



Invitation to Tender

Visitor Economy Renaissance Programme (VERP)

**Visitor Economy Vision and Destination Management Plan (DMP)
For Oxfordshire**

1. Introduction

Oxfordshire LEP (OxLEP) is the local enterprise partnership and it is our role to champion Oxfordshire's economic potential, acting as a catalyst and convener to drive a dynamic, sustainable and growing economy. Overseeing a £3.3bn programme of activity supporting the delivery of major infrastructure development, skills and training, business growth, supply chains and inward investment and internationalisation, we act as a single 'front door' and portal for support and opportunity for Oxfordshire businesses and their current and future workforces. Development of the Economic Recovery Plan post COVID identified the visitor economy as being one of the hardest hit sectors. Since then statistics show that the county has maintained its attraction for visitors but continues to be impacted by the downturn in the global economy and national labour force issues. To be able to return to the 2019 value of £2.5billion is a key ambition, whilst minimising environmental impacts. The current changes in the national tourism landscape also allows Oxfordshire an opportunity to re-imagine the contribution the visitor economy makes to the wider place economy, shaping a new collective future direction for the sector.

2. Purpose of the Work

OxLEP and its Culture and Visitor Economy Subgroup (CVESG) wish to commission a consultant(s) to create a countywide Visitor Economy Vision and Destination Management Plan. Working in partnership with key stakeholders; the county's two main DMOs, Experience Oxfordshire and Cotswolds Tourism, all five local authorities, both universities, and industry to develop the DMP. It is to be a shared statement of intent to manage Oxfordshire as a destination over the next 5 years, setting a clear vision, bringing together key stakeholders and articulating their roles alongside identifying clear Destination Management actions to reinvigorate and support the visitor economy. This DMP will form a key part of a wider, current, funded, Visitor Economy Renaissance Programme being managed by OxLEP.

The past 3 years have been challenging; not least for the Visitor Economy, which makes the timing of this work important to ensure we are clear about the destination management required to succeed in this post covid environment. A clear future vision for Oxfordshire as a destination, centred around the two key brands of Oxford and Cotswolds are needed to excite, encourage, and strengthen local partners engagement whilst coordinating the management of all the aspects of the destination that contribute to a visitors experience, taking account of the needs of visitors, local residents, businesses and the environment. All of which will assist the goal to stimulate the visitor economy post COVID to deliver sustainable visitor economy growth and opportunities, whilst providing new jobs and becoming more socially inclusive as a destination.

Having a DMP that all key stakeholders engage with will support the sector and strengthen the quality of the visitor experience and the performance of businesses. It will also identify how the full range of local authority policies and services (in planning, transport, environmental management, leisure and recreation, culture and the arts) can support the visitor economy and inform future policies and services. The Action Plan element will help us strengthen the case to secure additional funding and identify key projects to support.

3. Background

The Visitor Economy (comprising retail, tourism, leisure, arts, culture and heritage) is a vital component of Oxfordshire's economy and supports good health and wellbeing for local communities as well as visitors. Pre Covid, Oxfordshire had a thriving visitor economy which attracted 30 million visitors a year generating £2.5 billion for the local economy and supporting 40,000 jobs. It is also the largest employer of women, provides vital employment and apprenticeship opportunities for young people, offers flexible employment opportunities which is critical for working families whilst providing an important route back into work for people seeking to return to employment having had long term health matters. It is also an accessible sector in which to start a new business.

The sector also provides significant experiences for local communities to recover socially and mentally from impacts of the pandemic. Cultural attractions, events, retail, hospitality, all attract a diverse range of people from different backgrounds which should also be built upon and actively encouraged. Sustainability and social inclusion are also key features that need to run through the DMP.

4. Oxfordshire's Visitor Economy Renaissance Programme (VERP)

OxLEP is currently managing and delivering the Visitor Economy Renaissance Programme (VERP). Activities

outlined in VERP, were initially identified as a part of the Oxfordshire COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan (ERP). The VERP is a comprehensive programme ending March 2024 and is overseen by a small task group of independent membership together with the CVESG at OxLEP.

The programme's main aim is to 'attract visitors and ensure that Oxford and Oxfordshire maintain its position as one of the UK's most desirable visitor destinations (current consumer destination awareness is Oxford and Cotswolds) for local, national, and international visitors, with a focus on attracting value from all visitors and encouraging green and sustainable tourism and practices'. This is to be achieved via delivery of the four key objectives of the wider programme:

- Promotion of the county via nine funded strategic marketing campaigns
- Supporting business competitiveness and resilience -grants and digital training
- Rebuilding Market Share and Confidence of a COVID safe destination
- Strengthening visitor economy/sector leadership and co-ordination through a Vision and Destination Management Plan (this commission).

All of these objectives will aim to stimulate the visitor economy economically and also, due to the funding provision, continue to minimise any further risk of Covid-19 transmission linked to the visitor economy, through measures to enable residents and visitors to be and to feel safe.

5. Tourism Landscape Changes and the Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan

This commission will need to allow for any changes to Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) locally following the launch of the accreditation process for the formation of the new Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEP) as a result of the DeBois Review into DMOs. *It is anticipated that there will be two neighbouring LVEPs.* This will need to be accommodated in consultations with key stakeholders to help shape this collective vision and strategic destination management plan for Oxfordshire as a county area. This work will also need to connect into OxLEPs Oxfordshire Strategic Economic Plan which is being refreshed at a similar timeline.

