

INVITATION TO TENDER/PROPOSE

Website Refresh/Upgrade

The Tower Theatre Company

<http://www.towertheatre.org.uk>**Summary**

The Tower Theatre Company ("the Tower"), a registered UK charity, invites proposals from qualified and interested parties internal and external to the charity to respond to this invitation with a proposal to review and update its website. The organisation would like professional assistance to refresh and upgrade it to facilitate new commercial offerings (room hire), meet new legal standards (GDPR), ensure payment and site security/encryption (for online ticket bookings), and enable a distributed burden of its maintenance across a range of qualified internal volunteers. To this end, the Board of Directors will consider proposals meeting the requirements detailed below, received by 17:00 on **Tuesday 19 February**, 2019, within a maximum budget of £15,000 plus VAT, with the project to be completed by 15 August, 2019 at the latest. Proposals and questions should be submitted to Alexander Knapp, Member of the Board and Project/Contract Manager at: alexander@knapp.net

Background of the Tower Theatre Company

The Tower Theatre Company was founded in 1932 as the Tavistock Repertory Company, but took its name from Canonbury Tower, the building that it occupied for over 50 years in North London.

Although it is strictly non-professional, many famous names have appeared here early in their careers, notably Richard Baker who for many years was president of its 'supporters club', The Friends of the Tower Theatre, a position now held by the leading stage designer William Dudley, who first practised his craft at the Tower. Others to have acted with the Company over the years include the late Alec Clunes (father of Martin Clunes), Renée Asherson, Tom Courtenay, Siân Phillips, Michael Gambon, Alfred Molina and John Bennett.

In 2016 the Tower was chosen by the Royal Shakespeare Company as its London partner for its production of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Play for the Nation', with performances at the Barbican Theatre in London and the RSC Theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon. The Tower also tours to other theatres, often abroad, and has performed from time to time at the Edinburgh Fringe. For the last 27 years the Company has performed its annual Shakespeare play in Paris, in an open-air theatre in the Bois de Boulogne. Last year's production was 'The Winter's Tale' and this year we will be performing 'The Merry Wives of Windsor'. Every two years, the Company also performs at the Minack Theatre in Cornwall, most recently with 'Wolf Hall' in 2018.

In 2019 the Tower will take a production of a rarely performed play by Cecil Beaton, 'Gainsborough's Girls', to Sudbury in Suffolk, and a tour to the Faroe Islands with Bernard Shaw's 'Pygmalion', to be performed in their National Theatre.

The Tower's crowded programme makes it one of the busiest companies of its kind in the country.

Website – Context

With the recent acquisition of a permanent home in Stoke Newington (Hackney), the Tower Theatre's Board of Directors is engaged in a series of interdependent and strategic initiatives to maximise benefit to its members, audiences, community and other beneficiaries.

Like many other community-driven organisations, the Tower's website is the primary source of information about its work and history, a powerful channel to engage current stakeholders, find and attract new members, volunteers and supporters. As an artistic- and performance-driven organisation, it also serves as a critical tool to enable ticket sales, and in the newly purchased building to also promote commercial opportunities for room hires or other partnerships.

Historically, the Tower's website has been developed and maintained by internal volunteers, and has adapted regularly to new needs, content and technology. However, the Tower recognises that periodic review by and advice from external specialists can be very valuable, particularly as the organisation enters a new chapter with its first permanent home in 15 years and concurrently reviews its structure, volunteer capability, training programmes, marketing tools, and artistic programme.

Website – Purpose

The primary purpose of the website is *engagement*, specifically, internal and external 'audiences' (constituencies/demographics, in addition to the theatrical sense). There are other benefits that a website can provide, but they are secondary to engagement. Given this and with limited resources, this project will primarily focus on delivering a website that engages more/new people, or make it easier and more effective to engage those people already part of its community. While other groups may be considered during the course of the project, the Tower has identified the following users (roughly in order of priority):

- Audience/Customers - Both those people who've already been to a show, and those who never have, particularly those in the local community (Hackney);
- Members and Friends - Updating and sharing information about opportunities for the Company, including events, training, or volunteer needs;
- Potential Members, Friends and other Volunteers - Who might join (through various channels, or in different capacities) and become active in various aspects of the Company;
- Commercial Customers - Who might want to hire our rehearsal/performance space (generating additional revenue);
- Media - Any promotional outlets (classical/digital) that could promote our work, opportunities, and charitable purposes.
- Donors - Trusts/foundations, local (Stoke Newington and Hackney) sponsors, or ongoing individual donors;

The Tower will not be providing detailed data on the historical and current website traffic as part of the documentation included in this invitation to tender/propose, but it does exist, will be collected and provided to the successful Contractor during the Scoping phase while they develop the final Project Plan in collaboration with key internal personnel and groups.

