**Facilitating the development of a** **mentor scheme for library Heads of Service**

**Libraries Connected: Invitation to Tender**

**Title**: Facilitating the development of a mentor scheme for library Heads of Service

**Return to:** info@librariesconnected.org.uk

**Deadline for receipt of tender proposals**: **9am 13 December 2021.**

1. **INTRODUCTION**

This Invitation to Tender (ITT) specifies the requirements for facilitating the development of a mentor scheme for library Heads of Service.

The following details are outlined in this document:

* Background Information
* Objectives of this project
* The Brief
* The role of the successful applicant
* Contract Management
* Workplan and milestones
* Budget
* The terms of business relating to the award of any contract
* Process for submitting proposals
* Further Information
* Compliance

1. **BACKGROUND**

**2.1 Libraries Connected** [**www.librariesconnected.org.uk**](http://www.librariesconnected.org.uk)

Libraries Connected is a charity founded in 2018. It builds on 20 years’ experience as The Society of Chief Librarians (SCL). We are now partly funded by Arts Council England as the Sector Support Organisation for public libraries. We have a small team of staff and trustees. But we are proud to remain a membership organisation comprised of every library service in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, and the Crown Dependencies.

Libraries Connected takes a leading role in the development of public libraries, advocating for continuous improvement on behalf of local people, and leading the debate on the future of the public library service.

***Our vision is an inclusive, modern, sustainable, and high-quality public library service at the heart of every community in the UK. We work to promote the value of libraries, broker national partnerships, share best practice and drive innovation in the sector.***

Our annual reports summarise our achievements since 2018. <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/5114389/accounts-and-annual-returns\>

Leadership development and support for Heads of Service is at the heart of our work, and this scheme will form an important new element within our programme of workforce development. This includes:

* Development of a new Workforce and Skills Strategy in partnership with CILIP
* Delivery of Leading Libraries, a programme to foster strong and diverse leadership
* A short leadership course
* Facilitation of a vibrant online Heads of Service network, and regional networks of services.

Our ambition is to create a more skilled, diverse and confident leadership and to remove any real or perceived barriers to progression. We hope that the mentoring scheme will be sensitive to individuals’ different needs, including those from non-traditional library backgrounds, and develop a model we could apply to other levels of leadership within libraries.

**2.2 The library sector**

Our membership is the 177 public library services in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Crown Dependencies.

We foster regional/national networks for these libraries, and also connect them nationally via our Basecamp communities.

During the pandemic libraries rapidly evolved their services to meet the heightened needs of their communities, as highlighted in research by Libraries Connected and Carnegie UK Trust: <https://www.librariesconnected.org.uk/resource/libraries-pandemic-evolving-services-meet-local-need>.

In autumn 2020 we set out the key priority areas that libraries can support in relation to recovery from the pandemic: <https://www.librariesconnected.org.uk/resource/libraries-essential-part-local-recovery>

Public libraries are now facing a period of unprecedented change. The pandemic has necessitated unimagined and ongoing changes in operational delivery, and as we emerge from the pandemic developments need to be consolidated and service transformation continued to meet the changed needs of communities. This is all against a background of continuing financial restraint, which also drives service reviews and restructures.

**2.3 The role of Head of Service**

The role of Head of Service is immensely challenging.

* They have to lead their library service through change. Reductions in management structures mean they are now often less well placed to influence decisions within their authorities.
* The role is also very diverse and may encompass other strategic roles such as head of museums, Registration or arts.
* It requires strategic leadership and direct service management and development skills.
* It requires a high level of skill in navigating political structures, forging alliances and partnerships and being entrepreneurial.

The role can seem daunting, and at times lonely.

Libraries Connected membership totals 177 Heads of Library Service. Recently, we have welcomed new Heads of Service into role – some of them appointed from within library services and others moving from other sectors or roles within local government. Many experienced Heads of Service are facing new challenges that they have not faced before – such as service restructure or capital developments.

Heads of Service form a supportive community, through our regional networks and our national Basecamp – which came into its own during the pandemic as an invaluable source of advice and peer support. Peer support sometimes takes the form of one-to-one discussions, if a Head of Service feel they have some specific advice to offer. However, access to one-to-one support is at present ad hoc, and there is no structured way to match those who need support with those best placed to deliver it. Furthermore, there are risks that at present the burden of providing support could disproportionately on the shoulders of a few, and the talents and experience of the wider pool of HoS are not utilised.

1. **OBJECTIVES OF THIS PROJECT**

This project will facilitate the development of a structured mentor scheme for Heads of Service.

The structured mentoring scheme will help HoS access support tailored to their needs and will ensure that the support is provided by a wide number of HoS and not falling disproportionately on the shoulders of a few.

The scheme will be especially beneficial to three categories of HoS:

* Newly appointed Heads of Service from a library background
* Newly appointed Heads of Service from a non-library background
* Established Heads of Service facing major changes – positive or negative.

The scheme should also be of benefit to the mentors, supporting their development as leaders and role models.

This contract will facilitate the establishment of the scheme in a way that it can be sustained by Libraries Connected staff and members beyond the term of the initial project.

