

**Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution - Invitation to tender brief**

**Contractor sought for:**

**Organisational Support and Administration of Events and Activities  
of BRLSI Imaginations Project**

**Contract from January 2024 to January 2025 - Appointment will be subject to the award of  
a National Lottery grant (applied for) and a tender that meets our requirements.**

**Introduction**

- 1) Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution (BRLSI) is a charity based in Bath, an accredited museum with an extensive collection spanning 4.2 billion years of history that has been contributed by past generations of local collectors. The Institution has committed new investment and hundreds of volunteer hours into fresh resources – our latest project (BRLSI Imaginations) is subject to an application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.
- 2) To further realise the huge potential of our heritage and this project we now seek to work with a contractor to provide overall project management and administration and organisational support for activity delivery. In particular the contractor will help our Project Steering Group progress this programme over a 13 month period - to draw a wider and more diverse range of audiences to our heritage, to our activities, into our home in Bath's Queen Square, and to build stronger foundations for all our futures. This Invitation to Tender (ITT) is structured as follows:
  - (a) Background to BRLSI and approach proposed
  - (b) Outputs of BRLSI Imaginations
  - (c) Contract details
  - (d) Submission requirements
  - (e) Award criteria

**Background to BRLSI and approach proposed**

- 3) Bath Royal Literary and Scientific Institution (BRLSI) was founded in 1824 for the promotion and advancement of science, literature and art in the City of Bath and its surrounding areas. Our collection has been built by previous generations of BRLSI collectors who brought together our heritage of over 150,000 items that spans 4.2 billion years of history.
- 4) BRLSI has become the focus for scientific enquiry in the City, with lecture programmes and field trips, and since the days of our first Georgian members, collectors have deposited their collections with the Institution, including the geologist Charles Moore and the natural scientist, Leonard Jenyns. Their collections attracted others to gift theirs and now the Institution has nearly 150,000 individual items covering palaeontology, mineralogy, botany, zoology, archaeology, ethnography, archives and books. The collection is Accredited and fully catalogued.

- 5) Housed in a Grade 1 listed building in the centre of Bath (which we own), BRLSI continues to be a melting pot for scientific, literary and arts debate and enquiry through an impressive programme over 130 talks per annum on subjects ranging from Antiquities to World Affairs attended by 4,000 people a year. It has an important library of 8,000 volumes and research and publications programme. These activities, though impressive in their way, do not make full use of our resources and assets – both physical and intellectual. Indeed, BRLSI is described by many as one of Bath’s best kept secrets.
- 6) BRLSI has historically been sustained by rental of office space to businesses in its buildings and through hire of rooms for meetings and other functions when not in use by the charity. We suffered greatly through COVID but have drawn inspiration from our recent NLHF-funded Resilience project’s recommendations to mitigate impact and to enhance digital resources in particular. We are delivering on these over the last year to great effect – our new website is now developed as well as a series of specialist Digital Discovery Trails – also our Virtual BRLSI YouTube Channel has approaching 300 new talks and lectures online with another 100 likely to be created in 2023/24. The heritage has reached new audiences: a 50% increase in access to our heritage through use of the digital resources already in place.
- 7) Albert Einstein once said "Imagination is more important than knowledge". In BRLSI we don't downplay the importance of knowledge, rather Imagination and Knowledge complement each other - together they form the basis of progress and personal development. This vision powers our BRLSI Imaginations project to draw a wider and more diverse range of audiences to our heritage, to our activities, into our home in Bath's Queen Square, and to build stronger foundations for all our futures.
- 8) Step one will be this recruitment of this contractor to progress programme delivery through organisational support and administrative help to our staff and volunteers to take forward these plans. In particular this will mean working with us to deliver new and more diverse audiences through development of the innovative and exciting activities we have planned and ensuring what we do follows a structured diversity plan - so people feel comfortable in our cultural places; have the chance to learn; and can access what they need to get to, get around, learn from, or just enjoy a cultural place.
- 9) The programme itself has three building blocks:
  - a) Academy of Imagination (for children) directly engaging school-aged children with our heritage and charitable objects. Supported by a significant donation we are seeking to aid match funding of Academy activities so that we have a sustainable new thread of in-house and out-reach activities for the longer term. We will recruit an Academy Education Officer to design, develop and run an inclusive and imaginative programme for young people within Bath and the region and generate unique opportunities to inspire, enthuse and provoke imagination using our heritage in Archaeology, Arts and Crafts, Creative writing, Natural History, Philosophy, Science and Astronomy. Discussions have already commenced with our two Universities as partners, including using student interns in activities.

