arts-related funding, but also reductions and changes to the benefits system, which, as many are known to be on low-incomes, affects visual artists. This is in sharp contrast to the significant contribution and rate of growth of our creative industries in relation to the UK economy.

There have been many enquiries around this subject area, however these have tended to take a theoretical/academic approach and/or are focussed on a narrow field of reference, relevant to the particular commissioner, its market/audience or constituency of members/subscribers, or concerned with a specific geographical location.

A comprehensive study in relation to visual artists in England which can clearly inform and be practically applied in a ‘real world’ context, is needed, based on a foundation of robust data collection and analysis.

**What or who will the research ultimately aim to influence or inform?**

* Government, government departments and those they directly fund including ACE, policy-makers, funders and commissioners of arts and cultural activity including stakeholders such as local government, trusts & foundations, education providers, including HEIs, other statutory services and relevant agencies
* Commissioners of arts and cultural activity including the arts and cultural sector, libraries, heritage and tourism
* The work will aim to engage and influence internationally, particularly at a pan-European level, by connecting to relevant / parallel activity being taken forward in 2016, via networks such as Visual Arts Platform (VAP), by organisations such as the Mondriaan Fund, the Danish Agency for Culture, Arts Promotion Centre Finland (via the Finish Institute) and the Flanders Art Institute. VAP discussions held in Manchester in November 2014 included whether ‘a common code for funders’ could be developed.

**Aims and objectives**

Arts Council England wishes to procure a service provider to carry out research that will enable a comprehensive understanding of how artists in England live and work, depending on the nature of their practice, where they are located and the social, economic and cultural influencing factors.

There are 4 key aims:

1. To understand the challenges and barriers faced by visual artists that prevents them from realising their full potential.
2. To understand how social, cultural and environmental factors such as employment status, education, age and gender, affect the career and talent development of visual artists, and the implications of this for workforce diversity.
3. To understand where artists are located and the factors which affect the movement and retention of artists between the regions, London and internationally.
4. To understand the variation between different sub-art forms within the visual arts and the spill-over with the Creative Industries.

The findings from this study will directly feed into national visual arts work focussed on the development and support of visual artists’ clusters.

**Requirements and Proposed methodology**

**A literature and data review** – of existing sources of research, data and evidence. This stage could include a call for evidence among relevant visual arts organisations/sector bodies. It would also include collation of any available data sources about where artists live, their earnings, and typical employment numbers. The DCMS Creative Employment stats contain information about different types of professional visual artists; though of course miss those that practice part-time or alongside other types of work/employment. But an initial synthesis of existing data would help with the later stages of the research and ensure that any data collected at later phases isn’t duplicating an existing source.

**3-5 focus groups or interviews –** with visual artists, in order to understand key themes and ensure that the survey questions cover topics that artists suggest are pertinent to their working lives, careers and trajectories as practicing artists. These focus groups could feed into development of the survey and collect in-depth attitudinal and perception-based data from artists. The focus groups would ideally be spread across the country and involve different types of visual artists (e.g. by primary practice).

**A hosted online survey** – Which would be marketed extensively and respondents sampled via convenience and snowball sample methods. The survey should ideally be piloted, tested and refined prior to full launch. The survey should aim for a large-scale (e.g. at least 1,000 respondents) sample. Key demographic and geographic information about the profile of respondents could be monitored throughout the fieldwork period, which could lead to targeted communications and sample boosts in places or art-forms where response rates are lower.

Options for the survey must incorporate the potential to collect longitudinal data from a sample of artists. Research suppliers are asked to consider the capture and store of file respondent contact information in order to potentially be re-contacted in the future for a repeated survey.

***NB:*** *The approach must consider all relevant respondent consent and data protection issues in order for follow-up contact, possibly from a different survey provider.*

**A further 3-5 focus groups** – To explore and further understand key findings emerging from the survey. The focus groups would ideally be spread across the country and involve different types of visual artists (e.g. by primary practice), though the exact quotas would probably need to be decided in response to what the survey findings are.

Research suppliers are asked to note the ideas for a research methodology suggested above and outline how they would implement a research strategy incorporating these ideas and suggestions with associated costs for each strand.