Website – Principles

Any proposal submitted in response to this invitation must demonstrate the Contractor's capability to create or update a website that reflects the following principles:

- Compliant – Ensure GDPR, disability-access, other legal/digital requirements and best practice;
- Secure – Match industry-standard for encryption, and streamline other assurances (e.g. online payments);
- Accessible – Can be easily taught to new/multiple people as appropriate and has existing documentation and other resources publicly available for training;
- Standard – 'Off-the-shelf' platform that doesn't require bespoke/costly/proprietary design or on-going support from a contractor;
- Collective – The majority of content and branding can be added/updated/maintained by an appropriate variety of internal volunteers;
- Intuitive – Simplify the 'user journey' to the greatest degree possible, validated through testing (the Tower can provide personnel for focus groups as needed);
- Strategic – Built with consideration for possible future upgrades (e.g. 'click to choose your seat') sales, CRM integration, ticketing options, training programme, marketing;
- Responsive – Minimum of backend scripts/queries to ensure speed and loading times;

Website – Functions

Any proposal submitted in response to this invitation must address the contractor's capability to develop or update a website to deliver the following functions:

- Event Information – Information about each show or social event, the dates/times, participants, prices, engagement opportunities/process;
- Ticket Sales – Selection of seats (show/type/venue/location), payment, customer data/preferences capture, transfer of information (ticket, CRM);
- Show Opportunities – Upcoming auditions and requirements, crew/production openings, other support needed (special props, get-in...);
- Membership Process – Types of membership, benefits tiers, donation opportunities, online form for payment;
- Other Volunteer Roles – Opportunities to participate, descriptions of requirements, booking calendar by role (e.g. for shifts), personal data capture and confirmation/reminder;
- Commercial Enquiries/Bookings – Description of available rooms/capacities/equipment, calendar of availability, price list, booking enquiry form;
- Donation/Fundraising Opportunities – Current priorities and requirements of the Company, and a dynamic 'menu' of ways to provide financial support;
- Complementary Interface(s) – Consideration for integration of the website with other external systems (e.g. Databox CRM currently, and other projected options to be agreed);
- Company Information – Current description and structure, framework for the historical archive of shows and personnel, contact/location/directions;
- Account Profile/Preferences – Account/profile page (theatrical, customer, marketing, management, website, donor) appropriate for various uses of the website;

Priority will be given to proposals that demonstrate the capability to design and integrate clear, simple user journeys for these functions.

Website – Requirements

Any proposal submitted in response to this invitation must address the contractor's capability to develop or update a website that meets the following technical requirements:

- Industry-standard ('off-the-shelf') platform appropriate for content management by volunteer, non-technical personnel with a minimum of training required;
- Compliance with relevant UK and EU laws and standards required for organisations comparable to the Tower Theatre;
- Adaptive formatting for a variety of common screens (including computer/laptop and mobile devices), resolutions, and browsers;
- Elastic search for both free text and tagged content within the entire site (including back-end databases directly integrated with the website, and populated over time);
- Capability to assign levels of authority/access appropriate to various functions ('roles'), and to preview draft changes or new content before publication;
- Ability for multiple users to engage various functions/pages of the website concurrently, and appropriate controls to prevent conflicting edits;
- Seamless maintenance of Databox interface (the current CRM/ticketing platform) in the new version of the website;
- Capacity to generate and manage Tower E-mail addresses from the primary domain, including for individuals, groups and functions (e.g. media@tower.org.uk);
- Integral media manager (video, photographs, documents) for common file types, and seamless integration of externally hosted content (e.g. YouTube videos) otherwise;
- Compatibility with Google Analytics and other quantitative tools and resources recommended for periodic reporting on traffic, and identification of relevant management data;

For the avoidance of doubt, any proposal of bespoke back-end design requiring ongoing maintenance by the Contractor (or a similar sunk cost/dependency) will be rejected immediately. The Tower invites proposals of the best existing platform that can be used for its needs, but expects Contractors to justify their recommendation's long-term value and ease of use against other options.

