**Brief for library consultant**

**Project**

Ask for a Book is a two-year project to create and pilot a new online service where libraries can offer personalised recommendations to readers. The creative agency Opening the Book is supplying the website content/design development and project management. Leeds Libraries lead a consortium of 15 library service partners who are testing the service with their readers. The project is governed through a Steering Group and is funded by Arts Council England and LibraryOn.

**External evaluation required**

The Steering Group seeks to appoint an external evaluator to explore specific questions to inform their understanding of the opportunities and challenges of this pilot project. This will be especially helpful as we develop plans for a bigger rollout to more library services in 2024.

The project already has feedback mechanisms in place for users of the ASK website and for library staff using both the front end website and the back office. We would like the external evaluator to explore three specific areas where we do not have sufficient information.

*Area 1 Project implementation*

What have the partners found are the challenges and rewards of operating the ASK project in its current model? What difference has the ASK project made to your library service offer? How have you engaged staff with the project – what worked and what didn’t?

*Area 2 Customer take-up*

Who is using ASK in your service and why – what needs do partners think ASK is meeting or could meet in future? What figures do you have for ASK books being picked up from the library as this is not recorded by the website? How have you encouraged take-up of ASK among your users - what worked and what didn’t?

*Area 3 The role of the creative agency*

Has the role of the creative agency been appropriate and useful? This should cover interactions on website design and functionality; training; communication; overall support. Are there areas where partners would seek more or less from the creative agency?

**Methodology**

We suggest individual interviews on Teams may be an efficient use of time and each active partner will nominate up to three staff at different levels to be available. There are four partners who are currently inactive because of staffing issues (sickness, restructure) and we suggest one of these four is also contacted for an interview.

**Fee:** £3,000

**Respond to Rachel Van Riel** [**Rachel@openingthebook.com**](mailto:Rachel@openingthebook.com) **by 16 October 2023**

**Timescale:** Start 1 November 2023 Complete by 15 December 2023