- b) Bicentenary Imaginations (for new and more diverse audiences). Next year marks the bicentenary of the foundation of the BRLSI, and we will use this one-in-two-hundred-years opportunity as a springboard for a year-long programme of public activities and events, to reaffirm the vision of our Georgian founders as a unique cultural hub for the city's residents and visitors where they share our heritage and discuss ideas and knowledge. Activities planning is well advanced and includes new ways of exhibiting our collection items, a three-day event focused on 'Engineering in Bath' and a 'Treasures of Bath' exhibition bringing together choice items from across Bath's cultural landscape, activities in Queens Square and as part of a revived 'Bath Taps into Science' festival. The Programme will progress a diverse mix of partnerships, speakers, venues and content including potentially innovative outreach activities in unusual locations such as inns and public places. Delivery collaborations have been agreed in principle with Museum of Bath at Work, Holburne Museum, National Trust and History of Bath Research Group and BANES Museums Group on different elements of the programme.
  - c) Imagination foundations. Underpinning these activities will be the need to enhance our donation generation, volunteer recruitment and audience management systems to grow our organisational resilience and provide underpinning foundations for activities. Using already prepared ITTs with details of requirements, proposals will be sought from suppliers to progress enhancements during 2024 to underpin further sustainability and long-term resilience.
- 10) This tender is for a professional contractor to particularly provide high level project management as well as administration, organisational support and facilitation to our Bicentenary team with delivery of the Bicentenary events and activities; this includes administration of the progress of the overall project (so we achieve the desired milestones) as well as facilitating successful events, exhibitions and inhouse or outreach activities.
- 11) The bulk of the time will be related to this Bicentenary work and will include support for the running of a small number of Flagship events such as our planned Family Days, a Bath Histories festival, a Treasures of Bath exhibition and developing outreach activities alongside our exhibition.
- 12) As the other elements will be run by specialists (ie the Academy of Imagination will be run by an Education Officer and each of the elements of Imagination Foundations will be run by specialist contractors) the non-Bicentenary work will be administrative in nature: ensuring tenders are developed that will deliver our desired outcomes, contractors are selected by the relevant working groups, and then monitoring and providing feedback on progress. There may be potential for cross-fertilisation between elements and the contractor will be responsible for drawing these out and sharing between teams to maximise the potential for achieving our outputs.

## **Outputs**

- 13) The conclusion of our NLHF Resilience project of 2021 still holds true: for a sustainable future for our heritage 'we must do better'. Reviews of our recent projects have

confirmed the continuing weakness of our audience, membership, donation generation and volunteer recruitment systems. Also our amazing heritage and collection is still one of Bath's best kept secrets; our audiences still lean to older age groups and our 'offer' is not structured to appeal to younger participants - whilst at the same time some of Bath's children live in some of the most deprived wards in the country.

