

Developing a Civil Society Strategy for London – draft TOR

Alice Wilcock, Team London 19 June 2017

TOR for the scoping of a Civil Society Strategy for London – Specification for Consultancy support

What we are looking for

The GLA is developing a strategy for supporting Civil Society in London. We are seeking some additional external resource to deliver this work.

The contract will run from approximately the middle of July 2017 until the end of September 2017 although the end date will also be determined by the deliverables that need to be completed by the contractor and further discussion with the GLA.

There is a budget of £15k.

We are looking for an individual or organisation that has significant experience of and knowledge of London's civil society, the current policy context for civil society, and strong cross borough relationships.

The successful provider would need to work very closely with GLA colleagues as this piece of work covers both internal and external relationships and considerations. This might mean co-location of the delivery partner for some of the work inside the GLA and at the very least frequent meetings and contact/collaboration.

The key deliverables will be;

- A review of the evidence and context
- The proposed methodology to developing the strategy
- A final written report
- A summary presentation

To respond to this opportunity please prepare a submission that is no longer than 8 sides of A4, which should cover;

- How you would approach the work
- Your experience within the sector(s) and brief examples of work of a similar nature that you have delivered in the past
- Details of the delivery teams that would be working on this piece of work, including if you will be sub-contracting to other people or organisations
- For each of the seven sections of the brief set out your views of what the challenges and opportunities are for the GLA and the sector in terms of the question/area raised
- Your estimate of the time and/or activity required for each section of this brief and how this relates to the overall budget so that we can see how you are breaking down your estimated costs, and what these will be

As an appendix please include CVs of the delivery team and two references that can be followed up in terms of your ability and expertise to deliver this work. Please also include any references to publications or resources that you have been involved in preparing as part of previous contracts.

Please send your response by email back to alice.wilcock@london.gov.uk by 12th July .

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Interviews will be held on the week of the 24TH July. Following this and a contract award, we will hold an inception meeting with the successful provider where exact reporting and deliverable information will be confirmed.

The work- developing a strategy for supporting Civil Society in London

1. What is civil society?

Civil society is where people take action to improve their own lives or the lives of others and act where government or the private sector don't. As a 'sector' it includes formal organisations such as voluntary and community organisations, informal groups of people who join together for a common purpose and individuals who take action to make their community a better place to live.

Civil society support (sometimes called infrastructure) refers to organisations that provide support, advice and capacity building to frontline groups, and sometimes advocate on their behalf.

2. The support needed to develop a GLA civil society strategy

–The GLA wants to develop a strategy for London's civil society, working with civil society partners to develop this, and, indicating our response to the recommendations contained in The Way Ahead report.

http://londonfunders.org.uk/sites/default/files/images/SME574%20London%20Funders%20Report_For%20Web.pdf,

This report has been a landmark proposal from London's civil society. We now need a more detailed analysis of some of the options within this and support to help us set out what we will do to support London's civil society.

We expect this support to include some work with internal GLA teams and some external stakeholder engagement to test our thinking as it develops.

The strategy will include;

A proposed vision and a structure

1. An overarching vision of the role the GLA has to play in the infrastructure of civil society in London, both as convenor and active participant
2. A proposal on the most appropriate structure(s) and methods to convene civil society leaders and groups to tackle the big issues facing London (e.g. via a 'Mayor's Challenge' model), cutting across geographic/sectoral boundaries

Building on the recommendations made in the Way Ahead on;

3. Working with London Councils/Local Authorities and others to develop commissioning frameworks and promote and reward good practice which allows access to contract opportunities for civil society organisations.
4. Supporting and promoting innovation and models of best practice for civil society organisations, and for civil society 'infrastructure' and creating networks to enable knowledge sharing and best practice to emerge

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5. Setting out the way in which the GLA can work with cross sector partners to gather data on the sector and share it in the most effective way possible, including mapping of the sector

Development of voice and regional support;

6. An exploration of the mechanisms that can be used to ensure that London grassroots organisations can have a say and be involved in policy production and having their voices heard
7. Working with partners to refine recommendations about the way that cross borough and local activity can be supported by sub-regional or regional bodies

We expect proposals to outline the methodology they would use to help us determine the central questions, analysis and content for each of these sections.

