

Widening Engagement Tender: Conversations about widening creative and cultural engagement with communities across Wales.

Arts Council of Wales responses to questions received

We have received the following questions from potential bidders in response to the above opportunity currently advertised. All questions received are presented in their original wording, below, together with our corresponding answers to each. Therefore, questions and responses may duplicate. This document is published on Monday 20 April 2020 and prior to the closing date of 24th April 2020 of the above tender.

Is the tender still active?

Yes, the deadline remains 5pm on Friday 24 April 2020. However, we of course understand the complexities of planning ahead with any assurance at this point, so are keen to be flexible around timetable for delivery etc.

Given the current COVID-19 outbreak:

1. Are the timescales for submission and contract delivery still the same?
2. What is the latest you would want this work delivered by?

Given the current outbreak and the fact that social distancing measures could be in place for up to 18 months this would influence our methodology, as face to face engagement (our preferred primary engagement method) is not possible or safe at this time.

We are keeping the submission date the same, but obviously understand that timescale for delivery and completion date will need to be flexible – and we're happy to accommodate this of course in these unprecedented times.

1. The deadline is 24th April. Could you let us know if, in light of the Corvid 19 pandemic, this remains the deadline or whether this will be postponed. The restrictions upon gatherings and the impact upon those living with dementia, who will fall within the criteria of vulnerable individuals being asked to self-isolate, will obviously have an impact upon the Tender Proposal and how we are able to carry out "Conversations" with those affected by dementia.
2. If the deadline remains the 24th April we would anticipate that our Project Activity would not begin until July this year. This would be to take into account, as much as we are able, the effect of current Corvid 19 restrictions. Our intention is also that the Project would be completed by the end of one year. Would this be acceptable?

3. Although ACW has not specified a budget, are you able to let us know whether there is an upper limit?

We will be holding to the original closing date of 24 April but are happy (of course) to be flexible with regard to when a project can appropriately start. We're all living through unprecedented times, and we need to work together to be realistic and supportive.

We don't have an upper limit for the work. We're keen for this project to be carried out effectively and efficiently, and budgets for delivery will need to reflect this.

Can I get some guidance on how wide you ideally want the direct engagement and mapping and your ideal completion date? – as this will inform our tender and allow us to submit an application that is deliverable in the timescale required by ACW.

We're interested in gaining as broad an engagement as possible to enable us to gather feedback and opinions from a wide number of communities across Wales.

With regard to timescale, as noted in the tender, this should be completed as soon as is practical. This will obviously be determined by the above, and by the time allocated to engaging with communities. We're keen not to rush things, as we want to get this right.

I see that the deadline for the application is 24 April. Has this deadline remained the stay or will it be extended due to current health situation?

We are keeping to the submission date of 24 April as the deadline.

However, we of course understand the complexities of planning ahead with any assurance at this point, so are keen to be flexible around timetable for delivery in these challenging times.

We're in the process of putting our application together, but had some key questions that we need your help with:

Do you have an indicative budget, or scale of budget within which you're expecting this research to be delivered

What is the timeline for delivery in context of Covid

Are there any implications of this research in context of Covid

Are you able to provide us with access to the preliminary research undertaken that's referred to in the tender outline?

Who is the reporting - to come from this research - aimed at: ACW, the wider sector, communities themselves, or a combination?

What's the criteria for the involvement of others in the delivery of the work - geographical spread, specific focus on specifics of access/engagement issues? (we were

anticipating whether there would need to be additional work involved in potentially liaising with other contractees)

Finally, if you've had questions from others tendering, will those questions be published and if so, will your responses be published also?

