



Next Steps 2024

Building a better future for Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome

Evaluation Consultancy Brief



Overview

Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome is tendering for a consultant to engage with us to evaluate the performance of the Next Steps 2024 project. The successful consultancy will work in a variety of ways to assess and gather feedback on the project. The project is tasked with two parts – first, a new post to drive to market and promote the brand on a national level and secondly a schedule of work that will review our operating model and the performance of the organisation. On completion, the project will present us with a series of options of how we might go forward, revising and updating our business model to become a sustainable charitable organization.



Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome
Hackman's Lane, Purleigh, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 6RN
Registered Charity Number: 1151099



Overview

Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome. (www.stowmaries.org.uk) A hidden gem of Essex, aviation heritage and Great War history. Its roots are in the darkest days of the early 20th Century and now it is celebrated as a vital centre of heritage, conservation and community wellbeing. You can find it to the east of Chelmsford and west of Maldon, tucked into the gently rolling farmland. It includes the largest known surviving group of RFC buildings on an WW1 aerodrome in Europe. But it is so much more.

Not only a time-capsule of early-Modern architecture, this bustling renovation project is a popular aerodrome and ACE-accredited museum, packed with galleries and exhibitions. It is also an award-winning centre for community volunteering and a dedicated response to the challenges of isolation and mental health, housing a growing wealth of skills, research and knowledge.

The Aerodrome opens three days per week, from mid-February to mid-December and hosts a thriving events program. It is largely staffed by volunteers, including its Board of trustees.

Vision and Aims

The core vision of Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome (SMGWA) is to **conserve our unique heritage site to enable it to play a vital contemporary role in the lives of our local and wider communities and become a key part of the nation's cultural landscape.**

SMGWA intends to achieve this by pursuing the following **aims** to:

- Research, preserve and tell the stories of the men and women who lived, worked and died at SMGWA and the part it played in the home defence of London and the South East during the First World War
- Create, present and curate enjoyable and educational experiences for all, featuring the historical heritage, ecology and biodiversity of our site
- Champion and be an exemplar of active participation and lifelong volunteering at the site
- Deliver an exciting, engaging and varied programme of participatory events
- Widen and broaden our audiences through accessible and diverse visitor experiences utilizing a range of interpretation techniques
- Maintain an appropriate Conservation Management Plan for the site, encompassing all facets of the site including ecological and historical

SMGWA is now ready to make the step on to the national stage and needs to understand what is required to achieve it. As part of a Heritage Fund supported project, we will appoint a Marketing and Events Officer to drive our brand. We will also appoint a business consultancy to review our operating model, our skill set and training needs, providing a clear, evidenced report to enable and empower our decision making – enabling us to become a financially sustainable charitable organisation. This project will begin in April 2024 and run for 18 months.



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Outputs

The successful consultancy will deliver:

1. An assessment of the effectiveness and impact of the newly instated Marketing and Events Officer role, funded by the Heritage Fund. This should detail the impact of the new role on increased activity, growth or decline in existing audiences (both physical and digital) that can be largely attributed to the role together with any pertinent engagement data (Such as visitor feedback). This assessment should be a 'live' document, presented in an initial (**1st October 2024**), interim (**1st April 2025**) and final (**1st November 2025**) report form. This should be completed using engagement with the charity and its stakeholders.

Note: The aim of this output is to enable the Board to have clear, data-led assessment of the effectiveness of the role in order to be able to make an informed decision on how best to host and, if needed, modify this role, in future.

2. The immediate formation of a project responses group, made up of suitable and appropriate new and existing stakeholders, internal and, but primarily, external to act as a consultant mechanism on the charity, its activities and its brand placement. The consultancy will meet with this group on an appropriate basis to gather feedback that will be added to its reports.

Note: The aim of this output is to enable the organisation to understand it's external image, public perception and branding and how to draw on this knowledge during and after the project.

3. An assessment of the effectiveness and impact of the skills assessment, resultant training program and business options appraisal, funded by the Heritage Fund. This should detail the success of these activities by way of reporting on the growth of understanding, confidence and skill set of the team (as appropriate), the delivery of the options appraisal and the impact of both on the stakeholders of the charity. This should reference the growth or decline in existing audiences (both physical and digital) as a result of the project and any pertinent engagement data. This assessment should be a 'live' document, presented in an initial (**1st October 2024**), interim (**1st April 2025**) and final (**1st November 2025**) report form. This should be completed using engagement with the charity and its stakeholders.

Note: The aim of this output is to give a data-led, professional appraisal of the project for the Board of Trustees and its funders, including the funders of the project, the Heritage Fund.

These outputs will be delivered to the Project Board (made up of selected Trustees, key staff and key volunteers), the Board of Trustees as appropriate and supplied to the funder of the project, the Heritage Fund.





Methodology

The successful consultancy will detail in their proposal how they will achieve the outputs. We expect these details to include how they will form the project responses group, including suggested candidates for membership.

We would expect this methodology to take account of the part-time nature of the management team & volunteers.

Contract management

We expect the work commissioned to begin on **1st April 2024** with an initial report provided by **1st October 2024**. An interim report will be provided by **01 April 2025**, with the final report submitted to Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome by **1st November 2025**.

The anticipated budget is £8,000 to include all expenses, ex-VAT. The contract will be let by the Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome.

The **payment schedule** will be agreed upon with the successful consultancy but is anticipated to be in three stages – being a 30% deposit, 30% interim payment at an agreed milestone and a 40% final balance payment on completion of the project.

The project will be managed on a day-to-day basis for Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome by Ian Flint, the CEO.

Award criteria

A proposal for undertaking the work should include:

- a detailed methodology for undertaking the evaluation
- an outline of the internal responsibilities and liaisons.
- details of staff allocated to the project, together with experience of the contractor and staff members in carrying out similar projects. The project manager / lead contact should be identified
- the allocation of days between members of the team
- the daily charging rate of individual staff involved
- a timescale for example, in the form of a Gantt chart, for carrying out the project
- an overall cost for the work





Proposals submitted will be assessed by Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome against the following questions:

Criteria	Scoring
To what extent does the proposal demonstrate an understanding of the issues related to this brief?	20%
To what extent does the proposal demonstrate an understanding of the issues of working with a part-time, financially lean, largely volunteer staffed organisation charity?	25%
To what extent are the methodology and methods appropriate to the requirements set out?	20%
What degree of experience does the bidder demonstrate in order to successfully complete the work?	20%
How well has the bidder structured a team in order to successfully manage the contract and deliver the required work to the budget and timetable required?	15%

Procurement process

Initial enquiries should be sent via e-mail to ian.flint@stowmaries.org.uk

Proposals should be sent in PDF form only, to ian.flint@stowmaries.org.uk

The procurement timetable will be:

Milestone	Date
Proposals invited	0800hrs 12th February 2024
Proposals return deadline	1700hrs 1st March 2024
Assessment and review (This will involve further communications with tenderers)	4th-29th March 2024
Decision made and contract awarded	1st April 2024



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