Suppliers are welcome to suggest fully costed alternative or additional research methods that meet the aims and objectives of the research and come within the budget. Suppliers should include in detail the phasing of different research approaches over the course of the contract. Suppliers should also provide information on how research participants will be engaged, conduct the research fieldwork and how they would ensure quality of data analysis and reporting outputs.

Suppliers should include information in their proposal about how they would approach recruitment/sampling, target sample sizes for qualitative and quantitative research and modes of data collection.

**Expected outputs**

* A full **research report** or set of reporting outputs which are likely to published, inclusive of details of the methodology and sources of evidence and data.
* An **executive summary report** about the key findings from the project
* A set of **case studies** of good practice and examples of areas for improvement
* A full set of **survey data tables** with various cross-tabulation, and a full SPSS file for the whole survey dataset.
* A set of **recommendations** for follow-up action by the Arts Council and arts and cultural organisations.

Research suppliers are asked to note the proposed research outputs expected, and are welcome to suggest additional or alternative outputs they feel could be useful for Arts Council England.

**Procurement and Project Timetable**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Event** | **Date/Time** |
| Tender Notice posted | 16 October 2015 |
| \*Deadline for questions | 30 October 2015 |
| **Tender response deadline** | **5pm, Friday 6 November 2015** |
| \*\*Clarification Meetings (if applicable) | 11 November 2015 |
| Anticipated contract award | Between 11 and 18 November 2015 |
| Project Inception meeting | 18 November 2015 |
| Weekly email updates and fortnightly telephone catch-ups on progress | Exact dates to be confirmed with appointee. |
| Call for evidence, data analysis, literature review | Date to be agreed with appointee at inception meeting. |
| Primary research recruitment period | Date to be agreed with appointee at inception meeting. |
| Survey design focus groups | Date to be agreed with appointee at inception meeting. |
| Primary research fieldwork | Date to be agreed with appointee at inception meeting. |
| Analysis and reporting of research data | Date to be agreed with appointee at inception meeting. |
| In depth focus groups | Date to be agreed with appointee at inception meeting. |
| Project meeting with the Arts Council to discuss project progress and reporting outputs | December 2015. Exact date to be agreed with appointee at inception meeting. |
| Seminar or workshop | Date to be agreed with appointee at inception meeting. |
| Submission of first draft of the Research Report  | 1February 2016 |
| Executive summary report | 1March 2016 |
| Case Studies | Date to be agreed with appointee at inception meeting. |
| Final Report Sign-off  | 31 March 2016 |

**\***Bidders should raise any queries they have about the requirements by sending an email to procurement@artscouncil.org.uk quoting the reference number provided on the ITT. Questions and responses (without identifying the author of the question) will be uploaded unto Contracts Finder

\*\*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 ACE’s and bidders’ resources are used appropriately, we will only invite up to three (the ultimate number will depend on the closeness of 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. ACE reserves the right to vary all dates in this Invitation to tender, to terminate this procurement process and/or decide not to award a contract.

Research suppliers are asked to note the above project timescales (project inception meeting onwards) and include in their proposal how they would work towards these timescales.

**Duration of Contract**

Arts Council England will award the contract to the successful supplier for the period of November 2015 – March 2016. Exact dates will be confirmed at appointment and project set-up.

**Service Levels**

The supplier should set out proposed service levels as part of their tender response.

**Account Management**

In performing the services required under this contract the supplier will report to Sam Peace, Relationship Manager Visual Arts. Please specify in your proposal the named individual who will be responsible for the account management of this contract on behalf of your organisation.

The supplier should provide weekly project updates via email throughout the length of the project. Additional meetings can be scheduled as and if required in discussion with the project manager at the Arts Council. These will be held at the Arts Council’s Manchester, Birmingham, London, Bristol, Brighton, Nottingham, Leeds or Newcastle offices, or via video conferencing between these as agreed by the parties.

**Logo**

The Arts Council England logo should be used alongside the supplier’s logo on all reporting outputs. Arts Council England will advise on house style guidelines at project set-up. The Arts Council England shall own all intellectual property created for it as part of the contract.