The Specification

Background and Context

Why does civil society matter to the GLA?

Civil Society is an essential sector that supports London's diverse communities. It keeps communities strong through individual relationships and collective action, improves individual wellbeing, and prevents unnecessary harm. The civil society sector plays a significant role in meeting needs which are not met by the private or public sector. Critically, civil society has a major role in addressing the needs of London's disadvantaged and vulnerable communities.

Why act now?

- **A changing sector:** civil society is already being forced to change as a result of external factors such as reduced public sector funding, reduction in public sector capacity building support for communities & voluntary sector organisations and is itself examining the way it works how it meets the demands of the future and can reshape infrastructure to match that delivery need.
- **A unique position to create change:** As a regional body, the GLA is ideally placed to make strategic interventions in order to support London's civil society.
- **A need for a cohesive strategy to create maximum impact:** the GLA already provides significant support to civil society (through grants, partnerships and engagement) but this is dispersed across departments. Having one clear strategy on how to work with civil society would offer clarity and maximise the impact the GLA can have by ensuring coordination across interventions, improved information about our beneficiaries and areas of need.
- **Demand from the sector:** during the Mayoral election race, the London Voluntary Service Council (LVSC) and the Centre for London both prepared comprehensive proposals about how the new Mayor could work with Civil Society. In 2015, London Funders, working with Greater London Volunteering and the LVSC, commissioned a review of the future of civil society support in London. The GLA was a member of the review's Reference Group. The review 'The Way Ahead: Civil Society at the Heart of London' was published in April 2016 and called on the GLA to support the future of London's civil society, including by:
 - collating, analysing and providing data on civil society and communities' needs;
 - bringing civil society into strategic planning about the future of London;
 - ensuring consistent commissioning and funding of civil society support.
 - The review also proposed a London Hub, which could work with specialist support and develop standardized resources where possible, which can be customized and delivered locally – there may be scope for the GLA to take on or support some of these 'hub' functions.

Contract deliverables

1. Background and evidence base

We have substantial evidence and research reports (including the Way Ahead) which set out the current context and position of civil society in London. An overview of this data is required and key relevant points summarised and set out.

2. The Civil Society Strategy – content

A proposed vision and a structure

There are a number of roles that the GLA could play to support London's civil society. Some of these were specifically identified in the Way Ahead report for the GLA and others are functions that we believe we might usefully take on, in many cases in partnership with others. Some of the options that could be considered are:

(i) Strategic leadership and convening

- Setting out policy priorities at the city level (e.g. social integration) and a strong message about the Mayor's vision for an active civil society and the GLA's partnership with civil society.
- Take a proactive role in terms of convening civil society groups from across the city to both galvanise action on both key challenges facing the city (e.g. child poverty) and new ways of working (e.g. making a reality of 'co-production').

To include exploration of;

- a) Work across GLA policy areas (particularly Health, Housing, Poverty, Regeneration, Diversity and Social Policy) to look at current civil society engagement and how organisations are feeding into policy making.**
- b) Convening of cross policy area focus group with range of civil society organisations to discuss 2-3 overarching themes.**

In terms of part a) the Contractor would be working with internal resource within the GLA who will be able to lead on the intra-departmental contacts and coordination. The role we would want the Contractor to focus on would be the civil society organisation outreach, working in collaboration with GLA colleagues.

