1. **What percentage of your operating costs is ACE funding?**

About 75% of our funding is from ACE. This is made up of our core funding as part of the National Portfolio, plus some project funding.

1. **Will you be looking for an uplift on the current allocation of £500k p.a.?**

We will receive some guidance from ACE in January about how much we can bid for. We would like an uplift to consolidate the expanded role we have developed since 2018.

1. **How are activities in NI and Wales funded?**

Our membership fees help fund our work in Wales and NI. However, we have recognised we need to be more proactive in securing funding to do more work outside England.

1. **Do you work with National Libraries of Scotland, National Libraries of Wales and National Library of Ireland?**

We do not currently have an active relationship with these national libraries.

1. **Will the strategic plan be for all activity or NPO funded activity?**

The strategic plan will be for the full sweep of our work.

1. **Will you want to appointed consultant to take account of the ACE templates for the next round – Investment Principles, Outcomes and Financials**

The consultants should take account of these templates, whilst not being constrained by them as the strategic plan will be broader than the NPO bid.

1. **Is it possible to read your strategic plan 2018-2022?**

Yes, this is published on our website: [Society of Chief Librarians business plan 2018-2022 | Libraries Connected](https://www.librariesconnected.org.uk/resource/society-chief-librarians-business-plan-2018-2022).

1. **How has your organisational capacity developed since 2018?**

We have secured additional grant funding to deliver more development programmes, and this has allowed us to employ project managers and administrators. We have also developed a commercial team funded partly by generated income.

We have also developed active networks of members using Basecamp.

1. **For the sector consultation: do you have a preference for face to face or virtual consultation?**

We envisage a mix of face to face and virtual, determined by practical considerations including the state of pandemic restrictions.

1. **Are you interested in identifying new strategic partners to work with?**

We have a “family” of core strategic partners but may need to identify new ones in line with the emerging priorities of our new strategic plan. We are particularly interested in new partners outside our immediate library world.

1. **Would you revisit your Vision as part of the work to develop a new strategic plan?**

Our Vision has served us well, but we are open to revisiting it as we look ahead.

1. **Has your existing strategy elapsed, or are there other drivers to create a new strategy now?**

The existing strategy is due to elapse in March 2022, and we are extending it by a year in line with the roll-over of NPO funding.

However, there are other drivers including:

* Needing to address the new challenges and opportunities of the post-Covid world
* Building on and clarifying our expanded role we have established over the last four years
* Need to bid for a new round of NPO funding

1. **What is the balance in this project between creating the strategic plan and generating the NPO funding bid?**

The focus will be on developing the strategic plan, from which the staff and Trustees of Libraries Connected will develop the funding bid.

To streamline this process, it will be helpful if the contractors have reference to the templates and guidance for the NPO bid process.

1. **The ITT sets out that the contractors must report on the outcomes of the consultation as one of their key outputs. Is another output to draft the strategic plan?**

Yes, drafting the strategic plan for adoption by the Trustees is the key output of this project.

1. **Is there any library sector fatigue in being consulted or involved in co-design processes?**

There may well be! We will need a clear engagement strategy to ensure the library sector sees the value of being involved and responds in an open manner.