



Invitation to Tender: Support recruitment to the Libraries Connected Board

Deadline for receipt of tender proposals:

1. INTRODUCTION

Due to a number of trustees reaching the end of their term of office and deciding not to continue as trustees Libraries Connected is recruiting a number of new external Trustees, with a focus on developing the skills and diversity of the Board. This tender is seeking a recruitment agency to support the process by delivering a skills and diversity audit, revising our Board handbook, developing a recruitment pack and induction process and supporting the recruitment of four external Trustees (these are trustees who are not working in a public library).

The following details are outlined in this document:

- The service to be provided
- The information to be provided by tenderers
- The terms of business relation to the award of any contract
- Anticipated timetable for the programme
- Stated outcomes and expectations of the work

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 About Us – Libraries Connected

Libraries Connected is a charity partly funded by Arts Council England as the Sector Support Organisation for libraries. We are also proud to be a membership organisation, made up of every library service in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and the Crown Dependencies.

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.

We:

- Represent the public library sector to communicate the value of libraries
- Connect partners to local libraries by brokering national relationships with a wide range of organisations and individuals
- Improve library services by developing and sharing best practice, providing training for library staff, and facilitating a network of library leaders in the UK
- Drive innovation and new thinking on the role of libraries in a modern society.



2.2 About Us – Libraries Connected Board

Our governance model was established in 2018 as part of our evolution from the Society of Chief Librarians with an executive of our members, into an independent charity with a team of staff. Our Articles of Association are attached as an appendix to this document.

The Board has 13 members. Nine of these are our members, who are heads of library services, and four are external trustees who bring a range of additional skills, insights and connections to the Board. Previous external trustees have included people who have worked with BBC and DCMS.

The Board is chaired by the President, who is a head of library service, and elected by our members. The Treasurer is elected by our Board and can be either a member or external trustee.

One third of the Board should retire each year and we are planning ahead to fill vacancies that will appear over the next year:

- Four external Trustees
- Four member Trustees.

The Board has a number of sub-committees including the Finance & Remuneration Committee, Commercial Sub-Committee, Nominations Committee and task and finish groups.

The Board is supported by our Advisory Committee which brings together the chairs of our regional networks and our Universal Library Offer leads (thematic experts).

We are a relatively new organisation, we are committed to a process of continuous improvement. Over the last four years we have worked hard to lay firm foundations and to develop our governance. We want to use this round of Trustee recruitment as an opportunity to diversify Board membership to better reflect the communities that libraries serve, and to bring in additional skills, insights and connections. We want the contractor to help us develop a ten year ambition for our Board development, so that we can take an evolutionary approach with clear targets at each round of recruitment.

3. DELIVERABLES

We are seeking to work with an organisation or individual who can provide support for the recruitment of our new Trustees both external and internal.

We want the recruitment process to have a particular focus on Board diversity, so that our Board better reflects the communities we service; and on ensuring the Board has a range of skills, insights and connections to support our work.

We envisage a holistic approach to the recruitment process and for the contractor to work with our Nominations Committee to deliver:

- Diversity and skills audit of the Board to identify its strengths and the gaps we will seek to fill. We would like this to form a baseline, for us to use in ongoing monitoring and development, and for the contractor to help us set out a short and medium term Board development ambition.
- Board Handbook to collate all essential information, policies and guidance to support Trustees to operate effectively
- An induction process, tailored to the different needs of our member and our external trustees



- A recruitment pack to attract high calibre candidates (one for external Trustees and one for member Trustees)
- Headhunting and recruitment process for four external Trustees, two to take up post autumn 2022, and two in summer 2023
- Libraries Connected will use the recruitment pack to recruit the member Trustees through its own networks.

3.2 Assumptions

Libraries Connected will be fully engaged throughout the process and the project will be supported by the Board's Nominations Committee.

Libraries Connected will provide meeting venues, although we envisage that the majority of meetings will be online.

The project will move at pace and be agile in its approach, and Libraries Connected is open to suggestions about alternative approaches to meet our intended outcomes of a strong and diverse Board. Tenderers will be willing to shape the work and deliver to time, working with Libraries Connected to ensure the delivery of a robust recruitment process and high-quality written materials.

The project will work in good faith, in confidence and with a shared purpose.

Tenderers and partners will work to minimise costs and maximise results.

4. OUTCOMES

- Recruitment of four external trustees and four member trustees who develop our Board diversity and strengthen the Board's skills, insights and connections.
- Improved induction and support for our Trustees through a revised induction process and handbook
- Baseline of our skills and diversity, which we can use for ongoing monitoring and Board development.
- Establishment of a short and medium term for our Board's development to increase diversity and strengthen the skills and connections at each round of recruitment.

5. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

The contract will be managed by Isobel Hunter, the CEO of Libraries Connected.

This project will report to our Nominations Committee.

6. WORKPLAN AND MILESTONES

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

Activity Time Period

- June-July 2022: Invitation to tender published, and appointment of contractors



- August/Sept 2022:
 - Board skills and diversity audit to identify the gaps to recruit to
 - Development of recruitment pack
 - Development of Trustees Handbook
 - Development of induction process
- Oct 2022:
 - Recruitment of external Trustees
 - Recruitment of member Trustees (by Libraries Connected)
- November 2022
 - Interviews and appointment of Trustees
 - Induction process begins
- December 2022
 - Agree ten-year Board development ambition
 - Project review and closure

7. BUDGET

£25,000 including VAT and travel and expenses.

Whilst many of the meetings can be conducted virtually, there is an expectation that the first meeting will be in person (in London) as will interviews for Trustees.

Travel, accommodation, sustenance, and any other reasonable costs incurred by the tenderers as part of project should be costed in the overall budget.