(ii) Structure and governance

- Connecting London government to London's trusts, foundations, charities and neighbourhood groups;

To include exploration of:

- ***A mechanism through which the GLA could engage and consult with civil society on its strategies, policies and programmes.***
- ***Specific interventions that the GLA can make in London for the sector which would add value at an aggregate, rather than specific, level.***
- ***The ways in which civil society could be involved in advising the Mayor? E.g. borough gatherings (like MQT), local roadshows, CVS acting as convenors, local hustings, the variety of involvement possible***

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- ***Other sectors and how they engage, both within London and also within other countries including Europe and the US***
- ***How can views on this area be gathered so as to gain the widest range of responses?***

Again, we would expect the contractor to work with GLA colleagues in order to consider the most appropriate structures and/or approaches.

Building on the recommendations made in the Way Ahead on;

- (iii) **Commissioning:** working with London Councils/Local Authorities and others to develop commissioning frameworks and promote and reward good practice which allows access to contract opportunities for civil society organisations.

To include exploration of;

- ***Social Value act – usage, modelling of best practice, how to help commissioners use it most effectively***
- ***Reward and recognition of good commissioning practice***
- ***Encouraging data sharing across boroughs regarding commissioning (see section on data later)***
- ***Exploration of impact measurement and social value add of commissioning at a local level including tie-in to local economic value add in terms of social capital and local economic development***

This has been a particularly key theme of the Way Ahead and other cross sector work and so we require a contractor with a strong knowledge of the commissioning environment within London and strong relationships with voluntary and community sector groups, wider civil society organisations and Local Authority/CCGs.

(iv) Innovation and recognition

- How we can look at innovative ideas for testing out new ways of working with Civil Society and recognising excellence.

To include exploration of;

- ***Exemplars of good practice sharing and networking from across the world***
- ***Use of technology to share best practice, but also face to face***
- ***Overlap with other Mayoral and citywide initiatives around STEM, tech, entrepreneurship***
- ***Potential link in with OCS and Lottery***
- ***How Trusts and foundations encourage innovation and best practice sharing, examine network theory***

(v) Data on the sector and data sharing;

Setting out the way in which the GLA can work with cross sector partners to gather data on the sector and share it in the most effective way possible, including mapping of the sector

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To include exploration of;

- ***The proposals from the Way Ahead in terms of information sharing, and, involving borough colleagues and internal GLA colleagues look at the kind of evidence base that is needed***

Development of voice and regional support;

- (vi) An exploration of the mechanisms that can be used to ensure that London grassroots organisations can have a say and be involved in policy production and having their voices heard

Scoping to include:

Look at best practice in terms of mass and local participation and opinion gathering

- ***Use of technology to gather information and create ongoing channels (use of existing mechanisms such as Talk London, or MQTs or new channels such as community research, touch pad research outside community venues/events, using school gates as a channel). Work would be required to link internally with both the Community Relations team and the Intelligence Team.***
- ***Working with the Lottery, City Bridge and the People's Health Trust to look at how they engaged with stakeholders on their strategy reviews***
- ***What innovative practice is being used elsewhere? In the UK? Overseas? What has worked and why – what has not worked and why not?***

(Depending on the time line of this work, then take to the next stage and;

- ***Work with CVS and local volunteer centres to create outline local roadshows***
- ***Hold consensus conversations and facilitated workshops in sample London boroughs including inner/outer/different demographic***
- ***What would this cost? How would it be resourced?***
- ***Commissioning of local organisations to develop local pattern/picture***
- ***Link in with data work – what would we be asking and why? How would we collect it? What would it cost?)***

- (vii) Working with partners to refine recommendations about the way that cross borough and local activity can be supported by sub-regional or regional bodies (a London hub?)

This recommendation will naturally fall out of much of the work covered in previous points as it will be informed by;

- ***The mapping and data about the sector that is covered in the context and background***
- ***Its role will be influenced by any governance structure and role recommended***
- ***The work on best practice promotion and commissioning will also shape what is required from a central level and what can be delivered locally***
- ***The recommendations coming from the Way Ahead steering group and dialogue there***
- ***The recommendation needs to be sustainable and also deal with the legacy of the existing organisations within London and their development, and include considerations about the funding sources there are and what would be required***
- ***This also links into mapping required of what is available across boroughs in terms of sector support (see data mapping point)***