Proposal – Conditions

Any proposal submitted in response to this invitation must meet the following conditions:

- Contractors must demonstrate the ability to deliver *all* of the technical requirements – no 'selective' proposals will be considered, nor is further sub-contracting permitted;
- Contractors must include two to four references (website links/examples, and contact information for those clients) for their most comparable previous work;
- Contractors should explicitly identify what aspects of their proposal are costed for a registered charity, or provide exceptional value-for-money;
- Contractors must demonstrate the capability and confirm their ability to deliver the process and product to the required milestones, budget and deadline;
- Contractors must explicitly identify any aspects of their proposal that will commit the Tower to costs outside the budget for this project (e.g. hosting, bandwidth, subscriptions/SAAS);
- Contractors must explicitly identify elements of the proposal that address and/or contribute to core and initial aspects of Search Engine Optimisation (SEO);

- Contractors must include initial training services for personnel selected by the Tower Theatre on website maintenance and editing during the project’s timeline;
- Contractors may propose visual elements of the website most appropriate for clarity, appeal and ease of use, but this contract does not include any aspect of rebranding;
- Contractors must propose how they will create content frameworks for all functions listed in this invitation to tender, but should not cost the migration of existing content into them;
- Contractors must budget for all costs in their proposal, exclusive only of UK VAT if applicable, and may not include travel/other costs if based outside of London;

Proposal – Timeline

The following timeline is illustrative of the process envisioned to deliver the new website, and will be informed by and finalised with the selected contractor during the Inception Period:

18 January	Invitation to Tender/Propose released to internal and external contractors
19 February – 17:00	Deadline for completed proposals to: alexander@knapp.net
(Two Weeks)	Review of proposals, possible interviews of candidate contractors
	Contractor selected, all other applicants informed
(Two Weeks)	Inception Period and detailed scoping to provide selected contractor with detailed information about the Tower, its current data, operations and needs, in order for them to develop a final project plan for approval
TBD March	Start of contractor’s development process, including:
	Planning - Approval of Sitemap and Wireframe Creation
	Planning - Approval of Visual Design Elements
	Design – Adaptation or generation of copy for new site
	Design – Development of pages and associated code/back-end elements
	Testing – Confirmation of user-journey and data transfer viability
31 July	Final (non-public) version completed for review and training of staff
01-14 August	Feedback and resolution period for site and functionality
15 August	Switch-over from current website to new version on public-facing domain
31 August	Completion of any remaining technical issues or emergent problems

Contractors may propose – with explanation – changes to the timeline based upon their experience of similar projects, and will be considered for discussion and agreement in the final project plan.

The selected contractor will also be required to meet regularly with the Tower’s Project Manager and other key stakeholders periodically through the process (to be clarified and agreed during the Scoping phase and included explicitly in the final project plan).

To minimise costs and potential confusion, all feedback during the contract (including any Change Requests to the approved Project Plan) will be collected by, reviewed, and communicated to the contractor through the Tower’s Project Manager. No other source of communication/instruction to the contractor will be authorised, and the Tower will accept no cost or delay resulting in action by the Contractor taken on the basis of communication from another party.

Proposal – Submission

Proposals should be submitted according to the following instructions. Failure to meet the following format and submission instructions will result in rejection of the offer at the Tower’s discretion.

Length

Proposals will be given preference that represent the contractor's ability to demonstrate understanding of the Tower's needs and succinctly represent their ability to meet them in approximately 15 pages. No proposal will be considered that exceeds 20 pages total.

Deadline

Proposals must be received by E-mail (only) before 17:00 (London) on **Tuesday, 19 February 2019**. Submissions received after that time or by any other means will not be included in the review process.

Recipient

Proposals should be submitted to Alexander Knapp, Project Manager and Member of the Board of Directors, at: alexander@knapp.net

Questions/Clarifications

Potential contractors may optionally express interest in the tender in advance of a proposal submission by sending an E-mail to the Project Manager at: alexander@knapp.net

The Tower will endeavour to answer questions submitted by potential Contractors before 12:00 on **Monday 18 February 2019**. Responses will be sent on a rolling basis from the time of receipt by blind-copy reply to all those having previously and explicitly expressed interest. No responses will be sent individually to avoid unfair advantage to any one potential Contractor. Questions and responses do not contribute to the selection criteria, nor will be considered a basis for alteration of the terms of this invitation to tender in any way.

