



Brief for an Evaluation Consultant

Devon and Exeter Institution - The Next Chapter Project

Introduction

Devon and Exeter Institution seeks to appoint a consultant to coordinate the evaluation of the activity plan, capital works and interpretation aspects of The Next Chapter project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which has recently begun its Delivery Phase.

Project Vision

To remove barriers for potential members and visitors by creating better access in all its forms – intellectual, cultural, and physical.

The delivery phase runs from January 2022 until the projected conclusion of the project in August 2024.

Background to the Project

The Devon and Exeter Institution is an independent library and educational charity in the heart of Exeter. The Institution was established in 1813

'...for promoting the general diffusion of Science, Literature and the Arts, and for Illustrating the Natural and Civil History of the County of Devon and the History of the City of Exeter.'

We became an educational charity in 1989 and a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in 2017.

The Next Chapter Project

This project builds upon the legacy of transformational change at the Institution in recent years and will ensure that a wider range of people are able to benefit from our collection, programme and Grade II* listed building.

The capital elements of the project address the pressing need to reconsider the way we use space in the building. We are upgrading service areas and maximising the resources of the site, making best use of underused spaces.

Outcomes

The table below shows the ways in which our project will meet the NLHF outcomes, and these aspirations are underpinned by both our capital works and our activity plan.

NLHF outcomes	How the project meetings this outcome
<p>1) A wider range of people will be involved in heritage.</p>	<p>By the end of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our member and visitor profiles will broaden due to targeted engagement with priority audiences. • Visitors and members with a physical disability will be able to access all areas of the building. • More people will be able to positively engage with the treasures of the DEI via our enhanced digital platforms. • A wider range of groups will be able to engage with our programme because of our new flexible education spaces.
<p>2) The funded organisation will be more resilient.</p>	<p>By the end of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DEI will be better supported by an increased cohort of skilled and trained volunteers. • A higher percentage of our income will be derived from room bookings. • We will have recovered and increased our membership due to an upgraded building and better facilities. • We will have development and/or succession plans in place for our trustees and staff.
<p>3) People will have greater wellbeing.</p>	<p>By the end of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants will report a greater sense of connection and purpose by participating in our garden development and workshops (Theme 4). • Participants will report a greater sense of mindfulness and decreased anxiety by participating in our Cultural First Aid workshops (Theme 2).
<p>4) People will have developed skills.</p>	<p>By the end of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All volunteers will have an enhanced understanding of our heritage site. • Garden volunteers will have developed skills in horticulture. • Volunteers will have gained skills in interpretation, via our collection review (Theme 6). • Our staff and trustees will have gained skills in the area of audience development, marketing and fundraising.

<p>5) The local area will be a better place to live, work or visit.</p>	<p>By the end of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DEI will be embedded into the city-wide cultural recovery plan. • We will be able to offer an enhanced programme of activities and events in our new spaces to support UNESCO City of Literature. • There will be better facilities for local businesses wishing to hire our spaces.
<p>6) Heritage will be in better condition.</p>	<p>By the end of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have opened up our rooms in the south range to create reading, educational and events spaces. • We will deliver a new build at the rear of the building which will house accessible lavatories, a workroom, lift and service area on the first floor. • We will work within our Conservation Management Plan and the Quinquennial Review process, established during the development phase. • We will upgrade our heating system to a more environmentally sustainable option and upgrade WiFi infrastructure throughout the building.
<p>7) Heritage will be identified and better explained.</p>	<p>By the end of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will have conducted a collection review and delivered public dissemination and interpretation (Theme 6). • People will have enhanced digital access to our illustration collection feel included in 'crowd sourced' research. • People will have found out about the 'Hidden Stories' via our public dissemination events (Theme 5).
<p>8) People will have learnt about heritage, leading to change in ideas and actions.</p>	<p>By the end of the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The DEI Board will have a suitable maintenance plan for the building, following the establishment of the Quinquennial review process in R.I. • People will have found out about the 'Hidden Stories' via our public dissemination events (Theme 5).

Scope of the work and expected outputs

The role of the consultant will be to coordinate the evaluation of the activity plan, capital works and interpretation aspects of The Next Chapter project.

The consultant will:

- Create an evaluation framework which identifies benchmark data and outcomes, outlined in the table above, that are expected with delivery of each activity
- Carry out evaluation on site which includes interviewing participants and observing sessions
- Compile and analyse evaluation cards and questionnaires
- Draft a full Evaluation Report in collaboration with the Director, to be completed within three months of the project ending) keeping to NLHF guidelines.

Management of the commission

The commission will be managed by the Director, who will act as Project Manager for the Next Chapter project.

We expect a commissioning meeting and regular communication throughout the project.

Requirements of the submission

Your 1000-word proposal should include your approach and methodology for the project, plus evidence of your track record.

Skills required

The consultant should have experience and expertise in:

- Evaluation of NLHF projects within heritage organisations
- Analysis of data, outputs and outcomes
- Writing evaluation framework documents to HLF guidelines
- Writing up concluding report

We are looking for a consultant with excellent communication skills, and the ability to engage with people with a wide range of backgrounds and skills.

Date of submission and timescale

The closing date for submissions is 31st May 2022

The submission should be emailed to Emma Dunn, Director of Devon and Exeter Institution at: project@devonandexeterinstitution.org

The interview date is planned for 15th June 2022

Fee

The fixed fee for the Evaluation Plan is £6,000 inc VAT and all expenses, over 2 years