

# RMT External Research – Invitation to Tender

## **Introduction**

For over 30 years, Ruskin Mill Trust (RMT) has provided [specialist independent education](#) to children and adults with complex needs including learning difficulties, autistic spectrum conditions and disabilities. Our provisions offer both day and residential placements and applications are welcomed all year round.

Our unique method of Practical Skills and Therapeutic Education helps learners overcome barriers to learning, become skilled and contribute to community. Find out more about our [three-stage process here](#).

Since RMT's beginnings, hundreds of students have benefited from the Trust's innovative Practical Skills Therapeutic Education (PSTE) method that draws its inspiration from the insights of Rudolf Steiner, John Ruskin and William Morris. Through engaging with crafts, many of which are specific and connected to the history of the location and to the student's specific needs, the learner is immersed in a whole therapeutic process from beginning to end. Through these processes they learn more than purely academic and functional skills, also gaining transferable work skills and independent living skills. Most importantly, they learn to value themselves and others.

RMT wishes to appoint an external research consultant to:

- improve the way we evidence the effectiveness of our PSTE teaching and learning method to outside stakeholders (Local Authority commissioners, parents etc.); and
- review our data holdings and data capture processes to identify what data to collect for these purposes in future.

We want to be able to show the impact of student time spent with RMT and our effectiveness vis-à-vis relevant national and international comparisons. External researchers will lend added rigour to our own evaluation processes and provide an opportunity to benchmark what we do with other relevant service providers.

## **Scope of Tender**

We envisage this tender being a two-stage process.

Stage One would be a scoping exercise that allows the research consultant to conduct an initial strategic review of our data holdings (details available on request) to:

- a) identify what data sets will contribute most to the overall research; and
- b) inform the methodology for the second stage.

We would envisage this first stage being a one to two-week exercise, involving desk-top reviews of data holdings and visits to one or more of our colleges to meet key staff and understand the similarities and differences among the provisions.

A short report, presented to a meeting of the project steering committee, would allow a decision to be made regarding the scope and methodology for Stage Two. RMT reserves the right to conclude the research commission at the end of Stage One or to pause the process at this stage to consider next steps.

Stage Two would be a longer exercise, involving a comprehensive review of data, probably taking place over a six to eight-week period. Tenderers should allow for initial presentation of interim findings to the research steering committee after two weeks and four weeks, with a presentation of full draft findings after six weeks and submission of the final report after eight weeks. Tenderers are invited however to propose alternative timings and methodology in their submissions.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

Tenders will be assessed using evaluation criteria that allocate 70% of marks to quality and 30% of marks to cost.

The quality criteria to be used are:

- understanding of remit (25%);
- understanding of Trust vision, values and key policies (10%);
- experience, methodology and personnel (35%)

The cost assessment will allocate marks to both Stage One and Stage Two as follows: lump sum for stage 1 (5%); sum for stage 2 (25%).

The experience of the team is critical to this project. Please include full CVs for each team member proposed and case studies of relevant projects completed, with two referees from clients who are happy to be contacted independently as part of tender evaluation.

We welcome tenders offering different forms of research and evaluation, including social return on investment and social value but not limited to these. A short justification of the particular benefits and value of the proposed approach should be included.

### **Timetable**

Our outline timetable for this project is as follows:

- by 1 June – advertise tender opportunity;
- by 1 July – receive replies;
- by 15 July – appoint successful tenderer;
- by 15 August – Stage One report received
- by 15 September – presentation to steering committee
- by 1 November – Stage Two report in draft

- by 15 November – Stage Two report signed off

### **Tender Queries and Submission**

Any questions, e.g. requiring clarification of project scope or evaluation process, should be submitted via email to Dr. Laurence Cox by 15 June. All substantive questions and RMT's answers will be notified to all tenderers in a single response one week prior to the tender return deadline.

Tenders must be received on or before midday Friday 28 June. Please submit your proposals [via email](#) and in hard copy (three sets) for the attention of Dr. Laurence Cox, c/o Sue Smee, Ruskin Mill Trust, Old Bristol Road, Nailsworth, Gloucestershire GL6 0LA.

Hard copy tenders should be packaged in a double envelope, with the outermost envelope clearly marked as a tender document. Internal envelopes should be marked with the name of the tender and the organisation/team submitting the proposal.

### **Tender Evaluation**

RMT reserves the right to appoint any or no tenderer.

We aim to notify the outcome of the tender evaluation within two calendar weeks of receipt of tenders. In the event that tender evaluation requires clarification questions of tenderers, this timescale may be extended by notifying all tenderers of the extension.

### **Queries**

Please address any queries on this ITT document and procurement process to [Dr Laurence Cox](#), Research Consultant.

### **Safeguarding**

Ruskin Mill Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Successful applicants will be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check. The Trust is committed to becoming an equal opportunities employer.

Ruskin Mill Trust

May 2019

