

Request for Quote (RFQ)

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by: West of England Combined Authority - Creative & Cultural Economy Service

for: Design and delivery of training day aimed at rural business and creative practitioners

Deadline for Proposals: 12:00 noon Friday 9th January 2026

The opportunity

This RFQ is issued by West of England Combined Authority, referred to below as “the Buyer” or “we” or “us”.

Context and Challenge: Rural nature based, and creative/cultural practitioners need to develop new income streams, in many cases as an alternative to relying solely on public sector funds.

In addition, businesses who depend upon or benefit from the visitor economy, need to ensure that they are building resilience such as product diversification to enable year rounds visits, and reduce seasonality.

There is a growing demand from consumers for a more meaningful travel experience, (the conscious consumer), through connecting to communities, places and landscapes, generating a positive outcome from their travel, often referred to as [sustainable tourism](#). This regenerative approach has been growing not just for consumers but also business event organisers and delegates. However, [research](#) from the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) shows that businesses need to make it easier for consumers to access these more sustainable tourism choices.

In response, Visit England have launched a [Regenerative Tourism Guide](#) that seeks to support business and destinations in their development, alongside the award-winning [Legacy and Positive Impact toolkit](#) for the Business Events industry.

As well as having an ethical response to leisure travel, conscious consumers value the positive wellbeing impact of nature and natural landscapes. Wellbeing is one of the three growth pillars identified in the [Destination Management Plan](#) for the West of England region developed by Visit West in 2023.

Our region is a place where many businesses have already invested in ensuring that they are operating as sustainably as they can and having a sustainable and responsible approach is in our DNA. It's in our nature to balance protecting our environment and delivering economic growth. They aren't mutually exclusive. Investing in nature and culture is a key driver for our regional economy and as such is reflected in our emerging Local Growth Plan: "We're a region where culture, leisure and nature serve as rocket boosters to our economy: attracting people, investment and creating a unique environment", Helen Godwin, West of England Mayor

Investment in nature and our environment brings not only an economic return but also a social one. The region is the first to publish the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and to support [WENP priority programmes](#). These nine programmes represent our partners shared priorities and show how we plan to target investment to bring nature back across the West of England. By fostering innovative partnerships, and securing diverse funding streams, Nature thriving means greener, resilient, healthier places for everyone to live, visit, and work.

Globally, tourism has evolved beyond the traditional sightseeing to a more experiential model, with a focus on engaging with a destination's culture and environment through immersive activities. The West of England is perfectly placed to work with creative producers, businesses and communities to develop these nature-based experiences to provide opportunities to engage with residents in the wider region, business event delegates and wider leisure tourism. This includes both the development and packaging of experiences, as well as the distribution of these to diverse audiences.

Therefore, there is an opportunity via the Combined Authorities Culture West programme to focus on connecting culture, nature and health to pilot a means of meeting these needs, the outcomes of which could then be used to determine whether there is value in developing a fuller strategic response by the Combined Authority and Visit West.

Proposed Solution: A pilot business support training day that upskills rural based West of England businesses and creative/cultural practitioners on how to conceptualise, design, develop, fund and market (including distribution), nature based creative and cultural experiences for paying customers, including both residents and visitors

A key element of the training will be providing an opportunity for rural businesses and local creative practitioners to come together and connect

What we need

We are now looking for a supplier to support with designing, organising and then delivering the proposed training.

The training will preferably take place over the course of one day (proposed 10am – 3:30pm) and will need to be delivered before the 31st March 2026. A venue for the location will have already been secured by the project team, and this will be a rural business based in the West of England region which has access to public transport.

We anticipate that the training day will involve multiple sessions, with each focused on a different element of the process. The aim is for the training to provide practical advice, guidance and tips to rural businesses and creative practitioners on how to design and deliver creative, nature-based experiences at a rural location.