- We are being very open about the number and type of proposals we'll consider to deliver this work. This type of community engagement and inclusion is new for us as a public body and we're keen to ensure we reach those communities we currently have no relationship with. We have not set a budget for this work because we are open to considering a range of different proposals – large and small. The key weighting will be on the approach to and experience of reaching and engaging with those communities.
- We have recognised the need to be flexible about the timeline due to the uncertainty about Covid 19. We anticipate proposals outlining the timescale needed to deliver the work but without specific start and end dates.
- Possibly but we have not identified what these might be. Our preference would be for much of this work to be undertaken face to face and in group settings.
- This was an internal piece of scoping work that looked at the projects and programmes we have delivered and also explored some of the community engagement work our funded organisations undertake. This commission is the next stage in the process hearing from communities about their experiences and aspirations for cultural engagement. We will discuss with the successful bidder or bidders the value of sharing the work we previously undertook.
- This involvement work is being undertaken to inform the development of future arts engagement work, but we will want to reflect the outcome back to the communities.
- This type of community engagement and inclusion is new for us as a public body and we're keen to ensure we reach those communities we currently have no relationship with. This is why we are inviting a range of proposals. How the work is eventually undertaken will be determined by the submissions we receive but it is certainly possible that we have more than one contractee. In such cases we would ensure there is no duplication and there may be some collaboration.
- We will publish these on our website.

We are creating a response to the above opportunity – and was wondering if you could provide guidance on a couple of elements

In section (3) of the specification – ‘The Brief’ – you highlight that ACW has previously commissioned a piece of work looking at community and engagement work supported across Wales – is this available?

Value for money - I note that no budget will be given for this work – and there is no sense of scale offered as to the number of contacts required. Can I ask your methodology for assessing value for money to ensure that we present our budget in a way that that allows for different interpretations of the scale of the project – and what is the scoring weighting on cost and other variables?

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Just wondering whether the 'Invitation to tender: conversations with communities across Wales' application is still open/going ahead or whether the COVID-19 fund has replaced it?

We can confirm that the Invitation to tender: Conversations with communities across Wales is still open and the closing date remains **5 pm on 24 April 2020**.

However, we of course understand the complexities of planning ahead with any assurance at this point, so are keen to be flexible around timetable for delivery etc.

We are interested in submitting a tender for this project as it very much fits into our work practice and artistic philosophy but we are also aware that currently organisations and community groups are unable to engage in creative conversations at this time. (several of our current projects are currently on hiatus). In terms of the bid how would you like the fact that none of us know when the restrictions will be lifted reflected in the timetable?

We have recognised the need to be flexible about the timeline due to the uncertainty about Covid 19. We anticipate proposals outlining the timescale needed to deliver the work but without specific start and end dates.

Does the Arts Council expect the work and subsequent report to be completed in both English and Welsh?

Ideally yes. We would expect the conversations to be undertaken with both English and Welsh speaking groups/communities and the report back to reflect this

Given that the expectation is for the work to be done as soon as possible in the current climate, would the Arts Council prefer a methodology delivery that is COVID-sensitive and will therefore remote-sensitive?

We have recognised the need to be flexible about the timeline due to the uncertainty about Covid 19. We anticipate proposals outlining the timescale needed to deliver the work but without specific start and end dates.

Finally, the ITT refers to a relevant report which was commissioned by the Arts Council at the end of last year. Is this something that will be available as a resource to the successful tenderers?

The report referred to was an internal piece of scoping work that looked at the projects and programmes we have delivered and also explored some of the community engagement work our funded organisations undertake. This commission is the next stage in the process hearing from communities about their experiences and aspirations for cultural engagement. We will discuss with the successful bidder or bidders the value of sharing the work we previously undertook.

Due to the lockdown are you proposing to stick with the original deadline date for both submission and for the project timeline?

We have recognised the need to be flexible about the timeline due to the uncertainty about Covid 19. We anticipate proposals outlining the timescale needed to deliver the work but without specific start and end dates

Can you give an indication of how much we should be pitching for budget wise?

We are being very open about the number and type of proposals we will consider delivering this work. This type of community engagement and inclusion is new for us as a public body and we are keen to ensure we reach those communities we currently have no relationship with. We have not set a budget for this work because we are open to considering a range of different proposals – large and small. The key weighting will be on the approach to and experience of reaching and engaging with those communities.

Can you give any links to the reports you reference in the Tender Document?

This was an internal piece of scoping work that looked at the projects and programmes we have delivered and explored some of the community engagement work our funded organisations undertake. This commission is the next stage in the process hearing from communities about their experiences and aspirations for cultural engagement. We will discuss with the successful bidder or bidders the value of sharing the work we previously undertook.

NB: How you propose to undertake the work is a matter for you to decide as part of your submission and something we will then consider as part of the selection process. It would be inappropriate for us to comment on this prior to your submission.