Format

Proposals should be submitted in PDF format as E-mail attachments ONLY, with the budget (optionally) in MS Excel, if not embedded within the proposal itself in a table (preferably). Additional appendices, links or visuals may be submitted/attached digitally as necessary in standard formats, if necessary. Contractors may ZIP multiple files together at their discretion.

References provided should be informed in advance by the Contractor that they may be contacted.

Mandatory Integrations

The only mandatory integrations for any eventual update/refresh to the Tower's website are:

- CRM/Ticketing: ProVenue Databox release 2.8.0.20 (Build date 20 March 2018); and
- Social Media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram

Any other system integrations (or their potential) will be discussed with the successful contractor as part of the Inception Period, and will be detailed appropriately as part of the final project plan.

Project Management

Proposals should include the Contractor's recommended implementation methodology (including any suggestions amending the process described within this invitation to tender), and a description of the Contractor's internal project management methodology (in particular how a client participates in it). Contingency time, budget and capability – as well as those for testing/quality-assurance – should be explicitly noted in the submission.

Cost Breakdown

Proposals must include a high-level budget breakdown of the contractor's cost to deliver the website to this specification, including:

- Total cost, and total cost including VAT (if applicable);
- Summary of labour costs by function/level (for example, "Designer - £XX per hour");
- Estimated proportion/breakdown of costs by stage (level-of-effort);
- Explicit enumeration of non-labour costs, and their type (one-off, recurring);
- Explicit disclosure of the indirect cost rate applied to the project;
- The estimated value of any volunteer, discounted, or supplemental value-added;
- Breakdown of proposed payment schedule (upfront, interim, final percentages);

For the avoidance of doubt; a detailed, line-by-line item budget is not required. Total cost, without VAT, may not exceed £15,000.

Contractors should also indicate in a supplemental section if they also offer optional hosting and other services related to this kind of website development contract, which may be considered by the Board separate to this tender. Acceptance of the proposal does not commit the Tower to any proposed supplemental/running costs.

Personnel

Proposal should include short biographies of key personnel who will be active on the project, their qualifications and relevant experience. Full CVs should not be submitted.

Validity

Proposals should be valid for sixty (60) calendar days from the deadline, in the event that the initial Contractor selected should for any reason become unavailable to carry out the work and a replacement need to be engaged.

Authority

Proposals should be submitted with the details of the Company name and registration number, and the name of the primary point of contact (if not the Chief Executive), UK mobile number and E-mail address.

Selection Process

The selection process will take place in three stages.

First, the Project Manager will receive, log and confirm receipt of all submissions received by the deadline, remove any that fail to meet the minimum criteria listed in this invitation to tender/propose, and compile an initial 'long-list' of competitive options for consideration.

Second, a selection panel chaired by the Project Manager will review and assess 'long-list' proposals against the following criteria:

Criteria	Weighting
Clarity of the proposal responding to the invitation to tender, including concise content addressing the various requirements, and the degree to which it generates confidence in the Contractor's ability to deliver	30%
The Contractor's past experience developing websites of a similar size and level of complexity for small businesses, non-profit or artistic organisations (specific experience with theatrical clients <i>not</i> required)	10%
The Contractor's proposed methodology for engagement of the Tower community for feedback and information-sharing, and the methodology ensuring testing and integration of various user-journeys on the website	10%
Innovative suggestions demonstrating the Contractor's capability to understand the Tower's operation, values, community and existing resources, and how they can be leveraged by/into the updated/new website	20%
Demonstration of accessibility to non-technical audiences (both in the proposal language itself, and how the Contractor suggests engaging the Tower community in language and process that are easy-to-understand)	10%
Value for money of the proposal opposite the requirement and proposed methodology (note: <i>not</i> the lowest cost proposal, but rather the greatest benefit over time received for the level of expense)	20%

The selection panel may, at their discretion, also invite select Contractors to a one-hour interview at the Theatre in Stoke Newington in the following two weeks. The short-listed proposals will also be provided to the Tower Theatre's Finance Director for supplemental feedback.

Finally, scorings, feedback (and findings from possible interviews) will inform the final decision by the Board-appointed Project Manager to be taken within two weeks of the deadline, after which all applicants will be notified of the results.

Unfortunately, due to the volunteer nature of the Board and participants in this process, detailed feedback on unsuccessful proposals will not be provided, and the decision is final.

Amendments

07 February 2019 – Deadline extended to 17:00 on Tuesday, 19 February 2019, and internal references/dependencies adjusted accordingly;