Examples of modules which could be included are:

- An introduction to tourism and paid-for visitor experiences
- Costs of operation – what costs to expect to have to account for
- Legal requirements – e.g. insurance, accessibility, advertising
- ‘Pitching’ by rural businesses of their ideas and what they could or would like to offer
- ‘Pitching’ by creative practitioners of their ideas and what they could or would like to offer
- Marketing and distribution of experiences
- Transport considerations

Staff from Visit West and the West of England Combined Authority will be available to run specific sessions (eg around transport considerations which we know is a key challenge for rural businesses- this session would be run by staff from the Combined Authorities transport team. Another example is marketing and distribution; this session can be delivered by or alongside Visit West) and help facilitate on the day

The West of England Combined Authority’s Creative & Cultural team will work with Visit West, the regional Unitary Authorities, plus any other relevant networks to promote the opportunity to rural businesses and creative practitioners as well as managing signing participants up to the training.

The target is to have 10 rural businesses and 10 creative practitioners taking part in the training day.

What’s important to us?

Key outcomes of this pilot scheme are:

- that rural businesses feel they have the knowledge and confidence to design and offer nature based creative and cultural experiences for paying visitors
- that rural businesses and creative practitioners who want to offer such paid for experiences for visitors can connect with each other to form working partnerships
- insights are gained from the pilot which will enable the Combined Authority to assess whether to scale-up and develop such trainer further

We are looking for a high quality, inclusive and accessible training day to be designed, developed and delivered within a tight timeframe.

1.1 What we require from a Respondent:

a. track record

We are seeking Respondents that have experience of delivering training to businesses, with knowledge of the tourism industry and visitor economy. Experience of having worked with or on projects involving creative practitioners and/or rural businesses would also be beneficial

An understanding of the visitor economy and cultural-creative landscape in the West of England region would be beneficial

b. capability

We are seeking Respondents that can design and develop a high-quality training day for businesses within fairly constraint timescales. We are also looking for the respondent to be confident and capable at delivering training on the day

c. capacity

We are seeking Respondents that can work at speed with the Creative & Cultural Economy team to develop and deliver this training opportunity

We are looking for solutions that provide practical guidance and advice to rural businesses and creative practitioners on how to work together to develop and deliver paid-for experiences to visitors. This could include materials that can be distributed post event to support their learning.

Broader Outcomes

We are seeking Respondents that can provide valuable insights and lessons learnt from this pilot training which can then be used in any future business case for a scaled-up version of the training

An awareness/appreciation of the need for the training to be fully inclusive and accessible and ability to incorporate this into its design and delivery is important

1.2 Other information

Payment will be on successful delivery of agreed milestones

1.3 Contract term

We expect that the Contract will commence January 2026. The anticipated Contract term and options to extend are:

Description	Months
Initial term of the Contract	3 months

Description	Months
Options for us to extend the Contract	There is no option to extend
Maximum term of the Contract	3 months

1.4 Key deliverables

Description	Indicative date for delivery
Training day agenda/plan	First draft to be received within 3 weeks of contract start date
Organisation of training day completed, such as speakers confirmed	By mid-February 2026
Training day delivered; trainer to facilitate and deliver sessions where relevant	By Mid-March 2026
Evaluation/feedback survey developed	Finalised prior to training day taking place and conducted at the training day itself
Post-training day summary report providing recommendations for future training	Submitted by end of March, final round-up discussion to take place by early April 2026
Training summary pack for participants to take away for future reference, with links to further support	Completed prior to event being delivered and disseminated to attendees within 1 week of training taking place

a. Useful documents/information (available on request):

- Project briefing document
- Small amount of responses from a survey that was sent out to rural businesses asking for insights on: what experiences they currently offer, what they would like to offer and what challenges they face when trying to provide these types of experiences
- Examples of similar training in other locations or that have happened previously in the region
- Overview of Culture West delivery strands

Pricing information

1.5 Pricing information provided by Respondents

- a. Pricing must show a breakdown of all costs, fees, expenses and charges. It must also clearly state the total Contract price exclusive of VAT.
- b. Where the price is based on fee rates, specify all rates, either hourly or daily or both as required.
- c. Respondents must document all assumptions and dependencies that affect its pricing

How to apply

1.6 submission of quote

Respondents are asked to submit their responses to beth.hogben@westofengland-ca.gov.uk by 12:00 noon on Friday 9th January 2026

Please provide your response to this brief plus, your CV/list of previous relevant experience

Selection process

1.7 Assessment of quotes

Responses will be reviewed and scored by a panel made up of West of England Combined Authority and Visit West staff.

