

Brief for Reviewing the Governance of Exeter Cultural Partnership

Introduction:

Exeter Cultural Partnership (ECP) has a membership of almost 500 representing the city's cultural ecosystem. Culture is broadly defined, and embraces arts, creative industries, creative education, environment, food, health, heritage, libraries, museums, retail and sport. ECP has existed for the past seven years; it is not a constituted body, limited company or charity. It has a Steering Group (ECP-SG) that includes representation from the City Council, University of Exeter, Arts Council England and a range of organisation and sectors in the city. The ECP-SG meets quarterly, with smaller working groups set up on a 'task and finish' basis (e.g. scoping the potential for a city-wide Shared Box Office, developing culture sector engagement with Creative Apprenticeships). The ECP's mission is ***'To contribute to a city where a vibrant cultural life enriches the experience of everyone living in, working in and visiting Exeter'***. It led the creation of a Cultural Action Plan which is co-owned by Exeter City Council and partners.

The **strategic aim of the Plan** is *'To develop Exeter as a culturally vibrant city'* and the plan has **four strategic Goals**:

- Goal 1 To develop a **vibrant cultural economy** - Exeter as a cultural destination
- Goal 2 To develop **cultural opportunities and experiences**
- Goal 3 To enable wide and **inclusive engagement with the cultural sector**
- Goal 4 To build a stronger, **more confident** cultural sector

Exeter Cultural Partnership wants to review its governance options and ensure it is robust and relevant for the future. This brief is to commission a consultant / team of consultants to undertake a **Review of the overall Governance of ECP**, with recommendations for a new and more sustainable model.

Currently:

- Meetings are scheduled quarterly throughout the year (usually Feb/May/Aug/Nov).
- Minutes or action points of each ECP-SG are completed by the culture director or other colleagues and circulated to attendees for checking. These minutes are then signed off by the Chair in the following ECP-SG meeting. (E.g. February's meeting minutes will be signed off in May's meeting, and published immediately after).
- Minutes are published for public reference: <http://www.exeterculturalpartnership.org.uk/documents/>
- ECP's budget for the period 2017 – March 2020 is likely to be £175,000. From autumn 2017 ECP will have one part-time Manager and one part-time Officer employed at the University of Exeter.

Specific elements of the **brief** are to:

- I. Outline a range of models for governance adopted by comparator Partnerships in the UK
- II. **Using the models to underpin the consultation, undertake a review with stakeholders** (financial supporters, cultural organisations and partners as identified by the client at the briefing meeting). This

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may take the form of a workshop or other consultation methodology to ensure a robust set of recommendations is prepared.

- III. Produce an **appraisal and recommendations for future governance** arrangements which should include the following:
- Proposals for a mechanism to recruit a new Chair of ECP by November 2017, including a specification for the role.
 - Propose a mechanism for recruitment and rotation of ECP-SG members within the new structure, including duration of office, and scope of membership to ensure a mixed skills matrix,
 - Recommendations for improving the representation and diversity of ECP
 - Ensure current good practice guidance (e.g. Nolan principles and Standards in Public Life),
 - Consider the sustainability of ECP and the organisational form it may take in the long-term (i.e. beyond 2020).
- IV. Write the **Terms of Reference** for the constituent parts of ECP.

The successful consultant will be:

- Employed on a fixed fee basis which includes expenses.
- Registered as self employed with HMRC, responsible for their own tax, NIC and any other statutory obligations.
- A clear communicator able to demonstrate expertise in governance review work for a range of organisations (public, private and or third sector)
- A self-starter with the ability to work without day-to-day supervision.
- Familiar with issues as relevant to cultural governance including:
 - [a] Committee on Standards in Public Life
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/the-committee-on-standards-in-public-life>
 - [b] AIM Successful Governance Guidance
<https://www.aim-museums.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Successful-Governance-2017.pdf>
 - [c] IPPR, (e.g. *Citizen Governance in the Public Sector*, Ben Rogers)
<http://www.ippr.org/>

Interested consultants should tender as follows:

