Invitation to Tender: eLicensing project survey

Deadline for receipt of tender proposals: Monday 9 October at 12 noon

Project background

Libraries Connected has been funded by the Arts Council England (ACE) to deliver the eLicensing Project which aims to increase affordability and availability of digital content to public library services by looking at new and existing business models.

The project objectives are to:

* enable libraries to reach more people with more impact
* improve choice for eBorrowers
* improve data flow about eBook lending in libraries
* greater collaboration between aggregators, publishers and libraries around stock curation and promotion of authors and books.

The project team is working with the Society of Authors, Booksellers Association, British Library, The Reading Agency, the Publishers Association, publishers and aggregators to ensure as key stakeholders in the publishing eco-system that their views are included in the pilot, where relevant.

A 6-month pilot will commence in January 2024 with a set of libraries, publishers and aggregators testing a range of new models for eLending in public libraries.

Alongside the project, funded by ACE, Libraries Connected is commissioning a survey of eBorrowers to understand:

* library users' eBook borrowing and eBook buying habits
* the extent to which library e-lending might lead to eBorrowers buying books or audio, in physical or e-format, following their interaction with the library offer
* how habits might change depending on the scope and accessibility of the library offer.

This would yield anonymised hard data on choices made by eBorrowers in a range of different scenarios.

The library cohort will mirror those involved in the eLicensing project pilot (funded separately) plus a control group (control group number to be agreed by the partnership board).

Role description

We are seeking an evaluation provider who will:

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- Work with partners to develop a clear approach to the survey and data collation.
- Define and deliver a survey of existing eBorrowers' book consumption via a representative cohort of up to 25 library services nationally, plus a control group.
- Drive uptake of completing the survey (active promotion and incentivisation).
- Identify candidates willing to be contacted as a Case Study via the survey.
- Work with stakeholders to design a process to capture relevant data.
- Work with the team to develop a way to measure how effective the licensing models being piloted are at better meeting the needs of library services and their users.

Deliverables

- A clearly articulated and completed evaluation plan.
- Baseline survey of eBorrowers at the start of the pilot.
- Data analysis.
- Final survey of eBorrowers at the end of the pilot.
- Final report, including methodology, data analysis and recommendations, to a publishable standard.
- Make available any data collected in an accessible format.

Contract governance

The contract will be managed by Iain Moore, Commercial Director at Libraries Connected. The work will be subject to a governance structure consisting of a Project Board of key partners including ACE, representatives from the library sector and external representatives.

Workplan and milestones

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

Overall time period: October 2023 – September 2024

This time period covers the remainder of the project plus an additional two months to complete the data analysis and produce the final report.

Milestones:

Scoping / evaluation plan with process and tools in place	1 November 2023 (subject to negotiation)
Pilot commences	1 January 2024

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Pilot ends	30 June 2024
Pilot evaluation	1 July 2024 – 31 August 2024
Final Report	15 September 2024

Budget

£35,000 including VAT and travel expenses

We expect that the majority of meetings will be conducted virtually.

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

Procurement timetable

- Thursday 21 September: ITT issued
- Week commencing 25 September: Provider questions via email or conversations by request
- Monday 9 October at 12 noon: Deadline for responding to the ITT
- Thursday 12 October: Shortlisted provider interviews
- Monday 16 October: Notify bidders of the outcome

Proposal content

Proposals should demonstrate:

- Understanding of the project and deliverables
- Responses should provide evidence that they have excellent and relevant skills, expertise and experience to deliver the breadth of analytical work required. The response should demonstrate ability to deliver similar/comparable contracts in terms of scale and nature. It is acceptable to subcontract – tenderers should make it clear if they intend to subcontract, and detail how they would put these arrangements in place over the course of the contract.
- The relevant project and risk management skill, experience and expertise of the organisation and staff to undertake this work.
- Sufficient capacity to carry out this work, either through internal resources or subcontracting arrangements.
- Proposed methodology.
- Costs, including breakdown for costs of each phase or unit of work, day rate of each team member and other costs or expenses.

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Proposal submission

Proposals should be emailed to info@librariesconnected.org.uk by **12 noon** on **9 October**.

Any late or incomplete submissions will not be evaluated.

Evaluation of proposals

Proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Criteria	Weighting
Understanding of project and deliverables	20
Knowledge and experience relevant to the project, including an understanding of policies, strategies, and relevant literature within the scope of work	20
Project and risk management capacity and capability	15
Staffing and resourcing capacity	15
Quality of methodology and experience in relation to development of strategy and programmes	20
Cost	10

Further information

For an informal discussion about the work, please contact:

Iain Moore on Iain.Moore@librariesconnected.org.uk

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