

Slough Borough Council

Proposal for the provision of services at the West Wing Arts Centre

**Slough Borough Council
Community & Wellbeing Directorate
Learning & Cultural Engagement Division
Town Hall
Bath Road
Slough
Berks
SL1 3UQ**

1. Purpose of the procurement:

- 1.1 Slough Borough Council wishes to secure a partner to take over operational management of the West Wing Arts Centre.
- 1.2 The West Wing since 2009 has been developed as a creative hub, hosting tenant community based arts organisations, and providing a venue for over 30 community groups to run activities and build a community led arts programme. The Council's Community Arts Strategy sets out our ambition for culture to reflect local people's experience and to involve the whole community, as part of a distinctive cultural offer that supports the wider Sustainable Community Strategy, 'Proud to be Slough'.

2. Background Information:

- 2.1 The West Wing Arts Centre was opened in 2005. Following concerns raised over the relatively low numbers benefitting from the West Wing "traditional arts" provision and the effectiveness of the programming, the professional programme ceased in May 2009 and the management team was disbanded. From May a new approach was adopted, which we wish to sustain and develop. With a more community focused approach and growing involvement from local groups, the venue has seen a significant increase in usage in the past year.
- 2.2 In 2009 Slough Borough Council commissioned Alun Bond of ArtService to undertake a review of the West Wing Arts Centre as part of a wider review of the performing arts provision in Slough. The review of the West Wing was to assess the potential for the West Wing to remain open and be viable after 2010 and to prepare a business case in support of a preferred option.
- 2.3 The study looked at future options in the context of the Council's plans to include a new performance space in the planned Learning Curve development in Slough Town Centre and the plans for the Arbour Vale School site re-development as a sports stadium. It should be read in context with a broader over-arching study by Red Quadrant, 'The Performing Arts in Slough', which supports the Community Arts Strategy.
- 2.4 Slough Borough Council has developed a new strategy for community arts for 2010 – 2015, which sets out how the council aims to deliver its vision. This was developed by talking with and listening to local people to see what they need to overcome barriers and meet their aspirations for art and culture in Slough.
- 2.5 The strategy is driven by the desire to move from arts for arts sake and for artists to adopt a community focused model reflecting and celebrating the culture that local people experience and own. The Council wishes the West Wing to be well used by community groups and partners, engaging people from across the community in ways that traditional arts venue programming does not achieve. The strategy shows how the council will shape the service to meet local needs, and why it will evolve over the coming years to meet changing needs.
- 2.6 Reports on the West Wing and performing arts by ArtService and Red Quadrant along with the consultation document for the Community Arts Strategy in Slough are available to download from the council's website for the arts in Slough www.artsinslough.org.uk/Resources/641.aspx

2.7 The West Wing Arts Centre currently comprises a 250 seat raked auditorium with retractable seating (hall also available as a flexible activity space), rehearsal room, music room, 2 x dance studios, café, outdoor courtyard area, exhibition space and a number of flexible office spaces.

2.8 It is home to a number of rent paying creative SMEs including:

- Creative Junction
- RIFCO Arts
- Slough Creative Academy's Foundation Dance Degree
- Resource Production (film and corporate video)
- Steve Hart Photography
- Rani Bilkhu (photography)
- Apna Virsa (Indian music and dance)
- Keyhorn (graphic / web design)
- Slide (digital enterprise)
- Deni Armatrading (design)

2.9 Particular strengths of the venue are:

- Strong community arts facilities
- Availability of significant levels of car parking on site
- Considerable unused space available that could be brought into use with modest investment as flexible space for rent
- Versatility of space for a range of uses
- It provides better small scale performance facilities than any other Slough community facility

3. Process and Timetable:

You are invited to submit a proposal to operate the West Wing Arts Centre as a community venue and cultural hub.

3.1 Submissions:

Providers should submit four hard copies of their signed proposal documents together with a CD containing an electronic version in MS Office compatible format addressed to:

**Miss Catherine Meek
Assistant Director – Democratic Services
Slough Borough Council
Town Hall
Bath Road
Slough
Berkshire
SL1 3UQ**

3.2 The envelope should not bear any distinguishing mark to indicate the identity of the sender.

3.3 Those submitting proposals are required to hold the proposal open for acceptance for a period of 90 days from the closing date for the submission.

3.4 Proposal submissions must be received no later than **12 noon on the 15th April 2010** and should contain responses to the requirements as set out in this document as well as any other relevant information.

3.5 Slough Borough Council may also consider alternative solutions to meet the core requirements, but these are to be submitted as additional documents.

