

Invitation to Tender - Responding to the changing needs of the academic and research sectors and scoping the Research Landscape

On behalf of The National Archives

Issue Date: June 10th, 2015

Deadline for Response: Midday, July 9th, 2015

1. INTRODUCTION

The National Archives (TNA) is the official archive of the UK government and for England and Wales, making available to the public a vast collection of historical records dating back over 1,000 years. The higher education sector and research in higher education are evolving rapidly, and as a result, TNA has created a new Research and Collections Directorate to focus on its academic audiences.

TNA requires evidence of what users need and want in order to plan services and collaborations. TNA has examined options and concluded it does not have the resources at present to conduct this research in-house. As a result, TNA is inviting bids to produce a two-part study to capture the changing needs of academic users across sectors, and to scope the current and future research landscape. Written in plain English, the scoping study will draw on national and international research to identify key trends and challenges, and make recommendations.

2. PROJECT SPECIFICATION

A scoping study is required to identify the changing needs and challenges of the academic and research sectors, to clarify TNA's current offer to those sectors and to assess how well equipped TNA is in terms of current resources and skills to address those needs and wants. The successful supplier will work in conjunction with those running relevant TNA initiatives in order to ensure that their viewpoints and needs are taken into consideration, and that duplication and overlap are avoided. The Research and Collections directorate is commissioning a study to examine the following:

Part I) Responding to the changing needs of the academic and research sectors

- Assess the challenges and needs of the academic and research sectors, currently undergoing considerable change
- Survey and assess TNA's current offer to the sectors
- Identify what services and communications the academic and research sectors need and want
- Assess how well equipped TNA is in terms of current resources and skills to address those needs and wants
- Make recommendations for TNA, especially around what TNA could and should offer, considering any financial, intellectual and other resource constraints
- Consider what TNA should offer in terms of future aspiration and what it would need to do to meet those aspirations
- Make connections between how these offers and aspirations support TNA's business and research strategies

Part II) Scoping the Research Landscape

The National Archives' new Research and Collections Directorate has the following within its priorities:

- Expand its national and international reputation for pioneering research in line with its status as an Independent Research Organisation
- Leverage its current research reputation to develop funding success

The National Archives seeks to commission a study to scope the current research landscape and its reputation within it, in order to establish a baseline for future research activities. The successful supplier will research and survey, then write and deliver a report for TNA, encompassing the following:

- A brief general overview of the national and international research landscape, its issues and challenges
- A brief overview of the landscape, issues and challenges relating to the relevant disciplinary areas, namely: archival and information science, history, social science, heritage science and digital humanities
- A brief overview of the research landscape, issues and challenges relating to TNA's main stakeholders and audiences including government, archive sector, academia, independent research organisations
- TNA's current national reputation in relevant disciplinary areas, and with the named stakeholders and audiences
- TNA's current international reputation in relevant disciplinary areas, and with the named stakeholders and audiences
- Recommendations for realistic aspirations in terms of reputational growth and how to meet those aspirations

3. TIMETABLE

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| • Invitation to Tender Published | <i>June 10th, 2015</i> |
| • Deadline for Responses | <i>July 9th, 2015</i> |
| • Time-Box for Potential Supplier Interviews | <i>w/c July 13th, 2015</i> |
| • Contract Award | <i>w/c July 20th, 2015</i> |
| • Project Completion | <i>End-October, 2015</i> |

4. BUDGET

The maximum available budget for the delivery of this project is £25,000.

5. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Tender submissions will be evaluated on a combination of Price (40%) and Quality of Response (60%).

6. SUBMISSIONS

Please respond to this opportunity by:

- Describing how you would meet the requirements described in the Project Specification.
- Providing relevant evidence of your research experience and expertise, including details of relevant projects successfully completed in the past 2 years.
- Providing a total price for you to deliver the project.

The supplier will be required to sign a contract agreeing to The National Archives' standard terms and conditions of contract for services. We draw your attention in particular to Section A7 of these terms and conditions, covering Conflicts of Interest - <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/procurement-terms-conditions-services.pdf>

The National Archives reserves the right not to appoint and to achieve the outcomes of the project through other methods.

7. KEY DATES & CONTACTS

Please submit your proposal to procurement@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk by **Midday on July 9th, 2015**.

Please submit any clarification questions to research@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk