

Report of: Head of Arts Development

Report to: Deputy Director, Learning Skills and Universal

Date: 2nd September 2014.

Subject: Nesta Digital R&D Fund for the Arts – Waiver of contracts procedure rule 8 to agree partnership agreements and to enter into contracts with a range of providers.



Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. ArtForms (Arts Development) working in partnership with DigitalME (Technology partner) and Sheffield Hallam (Research partner) submitted an application to Nesta Digital R&D fund for the Arts. Our application was successful.
2. ArtForms (Arts Development) is the lead partner and will be the budget holder for a grant of **£124,972**. Approval of the grant has been received from Nesta.
3. Within the grant agreement, ArtForms will enter into partnership agreements with DigitalMe for **£46,053** and Sheffield Hallam University for **£38,620**.
4. The above partnership agreements will need to be approved through the taking of a significant operational decision and the grant agreements are being prepared for signature upon receipt of approval.
5. An element of the funding within the grant agreement will also be used to contract with a range of providers for the delivery of a number of workshops. The value of the funding used for this purpose is approximately £20,000.
6. Authority is sought to waive the requirements of contracts procedure rules to allow the approval of the partnership agreements with Digitalme and Sheffield Hallam University and the procurement of the range of providers without competition.

Recommendations

7. The Deputy Director, Learning Skills and Universal is recommended to approve the waiver of the following Contracts Procedure Rule(s):

Contracts Procedure Rules No 8.1 and 8.2 – Intermediate value procurements

and award a contract to Playful Leeds and a range of Artists in the sum of £20,000, and to enter into partnership agreements with DigitalMe for£46,053 and £38,620 with Sheffield Hallam University.

Purpose of this report

- 1.1 That the Deputy Director, Learning Skills and Universal agrees to waive the requirements of contracts procedure rule 8 to allow ArtForms to enter into partnership agreements with DigitalMe and Sheffield Hallam University and to contract with a range of providers without competition to allow the delivery of the planned workshops within the programme.

2 Background information

- 2.1 Nesta, Arts Council England and the Arts and Humanities Research Council are running a research programme called “The Digital Research and Development Fund for the Arts” to support innovative arts organisations and their partners to use digital technologies to enhance audience reach and/ or create opportunities for new business models for arts organisations to promote the sustainability of arts organisations with merit for the benefit of the public.

The Project

- 2.2 The **BotBadge** project will pilot the use of emerging digital Open Badge (OB) technology to incentivise participation and reward individual learning in the arts, prioritising the involvement of children from disadvantaged groups in Leeds who are non-engagers in the arts and learning. Through a programme of in-school and out of school arts workshops, led by artists and arts organisations who are partners in the research project, participants will have the opportunity to explore and extend their own creativity and skills. Participants will earn and will display their ‘BotBadges’ through the project’s secure platforms. The BotBadges project will develop and share Open Badge tools, expertise and workshop materials, of use and significance to the wider arts and education sector.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The grant agreement is for **£124,972** and has been agreed through the taking of a significant operational decision.
- 3.2 To support the project as identified within paragraph 2.2, it will be necessary for ArtsForm to enter into partnership agreements with Digitalme and Sheffield Hallam University a range of contracts with a range of providers.
 - 3.2.1 Partners in the bid (ArtForms -LCC, DigitalMe and Sheffield Hallam University) have worked together to develop the bid in consultation with our Arts partners.
- 3.3 The grant agreement has been approved on the basis of working with the named research and technical partners with the programme. Therefore to meet the conditions of the grant agreement, it is necessary to enter into partnership agreements with the named partners, DigitalMe and Sheffield Hallam University.
- 3.4 The partnership agreements will be valued at **£46,053** with DigitalMe for and **£38,620** with Sheffield Hallam University.