**Contract Value**

The approximate value for the contract is in the range of **£30,000 to £40,000 excluding VAT**. Bids in excess of £48, 000 (including VAT) shall be excluded as unaffordable and will not be assessed against the evaluation criteria below.

You should provide an informed estimate of the cost of the project in the Table of Charges below.

**Payment Structure and billing requirements**

**Payment will be made on the achievement of agreed contract milestones. The payment profile will be agreed with the successful contractor and set out in the contract terms and conditions,**

**Evaluation Criteria**

You are required to respond to **ALL** of the criteria below. To assist our evaluation of your tender submission, please ensure you clearly cross-refer your responses to the assigned numbers. Any relevant supporting tender documentation must also be clearly identifiable by a criteria number.

1. Quality Criteria

**65 marks** will be allocated to your response to the Quality Questions (table 1 below). Each question will be scored using the methodology in the table 2 below.

Your overall score for each question will be calculated by multiplying the quality score you receive with the weighting for that question, set out below. This score will then be divided by the total maximum available score for the Quality Criteria (325) and multiplied by 65% to get your final score for that question.

Example: assume Bidder A scores 3 for Question 1: the formula is **3 x 10 = 30, 30 ÷ 325 x 65 = 6.00%**

**35% of the marks will be available for your Price Proposal**. The methodology for scoring price is set out further below.

Your responses should be supported by evidence/previous successful implementation of proposed solution for meeting our requirements.

Please note – Though criteria are numbered, this does not relate to any order of importance

Table 1

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Quality Criteria** | **Weighting** |
| 1. A demonstrated understanding of the background to the research and the aims and objectives
 | 10 |
| 1. Please detail your research methodology for meeting all of the requirements set out above. Please include a timetable for delivering the services.

You should support your answer by reference to your previous relevant experience. | 30 |
| 3. Demonstrate your ability to deliver accurate, concise and well -structured written research by submitting two examples of published reports. Please include the reports as part of your bid or provide URLs.  | 5 |
| 4. Skills and experience of the key personnel proposed for this contract in: * delivering research in the arts and cultural sector and about disability equality; and
* conducting analysis of equality and diversity and about workforce development
 | 20 |

Table 2

|  |
| --- |
| **Scoring Methodology** |
| 0 | Very Poor  | No response or partial response and poor evidence provided in support of it.  Does not give ACE confidence in the ability of the Bidder to deliver the Contract and/or our requirements are not met in most respects. |
| 1 | Weak  | Response is supported by a weak standard of evidence in some areas giving rise to concern about the ability of the Bidder to deliver the Contract and/or our requirements are not met in some respects.  |
| 2 | Satisfactory | Response is satisfactory and supported by a satisfactory standard of evidence. Gives ACE confidence in the ability of the bidder to deliver the contract, meets the requirements in most respects. |
| 3 | Good  | Response is comprehensive and supported by good standard of evidence. Gives ACE a high level confidence in the ability of the Bidder to deliver the contract and meets ACEs requirements. |
| 4 | Very Good | Response is comprehensive and supported by a very good standard of evidence meeting ACE requirements and may exceed them in some respects. Gives ACE  a very good level of confidence in the ability of the Bidder to deliver the contract.  |
|             5 | Exceptional  | Response is very comprehensive and supported by a high standard of evidence. Gives ACE a very high level of confidence in the ability of the Bidder to deliver the contract.  May exceed ACE’s requirements in several respects.  |

1. Price criteria (35 marks)

**35 marks** will be awarded to the lowest priced bid and the remaining bidders will be allocated scores based on their deviation from this figure. Your total costs figure including VAT and expenses in the schedule of charges below will be used to score this question.

For example, if the lowest price is £100 and the second lowest price is £125 then the lowest priced bidder gets 35% (full marks) for price and the second placed bidder gets 26.25% and so on. (25/100 x 35 = 8.75 marks; 35 – 8.75 = 26.25 marks)

**The bidder with the highest score when the quality and price marks are added up will be the preferred bidder.**

**Table of Charges**

VAT is chargeable on the services to be provided and this will be taken into account in the overall cost of this procurement contract.