3.6 Queries and Clarifications:

If clarification is required for any point it should be requested via e-mail to Alison Hibbert at alison.hibbert@slough.gov.uk by no later than **12th April 2010**. Any additional information that is passed on will also be communicated to all respondents.

3.7 Timetable:

Tender advertised	15 March 2010
Deadline to receive points of clarification	12 April 2010
Closing date for completed submissions	15 April 2010 at 12 noon
Shortlisting and initial evaluation	30 April 2010
Shortlisted suppliers receive notification	4 May 2010
Presentation to evaluation panel	17 May 2010
Successful supplier advised	28 May 2010
Contract available for signature	25 June 2010
Contract start date	1 August 2010

4. Key Outcomes and Requirements:

The supplier is required to provide high quality professional and community arts facilities, with a wide range of community led activities that engage local people and meet the aspirations of the Council's Community Arts Strategy and the wider Sustainable Community Strategy 'Proud to be Slough'.

4.1 Length of Contract:

The service is required to be provided for a period up to December 2012, with scope for extension, reviewed and renewed annually according to contract performance and the Council's requirement.

4.2 Management Fee:

A management fee of a maximum £65,000 to cover both 2010/11 and 2011/12 is available to the supplier. This sum is not an annual payment and will not be exceeded. Slough Borough Council would expect to see a reduction in the management fee in 2011/12 and proposals should set out how this will be achieved. No management fee will be available from April 2012.

4.3 Requirements:

The Council will require as a minimum the:

- Operational management of the West Wing Arts Centre venue as a community arts venue
- A programme of cultural activity accessible to the diverse communities of Slough
- Continued development of the arts centre as a cultural and creative hub for small local businesses and artists

- Establishment of new, robust governance arrangements for the venue, including representation from the local arts community and tenants of the arts centre
- 4.4 The service requires a community led, diverse artistic programme in line with the recommendations in the Alun Bond report and suppliers should include a draft programme for 2010/11 including:
- 4.4.1 **A Programme of Community Arts Activity** - the venue should continue to provide opportunities for Slough based groups to develop and deliver their own arts and cultural activities. The community programme should provide links with community organisations, events and performances. As a minimum these should include:
- The Co-operative Film Society
 - Two Left Feet
 - SWIPE
 - MATRA
 - Amateur dramatics and dance school events
 - Youth club provision
 - Provision for older people
- 4.4.2 The proposed community programme should demonstrate the way in which the supplier would contribute to the local arts culture and how the programme will be built to encourage more involvement from local community groups. The supplier should also identify the types of partnerships their organisation would aim to build and the additional value those partnerships would deliver for the community. It should also demonstrate how you will continue to increase hires from the local community.
- 4.4.3 **Workshops and Classes** - including access to space and professional teaching for all age groups, targeting children and families and older people.
- 4.4.4 **Exhibition** - programme to include local arts groups and emerging artists.
- 4.4.5 **Meetings** - facilitate and programme meeting space for community groups and local artists.
- 4.4.6 **Hire of Office, Conferencing and Performance Space** - the service will include the co-ordination of letting / hiring of space on both long term and one off basis to businesses, groups and individuals, in particular making use of the venue's professional theatre facilities.
- 4.4.7 **Partnership Work** - look for opportunities to work with key community and public sector organisations in joint initiatives to attract funding that improve access to the arts and develop audiences e.g. grant funded projects involving young people, early year's education and adult and community learning. How the provider works with the local community is critical and will drive programming. Local people's ownership and participation is central to the Council's vision for the West Wing.
- 4.4.8 **Operational Hours** – the draft programme should identify operating hours and how the programme will sit within this.

4.5. Contract Management:

Slough Borough Council will require monthly contract performance management meetings to be undertaken between the chosen supplier and nominated Council representatives, where monitoring and evaluation of finance, strategy and performance indicators (proposed by the supplier) will be undertaken. The Council's requirements may change and develop as a result of new strategy implementation and the chosen supplier will be required to work closely with the Council on this in developing and shaping that vision and delivery programme.

Failure to meet agreed performance targets may result in the contract not being renewed beyond two years.

5. Submission Requirements:

The following is requested as a minimum for submission:

5.1 Organisational Profile:

The provider should give details of:

- a. Experience in similar projects
- b. Quality assurance & procedures particularly in reference to Health & Safety, equalities and diversity policies and business continuity planning, detailing evidence of practice
- c. Charity or company registration number and place of registration
- d. Key contact names – including the nominated lead officer for accountability and the management of the contract
- e. Financial information including: the last two years published audited accounts, current years trading accounts for existing organisations, details of committed financial support and grants applied for or received for newly formed organisations
- f. Size of organisation (locations and staff numbers)
- g. Partnerships (current and past)

5.2 Operational Structure:

The proposal should indicate the following:

- a. Operational structure, identifying key staff and their proposed roles and responsibilities, including the existing 1 FTE – Facility Officer in post at the Arts Centre
- b. Background of key existing employees providing information on skills and experience
- c. Ability to attract and work with volunteers detailing previous experience in this role
- d. Proposed governance structures and how your organisation will involve key community organisations

5.3 Business Case:

The business case must cover as a minimum:

- a. Draft programme of operations and activity (section 3.3 of this document) detailing how you propose to deliver the programme

- b. How venue management will be carried out, including building maintenance, Health & Safety policies and procedures. The provider will be responsible for all internal facilities including fixtures and fittings, whilst the Council will retain responsibility for the exterior and fabric of the building. At the end of the contract the Council will expect the building to be returned in the condition it was received.
- c. Copy of proposed Business Continuity Plan
- d. Proposals for the form and content of monthly and quarterly management reports
- e. Proposals for the structure of monthly monitoring and quarterly planning and strategy meetings with the Council's representatives
- f. How management of bookings and ticketing systems will be managed and what systems will be used
- g. Proposals for the café/bar and outdoor courtyard areas
- h. Discounts available for targeted, community groups
- i. Financial cash flow projections and estimated budgets for operations, including detail of how you will deliver against the proposed decreasing subsidy (management fee) to reach a self financing position in 2012
- j. Options for profit share with Slough Borough Council and how this would operate as part of the contract
- k. Other sources of funding secured and expected
- l. How performance information will be captured and used
- m. Performance targets and how you will work with SBC to monitor these against the contract. This should also include detail of how you will use this data to determine priorities and services
- n. Governance proposals that engage local communities and stakeholders including key Board Member's background and experience

5.4 Suppliers are asked to demonstrate throughout their submission an understanding of Slough Borough Council's requirements as detailed in this document.

5.4 References

Please give brief details of all relevant delivery contracts that your organisation has completed, with contact details, during the past three years or is currently running, and which you judge to represent your experience and demonstrate the expertise needed for undertaking the required services.

5.5 In addition we will require bank & trade references for key individuals in new organisations or for the organisation if trading longer than two years.

5.6 Slough Borough Council reserves the right to contact any of the given references.

6. Evaluation

6.1 All proposals received will be considered on the information contained in the proposal and on the basis of providing the most appropriate solution and best value for money to deliver Slough Borough Council's requirements. Criteria for assessment are:

- 1 Financial standing (20%)
- 2 Financial proposal (20%)
- 3 Understanding of the brief (20%)
- 4 Community involvement (20%)

5 Capacity to deliver the brief (20%)

6.2 During the proposed evaluation period Slough Borough Council may raise queries, take references and will invite all shortlisted suppliers to make a presentation to representatives of the Council and key arts representatives in the town. Slough may also request potential partners to provide supplementary information or additional undertakings or to consider revising certain details of their response.

6.3 Signature of the contract is expected by **25 June 2010**.

6.4 Slough Borough Council is the owner of the project and may consult all parties interested in the development of the new services

7 Successful Acceptance of Proposal:

All requirements are negotiable. Slough Borough Council is not bound to accept any, all or part of any proposal and may choose more than one delivery partner or service.

8 Contract:

A contract will be implemented following successful acceptance of a proposal. Deadlines for delivery and provision of monitoring information shall be established between Slough Borough Council and the supplier within the contract. It is intended that the contract term will commence on **1 August 2010**.

9 Disclaimer:

Slough Borough Council accepts no liability or responsibility for the accuracy of the information in the proposal document; Slough Borough Council also reserves the right to change the requirements or to accept part of a proposal or submission only.

10 Freedom of Information:

Slough Borough Council is committed to open government and to meeting its legal responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Accordingly, all information submitted may need to be disclosed in response to a request under the Act. If you consider that any of the information included in your proposal is commercially sensitive under the Act, please complete and return the attached non-disclosure document. You should be aware, that even where you have indicated that information is commercially sensitive, we might be required to disclose it under the Act if a request is received. Please also note that receipt of any material marked "confidential" or equivalent by Slough Borough Council should not be taken to mean that the Council accepts any duty of confidence by virtue of that marking. If a request is received, we may also be required to disclose details of unsuccessful proposals.

Non-disclosure document (appendix 1)

Finance Questionnaire (appendix 2)

11 Background Documents:

Alun Bond Report – West Wing Review
Red Quadrant Report – The Performing Arts in Slough
Slough's Community Arts Strategy
Slough's Sustainable Community Strategy 'Proud to be Slough'.

All these documents are available to down load from:

www.artsinslough.org.uk/Resources/641.aspx