- 14) Each of the project's building blocks will focus on specific impacts and specific audiences:
- a) Academy of Imagination - events targeting the stimulating over the next five years of 1000 over 7 years age children's interest in curated topics to:
    - i) Broaden their horizons through imagination, inspiration and enthusiasm
    - ii) Encourage curiosity, exploration independent thinking
    - iii) Develop in participants a stronger sense of self that builds on school curriculums
    - iv) Provide an introduction for children to a wider range of academic subjects
    - v) Give young people (particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds) the space to envision a different life/world
    - vi) Promote imagination, inspiration and enthusiasm
    - vii) Build on a shared desire by partners to build bridges into our community around youngsters and ensure that all reach their potential
  - b) Bicentenary Imaginations - BRLSI has made some progress over recent years in encouraging more diverse audiences but following a recent EDI review we have identified that the Bicentenary represents a great opportunity for a step change with 20,000 additional attendees viewing our heritage from a demographic that more represents the local population - to be developed by:
    - i) Refining our understanding of audiences by undertaking further research into audience segmentations and seeking three new volunteer theme convenors (who devise events) to focus on these
    - ii) Defining more clearly target groups and metrics for audiences, staff and volunteers
    - iii) Using EDI tools to promote the positive environment of BRLSI to visitors, guests and workforce
    - iv) A diverse mix of programming, speakers, venues and content,
    - v) Outreach to engage the local communities to target those, particularly in Bath's most deprived wards, who do not participate or benefit from our heritage
    - vi) All year, all visitors to our building will see items from our collections; not just when exhibitions are run
  - c) Imagination foundations - the enhancement of underlying systems will build sustainability and resilience. In particular we look to increase the volunteer pool by 50% over the next three years and in five years establish donations and legacies as a steady stream of fresh income. This latter may take several more years to come to fruition, given that gifts in wills are not crystallised immediately
- 15) To reduce environmental impacts, we plan on outreach and digital activities plus in-house to reduce the need for travel to our premises. Additionally themes and talks will increase audience understanding of the natural world, environmental and ecological changes and our impact.

### **Contract details**

- 16) We expect this work to begin in January 2024 and be complete before the end of January 2025. The anticipated maximum budget is £40,000 exclusive of VAT (if applicable). We anticipate the work can be undertaken remotely from our building in Queen Square if preferred though regular visits and travel in and around Bath will be needed. Progress meetings with the Steering group will be held via Zoom.
- 17) The primary contact for the project will be Chris Garcia; BRLSI Director of Fundraising and David Hall, Chair of Bicentenary Activities on day to day matters.

### **Requirements of the submission**

18) Your proposal should include:

- Approach to the project
- Methodology and how diversity and environmental sustainability will be embedded in the project
- CVs of individual(s) highlighting key competencies around areas such as project management, events programme design, management and delivery, management of third-party contractors, working in partnership with other cultural organisations and with volunteers
- Track record in the form of examples of similar projects you have delivered in the past 3 years.
- Two client references
- A fixed fee showing the daily rate and expenses, basis of invoicing and whether or not you charge VAT
- Projected timescale for when you would deliver the various outputs

19) The individual/s or organisation will have expertise and experience in project management and administration, events programme design, event organisation and delivery, management of third-party contractors, working in partnership with other cultural organisations and with mixed workforces including volunteers.

### **Tender assessment**

20) BRLSI reserves the right to make an appointment based on written submissions or invite one or more tenderers to an interview. Appointment will be subject to the award of the National Lottery grant and a tender that meets our requirements. Success for the project as a whole will be judged on achievement of our desired outcomes and outputs. The success of this appointment will also be judged on the achievement of our desired milestones and whether the administrative and organisational load on our (volunteer) Steering Group, who are focused on delivering these outcomes and already actively progressing advance planning, is reduced!

21) Criteria for assessment will be:

- Technical capacity to meet the brief -20%
- A proven track record /experience in delivering similar work – 40%
- Value for money – 40%

**22) Tender process with likely dates:**

Advertise brief - upload to our website and circulate (also post on Art Jobs and SW Fed)	From 12 November 2023
Deadline for receipt of tenders	5pm 8 December 2023
Shortlisting and interview process	w/c 11December 2023
Reference checks and contracting subject to award of grant	w/c 1 January 2023
Begin the contracted work	w/c 8 January 2023