Responses will be scored as follows:

AWARD CRITERIA & WEIGHTINGS		
Price	30%	Total Price on the pricing schedule.
Quality	70%	Question 1 - 35% Question 2 - 35%

The quality questions that you are expected to respond to in your proposal are detailed in the table below:

No		Question	Weighting
1		<p>Methodology and Project Management</p> <p>Please detail your proposed methodology for completing the work by the indicated deadlines (including key meetings and milestones).</p> <p><i>Please limit your response to maximum of 2 sides of A4, Arial font size 12 for main body text</i></p> <p>Responses should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate a clear understanding of the aims, objectives, and scope of the training and how you would meet the brief • Clearly define the breakdown of approach including a proposed plan with timelines and meeting the deliverables including allocation of staff time 	35%
2		<p>Experience and Expertise</p> <p>Please outline how the organisation/individual and/or project team have the expertise and experience to meet the requirements set out in Section 1.</p> <p><i>Please limit your response (excluding CV attachments – 1 page per CV) to 3 sides of A4, Arial font size 12 for main body text.</i></p> <p>The response should:</p>	35%

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly demonstrate that the project team/supplier has direct expertise and experience in meeting the brief Provide robust, credible information demonstrating recent and relevant experience delivering at least 2 similar projects over the last 3 years to timescale, budget and Client requirements Outlines the roles of the individuals/project team, their relevant skills and their key tasks mapped against the key requirements for this brief 	
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1.8 Scoring methodology

Where responses to questions are to be scored, the following scores are applied by a panel of evaluators to a Bidder's submitted responses. The scores are awarded dependent on the level of evidence provided to each question.

A score of 3 (Satisfactory) represents an acceptable level of evidence and is the minimum acceptable score for any question. Providers who score less than a 3 in any one area will have their bid rejected.

0 – No response and/or evidence is unacceptable or non-existent, or there is a failure to properly address any issue. The Authority does not have any confidence in the Bidder's experience, capacity and ability to meet its requirements.

1 – The response and/or the evidence are deficient (or not relevant) in the majority of areas and the Authority has a low level of confidence in the Bidder's experience, capacity and capability to meet its requirements.

2 – Large portions of the response are not satisfactory and/or are not supported by a satisfactory level of evidence and the Authority has limited confidence in the Bidder's experience, capacity and capability to meet its requirements.

3 – The response is satisfactory and supported by an acceptable standard of relevant evidence but with some reservations/issues not addressed. The Authority is satisfied with the Bidder's experience, capacity and capability to meet its requirements.

4 – The response is comprehensive and supported by a good standard of relevant evidence and provides the Authority with a good standard of confidence in the Bidder's experience, capacity and capability to meet its requirements

5 – The standard of the response is very high, and the relevance of the response and the supporting evidence is very comprehensive and provides the Authority with a very high level of confidence in the Bidder's experience, capacity and capability to meet the Authority's requirements.

This contract is being awarded on Most Economically Advantageous Terms (MEAT) MEAT which is the combination of both the Quality and Cost scores. The highest scoring bidder will be recommended for the award of contract.

Quality - % Total - High Best

Quality Scores will be calculated using the following formula:

Your evaluated score (0-5) X question weighting

Sum total of your weighted score (out of 5)

Your weighted score X
Maximum score available (5)

Price Evaluation - % Total - Low Best

All price bids are compared against the lowest bid to reach the percentage difference from the lowest bid.

The lowest priced bid will receive 20%

Other Suppliers cost score will be calculated using the following formula:

Lowest Bid Price X 20
Your Price

Your TOTAL SCORE will be calculated by adding your Quality + Cost weighted scores.

The most economically advantageous proposal will be determined by the evaluation

1.9 Confirmation of result/expected start date

All respondents will be contacted via email by Friday 16th January 2026 and informed whether they have been selected as the chosen supplier or not

It is expected that the contract start date will occur within 1 week of the successful applicant being informed

Contact information

If you have any questions about this Request to Quote, please submit them to

beth.hogben@westofengland-ca.gov.uk no later than 12:00 noon Monday 5th January (please note: responses to queries will not be received between Friday 19th December and Sunday 4th January 2026)