1. **THE BRIEF**

The contractor will:

* Convene a reference group of HoS
* Work with the reference group to define the aims of the scheme and set the ‘rules of engagement’ for both mentees and mentors
* Conduct a skills and experience audit of HoS
* Design a skills and experience mapping process for mentees, to help define their needs
* Develop a matching process
* Write the guidance for the scheme, for both mentors and mentees
* Develop training materials for the scheme, to introduce the basic principles of successful mentoring
* Deliver a launch event
* Deliver an initial mentors’ training event
* Execute a check-in review process after three months of the scheme’s operation
* Execute a review after 12 months of the scheme’s operation, with recommendations for the scheme’s sustainability within Libraries Connected’s structures, and recommendations on whether the model could be applied to other levels of leadership.

To develop the new peer mentor scheme, we want to build on our experience of fostering successful online communities and delivering a short mentor course for future leaders.

We would like to work in line with the principles set out the report by Carnegie UK Trust, *A review of the evidence on developing and supporting policy and practice networks.*

<https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/a-review-of-the-evidence-on-developing-and-supporting-policy-and-practice-networks/>

1. **CONTRACT MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

The contract will be directly managed by the Chief Executive of Libraries Connected.

The work will be supported by a small reference group of HoS.

1. **WORKPLAN AND MILESTONES**

We envisage the project will follow this workplan, but proposals can set out an alternative timetable to meet the brief.

**Overall programme plan**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Activity | Time Period |
| Invitation to Tender | Nov 2021 |
| Clarifications published | w/b 6 Dec 2021 |
| **Closing date** | **9am 13 Dec 2021** |
| Appointment of successful contractor | Dec 2021 |
| Planning, agreeing a project plan, and milestone moments through the project | Dec 2021 |
| Convene reference group | Jan 2021 |
| Agree rules of engagement; conduct skills audit; design skills audit for mentees | Feb – Apr 2022 |
| Design training materials | Apr – May 2022 |
| Deliver launch event | May 2022 |
| **Scheme goes live** | Jun 2022 |
| Three month check-in and review | Sept 2022 |
| 12 month check-in and review with recommendations for future development | Jun 2023 |

1. **BUDGET**

A maximum of £14,400 is available for this project, inclusive of VAT and all contractors’ expenses.

Libraries Connected will provide some administrative support including to help convene the HoS reference group, quality management and publishing training resources and guidance, arranging launch event, arranging training event, coordinating the review process.

1. **THE TERMS OF BUSINESS RELATING TO THE AWARD OF ANY CONTRACT**

Payment at key milestones in two Instalments subject to satisfactory delivery of programme phase and report to the Project Board.

1. **PROCESS FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS**
   1. **Procurement timetable**
   * Submission by 2021
   * Award selection process completed by mid December.
   1. **Proposal submission**

Please submit proposals by email to info@librariesconnected.org.uk

Proposals must be submitted by 9am on 13 December 2021.

Proposals should be no more than 2500 words and should include

Understanding of the brief

An outline methodology for achieving the brief

A statement of your skills and experience in context of this brief including names and experience of each person assigned to the project. Examples and links to relevant reports you have written or contributed to should be included

An outline work plan and timetable for this work

A clear breakdown of costs which includes all rates, fees, and expenses you are anticipating for the project. If you are VAT registered this must be included in your costings

A statement showing understanding of and commitment to the values of Libraries Connected <https://www.librariesconnected.org.uk/page/about-us>

Two contactable referees who could provide a relevant reference of your suitability to work on this project.

* 1. **Evaluation of proposals**

We will evaluate proposals using these criteria:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **CRITERIA** | **WEIGHTING** |
| Extent to which proposal demonstrates an understanding of the brief | 25 |
| Knowledge and experience relevant to the project, including experience of running consultation processes and strategic planning | 25 |
| Quality of methodology | 25 |
| Proposed team composition and management | 15 |
| Cost (Value for money) | 10 |

1. **FURTHER INFORMATION**

For an informal discussion about the work, please contact Libraries Connected Chief Executive [Isobel.hunter@librariesconnected.org.uk](mailto:Isobel.hunter@librariesconnected.org.uk)

**COMPLIANCE**

Libraries Connected reserves the right to disqualify any provider’s response to this ITT if it does not fully comply with the requirements contained therein. This is particularly relevant in relation to the stated closing date and time of applications.

Libraries Connected is not responsible for and will not pay for any expenses or losses you incur during, but not limited to, the application preparation, visits, negotiations, or interviews in relation to this procurement process. It is your responsibility to ensure that any consortium member, sub-contractor, and adviser abide by the conditions set out by Libraries Connected.

In submitting a response to this ITT, it will be implied that you accept all the provisions of this ITT including these conditions.

If Libraries Connected needs to change any information contained within this ITT before the closing date, you will be written to advise you of these changes, which includes the extension of any submission deadlines. Libraries Connected reserves the right to cancel or suspend this ITT process at any time but will notify you in writing as soon as possible if this occurs.

It is expected that the contractor will work within the values and behaviours of Libraries Connected and this will be part of the contract of engagement.