Bidders shall complete the table of charges below estimating the number of days and travel and subsistence costs associated with their bid. The total fixed price will be inclusive of VAT and inclusive of expenses and all costs to be incurred.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Service** | **Quantity/Days** | **Unit costs/Day rate** | **Total** |
| Pre contract set up meeting | 1 |  |  |
| Weekly email updates on progress |  |  |  |
| Synthesis of existing data, research and literature |  |  |  |
| Primary research recruitment period |  |  |  |
| Primary research fieldwork |  |  |  |
| Focus groups x 2 |  |  |  |
| Development of case studies |  |  |  |
| Analysis and reporting of primary research data |  |  |  |
| Development of full written research report and other reporting outputs |  |  |  |
| First draft of the research outputs |  |  |  |
| Final Report  |  |  |  |
| Travel  |  |  |  |
| Expenses |  |  |  |
| Other |  |  |  |
| **Sub-total** |  |  |  |
| **VAT at 20%** |  |  |  |
| **Total Price including VAT and expenses *(this figure will be used to calculate your price score. This figure must not exceed £48,000 including VAT.*** |  |  |  |

Notes:

1. Arts Council England reserves the right to reject abnormally low tenders.
2. You should not submit additional assumptions with your pricing submission. If you submit assumptions you will be asked to withdraw them. Failure to withdraw them will lead to your exclusion from further participation in this competition.

# Section 2: Instructions to tenderers

Please submit your tender offer in accordance with all of the instructions, requirements and specifications set out in the enclosed documentation.

You must treat these documents and any further information provided by Arts Council England as confidential at all times and only disclose them if necessary to prepare a compliant response to the tender.

Nothing in the enclosed documentation or appendixes, or any other communication made between Arts Council England and any other party, can be considered a contract or agreement at this stage.

## Compliance

Arts Council England reserves the right to disqualify any tenderers who do not fully comply with the requirements in the tender documentation, in particular the closing time and date.

## Contract Terms and Conditions

Arts Council England will award the contract to the successful tenderer for the period of November 2015 – March 2016. Exact dates will be confirmed on appointment and signing of a project contract.

The Arts Council’s standard terms and conditions for services will form part of the contract to be awarded. These can be downloaded and reviewed from our website:<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/media/uploads/pdf/Contract_for_Services_over_10K_v1_March_2012.pdf>. **The Preferred Supplier will not be permitted to enter into any negotiations on the terms of the Contract. Any attempt to negotiate amendments will breach the terms of this ITT and will result in the Preferred Supplier being excluded from the tender process. In such circumstances Arts Council England reserves the right to invite the next highest scoring Bidder to enter into the Contract.**

Please note that Arts Council England are required to publish online the final awarded contract and any associated documentation. If you have any concerns about the future publication of sensitive information you should raise these within your tender proposal, highlighting which areas within your proposal you consider may be subject to exemption, and subsequent redaction, in line with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). More information about FOIA can be found at [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk/).

## Validity of offer

You must offer your tender for acceptance for 60 days from the deadline for tender submission.

Please note that by submitting a tender response for consideration you are confirming that, as an officer for the company/organisation that you represent, you have read and understood the tender documents and that your offer to Arts Council England is open for acceptance for 60 days from the tender closing date.

## Tendering

If we need to amend any tender documents before the closing date, we will write to you with any changes. If we extend the deadline for tender responses, we will advise you.

Arts Council England reserves the right, in its absolute discretion, to cancel or suspend this tender process at any time and for any reason. If we need to do this we will notify you in writing as soon as reasonably practicably.

Arts Council England is not responsible, and will not pay for any expenses or losses you incur during, but not limited to, the tender preparation, site visits, post-tender negotiations or interviews.

**Return of Tender**

You must complete and submit your tender response/proposal electronically to procurement@artscouncil.org.uk by the tender deadline of **5pm, Friday 6 November 2015.**

We will only accept responses submitted via the email address provided. We will not accept any responses submitted by any other method. Any tender delivered after the closing date and time for any reason will be discounted.

The Arts Council is not responsible if all or part of your tender is not received.