- 3.5 A contract will be entered into with Playful Leeds to the value of £5,600. This is for 16 days work @ £350 per day. Playful Leeds are a non-profit organisation. The fee pertains to a non-commercial rate for Director level involvement in Open Badge development, project planning, publicity and evaluation, also includes technical API integration with MOTR web site.
- 3.6 ArtsForm will also enter into a range of contracts with a range of Artists. This can be summarised as 44 days work @ £325 per day, total projected value of £14,300. There is an assumption that this will involve the use of 6 artists. Covers all aspects of: Involvement in Open Badge development; attendance at briefings and badge canvas workshops; planning and delivery of BotBadge participatory arts workshops x 12; and participation in research (focus groups, one-to-one interviews etc.).
- 3.7 The values identified in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4 when totalled together would be covered under the requirements of CPR 8. This would require that at least three written quotes be sought.
- 3.8 A waiver of these requirements is sought to allow ArtsForm the flexibility to respond to the needs of the programme by identifying the appropriate artists who will be able to meet the needs of the programme and will also be compliant with the initial grant bid which specifically named Playful Leeds as a delivery partner.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.2 Partners in the bid (ArtForms -LCC, DigitalMe and Sheffield Hallam University) have worked together to develop the bid in consultation with our Arts partners: Playful Leeds, Studio 12 - Leeds Library Service and First Floor - West Yorkshire Playhouse.
- 4.1.3 ArtForms has shared information and consulted with colleagues in Learning Skills and Universal services, and Libraries, Arts and Heritage, City development.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 A key focus for the grant is to support audience development. In our project the 'audience' are children and young people. A criteria of the grant is that the programme and project activity:

- Broadens (connects with non-engagers in arts activity)
- Deepens (intensifying the level of participation e.g. young people attend more often)
- Diversifying (engaging new groups of young people who would not otherwise participate)

Our project activity as outlined in our application aims to deliver on all of the above. Screening form attached.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 'Badges' have been used for many years to motivate, reward and recognise achievement. Open badges are a digital version of this where learners collect and display their digital badges on line. Open Badges offer an alternative and complimentary approach to the conventional accreditation of learning. The Bot Badge project will pilot this technology as a way to

- a) engage children and young people in Leeds in arts activities
- b) reward individual learning in the arts

Open Badges have the potential to be an important way of engaging children and young people in cultural learning activities.

Child Friendly City

All our learning places identify and address barriers that prevent children and young people from engaging in and enjoying learning: lessons are more interactive and fun.

Children and Young People's Plan

CYP do well in learning and have skills for life.

CYP have fun growing up.

This pilot project will explore the following research questions:

- What value do young people attach to Open Badges as a record of their learning?
- Do Open Badges encourage young people's engagement and participation with arts activities?
- Do open badges help schools and arts organisations to engage children and young people who are non-engagers in arts and cultural learning?

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 ArtForms as the lead partner will be the budget holder. **£13,650** will be awarded to ArtForms to cover Project management costs. Activity will be delivered at no cost to LCC. ArtForms and LCC will gain National publicity for participation in this high profile project.

4.4.2 The rates indicated within the report are as per the grant application form and were approved to be reasonable. As indicated in 4.4.1, there is no cost to the Council, as the rates to be paid within the contract will be funded through the grant agreement.

4.4.3 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.4.1 ArtForms (Arts Development) as the lead partner and the budget holder must enter into contracts with providers to meet the needs of the programme as identified within the grant application process

The decision would be classified as a significant operational decision and as such is exempt from the provisions of call-in.

4.5 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 There is a minimum risk that the Council could be challenged as we are advertising the opportunities to potential providers of the services

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 This is a high profile National programme. The pilot programme will be researched and reported on by Sheffield Hallam University. The learning from this programme will be rolled out nationally, regionally and locally. The development of Open Badge technology could potentially have far reaching city wide benefits.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Deputy Director, Learning Skills and Universal is recommended to approve the waiver of the following Contracts Procedure Rule(s):

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and award a contract to Playful Leeds and a range of Artists in the sum of £20,000, and to enter into partnership agreements with DigitalMe for£46,053 and £38,620 with Sheffield Hallam University.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.