Libraries Connected will be able to provide administrative support for the Nominations Committee.

8. PROCESS FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

8.1 Procurement timetable

- Invitation to tender sent out 27th June 2022
- Deadline for Questions 20th July 2022
- Deadline for proposals 9am Monday 1st August 2022
- Selection interviews August 2022
- Appointment and initiation August 2022

8.2 Proposal content

The proposals should outline:

- Understanding of the project and deliverables
- Experience suited to the project subject and proposed methodology
- Names and experience of individuals assigned to the project, to clarify their involvement with each phase or unit of the work



- Costs, including breakdown for costs of each phase or unit of work, day rate of each team member and other costs or expenses

8.3 Proposal submission

Please email proposals to info@librariesconnected.org.uk by 9am on Monday 1st August 2022

8.4 Evaluation of proposals

We will evaluate proposals using these criteria:

CRITERIA	WEIGHTING
Extent to which proposal demonstrates an understanding of the brief and evidence of ability to deliver to timelines across multiple partners	25
Knowledge and experience relevant to the project, including an understanding of policies, strategies, and relevant literature within the scope of this work	25
Quality of methodology and experience in relation to development of strategy and programmes through a process of consultation	25
Proposed team composition and management	15
Cost	10

9. FURTHER INFORMATION

For an informal discussion about the work, please contact:

Robert Davies Robert.davies@librariesconnected.org.uk

The cut-off date for questions from suppliers is 20th July, and we will publish a collated list of questions and answers after this date.



Appendix One – example of desk research

Children’s literacy and associated outcomes. There is a strong body of longitudinal evidence in existence; this work may focus on the post-Covid picture of impact for public libraries and focus on a representative sample or initiative to illustrate impact.

We need to be able to fully evidence the positive contribution engaging with public libraries can have on a child’s school readiness and levels of literacy.

- The pandemic has had a profound impact on young children in numerous ways, including speech and language development, literacy, social skills and general school readiness.
- Public libraries are ideally placed to support families and children with their literacy needs post-covid recovery in this area, but, there is a lack of hard data in this area.
- It is estimated that around 16% of adults in England have “very poor literacy skills”, whilst the UK government estimates that a further 10% of adults have a condition such as dyslexia. Mencap also estimates that at least a further 2% of adults and 2.5% percent of children have some form of learning disability. (A & B)
- For both children and adults these issues can have a serious impact on their self-esteem as well as their ability to access information that can have a serious impact on their life chances - adults with poor literacy skills may be locked out of the job market, have less access to health information, and, as a parent, they may not be able to support their child’s learning.
- The Library Service will build people’s confidence in reading and writing by providing a safe and comfortable space where people can develop their literacy skills. The Service will focus on expanding opportunities to work with people who would benefit from additional support.
- Libraries are inclusive and open to all.
- They provide free access to books, IT, events, and activities that inspire people to engage with reading and information as well as enjoy reading for pleasure.
- Libraries are knowledge hubs and support residents to connect with other service and organisations

We know that there are some generally acknowledged benefits;

- Baby and Toddler Rhymetimes and storytimes – Speech, language and communication development (increasing vocabulary, improving speech), physical development (actions that accompany rhymes), numeracy (counting songs), social skills (being around other children), literacy (sharing stories) ^{1 & 2}
- Reading for pleasure – Libraries give children access to a wide range of books to encourage reading for pleasure and children who read for pleasure have a higher educational attainment ^{3 & 4}. The government published a new reading framework for schools earlier this year putting reading for pleasure at the heart of the reading journey ⁵.
- Encouraging families to read together – there have been several campaigns to encourage families and children to read for 10 minutes a day ^{6,7 & 8}, but many families still do not do this. Additionally, many families seem to be unaware of the benefits of continuing storytimes with older children ⁹



A. Adult Literacy Trust <https://literacytrust.org.uk/parents-and-families/adult-literacy/>

B UK Government [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/understanding\[1\]disabilities-and-impairments-user-profiles/simone-dyslexic-user](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/understanding[1]disabilities-and-impairments-user-profiles/simone-dyslexic-user)

1. <https://www.pacey.org.uk/news-and-views/pacey-blog/2019/october-2019/the-importance-of-nursery-rhymes-in-early-childhood/>
2. <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/news-and-features/features/2018/november/rhymes-in-early-childhood/>
3. <https://www.explorelearning.co.uk/blog/reading-for-pleasure-inspiring-children-to-read/>
4. <https://readingagency.org.uk/news/The%20Impact%20of%20Reading%20for%20Pleasure%20and%20Empowerment.pdf>
5. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1050849/Reading_framework_Teaching_the_foundations_of_literacy_-_July_2021_Jan_22_update.pdf
6. <https://literacytrust.org.uk/blog/reading-children-so-powerful-so-simple-and-yet-so-misunderstood/>
7. <https://literacytrust.org.uk/communities/manchester/take-10/encourage-your-child-take-10/>
8. <https://wordsforlife.org.uk/activities/take-10-to-read-every-day/>
9. <https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/blog/carry-on-reading-aloud-the-benefits-of-sharing-books-with-older-children/>

Other articles on Covid impact and recovery

- <https://literacytrust.org.uk/information/what-is-literacy/covid-19-and-literacy/covid-19-and-literacy-discussion-analysis-and-recommendations/>
- <https://www.earlyyearseducator.co.uk/features/article/school-readiness-the-impact-of-covid-19-on-school-readiness>
- <https://post.parliament.uk/impact-of-covid-19-on-early-childhood-education-care/>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-recovery-in-early-years-providers-autumn-2021/education-recovery-in-early-years-providers-autumn>