- Letter summarising the applicant's knowledge and experience to deliver this brief
- Details of at least three previous clients and the governance review related projects undertaken with them
- Contact details for at least two recent clients who may be called upon in advance of appointment to provide references
- Proof of professional indemnity of at least £1M is preferable, but not essential

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- Consultant should be self-employed; employment checks will be carried out by Exeter City Council in accordance with procurement practice
- Tenders should be submitted to Claire Bailey and marked Confidential – ECP tender
These may be submitted by **email**: claire.bailey@exeter.gov.uk

Or by **post**:

Claire Bailey
 Royal Albert Memorial Museum
 Queen Street
 EXETER
 EX4 3RX

If there are any queries, interested consultants may contact Martin Thomas, the current Culture Director of ECP by email martin@martinthomasculture.com or telephone 07841 483 664; or Nikki Sved, Interim Chair of ECP by email Nikki.Sved@theatrealibi.co.uk for an informal discussion prior to tender.

Outputs

- A skills audit of the current governance group and review of opportunities to develop
- Interim meeting with ECP Interim Chair and other representatives of the ECP Governance Working Group (to be advised by client) to report progress and discuss opportunities/issues
- A report and presentation of results and recommendations for sustainable future governance arrangements

Timescale

Closing date	5pm, Friday 11 August
Short-listing	14 August
Interviews during September	(date to be mutually agreed)
Appointment / inception meeting to follow in September	
Submission of draft report to lead contact	10 October
Outputs submitted/presented to working group	20 October

Budget

The budget is a **fixed fee of £4,000** (exclusive of VAT) including all expenses / associated costs. The contract will be let by RAMM, an Exeter City Council service, on behalf of Exeter Cultural Partnership.

2. Background notes:

2.1 Current Terms of Reference for the ECP-SG (Agreed as interim TOR in August 2016)

The overarching aim is to champion the vision of Exeter's Cultural Action Plan and the continuing ambition for the city as a refreshed Plan is developed.

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- Support the strategic leadership and policy direction for ECP
- Monitor the performance as reported on by the current Culture Director
- Enable effective communication with partners and stakeholders (ECP members, local government, funding bodies, community bodies, tourist partners)
- Ensure information is cascaded to respective colleagues / teams as appropriate
- Act as a support and critical friend for the ECP post-holder and colleagues involved in leading programmes of work (as defined by ECP-SG)
- Review and formulate a refreshed Cultural Action Plan
- Are civic advocates for culture, celebrating and championing the sector
- Bring their personal skills and organisations experience to benefit the wider strategic cultural partnership as represented by ECP
- Ensure overall financial oversight

2.2 Current Composition of ECP-SG

Current membership can be found here: <http://www.exeterculturalpartnership.org.uk/about/>

The Interim Chair is Nikki Sved, Artistic Director of Theatre Alibi

2.3 Recent developments

Exeter Cultural Partnership (ECP) and its Steering Group (ECP-SG) have grown over recent years. Since the inception of the ECP-SG, several important developments have taken place, both nationally and locally. The national *Sports Strategy* and the *Culture White Paper* were published in 2016, with associated policy and funding reviews of organisations including Heritage Lottery Fund and the Arts Council England. There have been consultations by the Arts Council and revised funding plans and national portfolio for 2018-22. Research by a range of bodies including AHRC-funded activity has considered how the value of culture can be measured. Locally, the development of Exeter BID and Visit Exeter intersects with the cultural offer of the city. The growth of Exeter College and its rebranding of Exeter School of Art - which will continue with other areas of its creative offer; and the University of Exeter's re-commitment to culture and creativity including reviewing its own internal arts and culture strategy. Exeter City Council convened a New Entertainment Venue Advisory Group to consider an options appraisal for a new multiple-purpose performance space in the city centre underway by Fourth Street consultancy. Themes around entrepreneurialism, talent recruitment and retention are common issues for the City Council, the FE/HE sector and cultural organisations.

Issued by Exeter City Council on behalf of ECP

21 July 2017