

Newham Community Renewal Programme
External Audit Tender Specification
February 2024

Introduction

The Trustees of Newham Community Renewal Programme wish to invite tenders from suitably qualified and competent registered auditors with an excellent level of knowledge and understanding of the voluntary and community sector and charity accounts, for the purpose of conducting our external audit process. The contract will be awarded for a three-year period for the annual audit of the financial accounts for the years ending March 2024, March 2025, and March 2026. The contract is subject to satisfactory annual contract reviews by the Finance Committee and Board of Trustees. At the end of the three years, the contract may be extended for a further three years to March 2029, subject to satisfactory review by the Finance Committee and the Board.

Context

Newham Community Renewal Programme is a multi-purpose charity (No:275796) and company limited by guarantee (01327924) that has been working in the London Borough of Newham for 52 years. Our vision is of vibrant and integrated Newham communities where everyone has access to suitable jobs, homes, health and education. We work with over 3,500 individuals annually; most from marginalised global majority communities. Newham is London's most diverse borough, with 69.2% of the borough's 360,000 residents being non-white. We have a highly diverse staff team of around 40 individuals, equating to around 25 full time equivalent staff members. We also have on average 100 volunteers supporting our work each year, again reflecting the diversity of the communities we serve. We work to tackle the causes and consequences of poverty; isolation; and disadvantage in Newham by providing housing; foodbank services; advocacy; youth services; young carers provision; adult education; immigration advice and energy advice to support residents to thrive independently. We also deliver a range of community cohesion activities. Our holistic approach is proven to support people away from a point of crisis and towards safety and wellbeing. Our work is informed by our core values of dignity; inclusion; collaboration; and empowerment.

Financial position

The Renewal Programme's turnover over the past few years has varied between £1.5M and £1.8M. For a more complete picture, a copy of our latest accounts can be found on the charities commission website [here](#). The majority of our income is generated from local authority contracts and fundraising activities targeted at trusts and foundations. To a lesser degree we also attract income from corporate entities and private individuals. Our overall financial position remains relatively healthy, and our reserve levels reflect our agreed policy. In the trustees' opinion, sufficient resources are in place to enable the charity to continue in operation for the foreseeable future.

We out-source many of our financial functions, including the production of monthly management accounts, to JS2 (www.JS2.net), a specialist firm of Chartered Accountants providing financial support and outsourcing services to charities and the not for profit sector. JS2 work closely alongside our staff team, bringing a level of expertise that helps to ensure robust and efficient financial processes for our charity. Additionally, JS2 do not provide audit services, which ensures there will be no conflicts of interest with our appointed auditors. JS2 will prepare the full draft annual accounts (numbers) in Excel before the audit. They will also merge these with the Trustees annual report (words) provided by the Renewal Programme.

Our requirements

The Board of Trustees wish to invite tenders from suitably qualified and competent registered auditors with a high level of knowledge and understanding of the voluntary and community sector and charity accounts, for the function of external audit to include the following:-

- i. Annual audit of the financial accounts in accordance with the current Charity SORP;
- ii. attendance (virtually or in person) at one Finance Committee meeting and one Trustees' AGM meeting annually, to present the audited accounts;
- iii. To give occasional advice and guidance to the charities finance staff on accounting issues.

Audit timetable (exact dates subject to final confirmation)

Timeline	Description
31 March	Financial year end
June	Client trial balance available
July	Audit begins in July with testing completed and draft accounts prepared by August
August & September	Accounts reviewed by Renewal Programme staff and JS2 staff and finalised by end of September
October	Accounts presented to the Finance Committee for approval. Final amendments made prior to presentation of accounts to the Board of Trustees for final approval and signature.
November	Board agree and sign off accounts at AGM.
31 st December	Auditor to file annual accounts with Companies House.

Tender information required

Tender submissions should include the following information, under each of the separate headings numbered 1 to 6:

1. Organisation Details – including the structure, size and capacity to undertake the work specified.
2. Charity Knowledge – including:
 - Competent in providing accounting and auditing services to charities.
 - Knowledge of the charity sector and charity legislation in England.
 - Two written references from clients who are registered charities.
3. Staff Details – including information relating to:
 - How the audit will be staffed, including details of relevant skills and qualifications;
 - How the organisation will manage succession planning and staff continuity.

4. Audit Approach – details of how the organisation will plan and carry out the audit.

5. Fees – to include the proposed annual fee including VAT and any other charges – this should be set out for the next three years, including any proposed increases. The fee proposal should also include the proposed billing schedule and how fees will be set and agreed if the contract is extended for a further period.

6. Any other information or offers the tenderer feels will be relevant to their proposal.

Queries on the tender specification should be sent by email to Peter Laing (Chief Executive Officer) – peter.laing@renewalprogramme.org.uk

Tender process

Organisations considering tendering should contact Peter Laing by telephone (07846039437) or email (peter.laing@renewalprogramme.org.uk). This will enable interested organisations to speak to relevant people at our charity and / or request further information and clarity if required.

Following this initial contact, organisations wishing to submit a formal tender are asked to do so in writing using the criteria set out in the “Tender information required” section above. Please ensure that you provide information on each area requested in a clear and concise manner and note that written submissions should be a maximum of 10 A4 pages.

Tender proposals should be submitted by the deadline of **5pm on Friday 8th March 2024**, by email to peter.laing@renewalprogramme.org.uk. Tenders received after this deadline will not be considered.

A panel appointed by the Finance Committee will score submitted tenders using the criteria above and invite up to three organisations for interview, either by video conference or in person.

The successful organisation will be contacted at the end of the process. It is hoped to complete this process by the end of March 2024.