6. Scope of work

This invitation to tender requires the preparation of a Vision and Destination Management Plan for Oxfordshire and should cover all the fundamental aspects of destination management (as described by Visit Britain in the Principles for Developing DMPs), including:

- Tourism performance and impacts
- Working structures and communication
- Overall appeal and appearance, access, infrastructure and visitor services
- Destination image, branding and promotion (marketing)
- Product mix – development needs and opportunities
- Future challenges

It is presumed that the stages of this commission will include:

- Inception: to agree activity and timeframes
- Evidence gathering on the supply and demand aspects of the Visitor Economy in Oxfordshire (i.e. product, performance, visitor experiences, businesses, local issues, external trends/future opportunities, benchmarking with other destinations) and extensive consultation
- Establishing the strategy and direction including holding key stakeholder workshops
- Develop the Vision statement and Action Plan to include tasks and responsibilities, product and market opportunities, visitor experiences, skills and business development needs and opportunities within a draft DMP
- Key Stakeholder consultation to approve the draft DMP
- Final DMP including KPIs

We are anticipating this can be delivered within a 4-5 month timeframe from inception.

Please note there is no current Oxfordshire Visitor Economy, Tourism Strategy or Destination Management Plan in place. Experience Oxfordshire have an Ambition Statement, and Cotswolds Tourism have a DMP for

2022-2025 for their area which includes part of Oxfordshire. Both these DMOs work within the county and are delivering other elements of the wider VERP and will be able to provide valuable research and intel to inform and shape this commission.

7. Outputs and outcomes

The DMP will:

- Strengthen the visitor economy and ensure sector leadership and co-ordination
- Cover a 5-year period (2023 - 2028) with a clear vision and framework of strategic actions for delivery.
- Highlight challenges, objectives, provide an updated economic evidence base
- Consult widely to help secure support of local authorities, businesses, and key stakeholders (see Appendix 3).
- Reference KPIs to allow for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

It is assumed that there will be:

- interim presentation of the initial evidence base, consultation, and engagement findings (key stakeholders and partners to be defined at inception meeting).
- a draft DMP to include assessment of Oxfordshire as a destination (product audit and economic assessment) and the vision and objectives to shape key stakeholder consultations to define the final action plan
- presentation of the final DMP including executive summary and action plan to be produced in Word and PDF format setting out the vision and Destination Management Plan actions for the 5 year timeline 2023-2028 to enable endorsement by key stakeholders.
- a powerpoint and pdf slide pack summarising the vision and DMP.

8. Process, Indicative Timeframes, Budget, and next steps

A small Tourism Task Group comprising representatives from OxLEP CVESG and OxLEP Board will oversee this commission. Further details will be shared at the Inception Meeting.

The primary point of contact for the tender and managing the commission will be Helen Ryan-Wallis, Programme manager - Strategy and can be contacted via helen.ryan-wallis@oxfordshirelep.com. Any questions arising in respect of this tender should also be made in writing to Helen Ryan-Wallis. Please state 'VERP Visitor Economy Vision and Destination Management Plan ITT' in your email correspondence.

Please note the deadline for a full submission is no later than **12:00 noon 20th February 2023**. Submissions are to be emailed to helen.ryan-wallis@oxfordshirelep.com following the format provided and Including the information requested in Appendix One and Two, also detailing how Section 6: Scope of work, Section 7: Outputs and Outcomes will be carried out and achieved.

Indicative Timetable and Milestones:

Anticipated Timescales	Milestone
26 th Jan 2023	Invitation to tender publicised
<i>Tuesday 7th Feb (10-11am)</i>	Supplier Briefing Session to be held virtually via Microsoft Teams
20 th Feb (12:00 noon)	Deadline for tender submissions
w/b 20 th Feb	Shortlisting and invitation to interview
27 th Feb	interviews and appointment of consultants (possibly in person)
13 th March (am)	Inception meeting to be held virtually via Microsoft Teams
March-April	Evidence gathering, consultations, key stakeholder engagement undertaken
May 2023	Draft DMP & further key stakeholder workshop
July 2023	Final DMP presented

Budget

The maximum total budget identified for this commission is £40,000 exclusive of vat and is fully inclusive of any charges and expenses incurred in the delivery of this tender.

Payments for services covered by this invitation to tender will be on submission of appropriate invoices, subject to Oxfordshire LEP standard payment terms. Invoicing arrangements will be agreed with the successful supplier following the award of the contract.

Tender Evaluation

All tender responses received will be processed in line with OxLEPs Procurement Policy and will be independently evaluated by a Tourism Task Group established for this purpose. Each will be scored against a set of pre-determined criteria, set out below:

Criteria	Percentage of Overall Score (%)
Demonstrate a clear understanding of the requirements	10%
Demonstrate previous similar experience and/or Knowledge of the geographical area	20%
Demonstrate methodology and Approach to the work, evidence of innovative thought	20%
Demonstrate Knowledge and expertise of team	20%
Demonstrate good project planning, management, and ability to deliver on time	20%
Overall price	10%
Total Score (Out of 100%)	

We expect your Invitation to Tender response to achieve high scores in each of the evaluation criteria.

Additional Information

Please note the successful bidder/consortium will be required to accept OxLEPs standard contract terms and conditions.

Freedom of Information

All information provided by you in your response to this Invitation to Tender (ITT) will remain confidential and will not be disclosed to any other party except where required for official audit purposes or to the extent that OxLEP Ltd considers that disclosure is required pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or any other applicable legislation, legal requirement or code of practice.

Confidentiality

By receiving this ITT you agree to keep confidential the information contained in the ITT or made available in connection with further enquiries and questions. Such information may be made available to your employees and professional advisers for the purpose only of responding to this ITT.

At any time before the award of the contract, OxLEP Ltd reserves the right to disqualify any organisation whose circumstances change to the extent that it ceases to meet the selection criteria or makes a material change in respect of its proposal unless substantial justification can be provided to the satisfaction of OxLEP Ltd. Where a Bidder becomes aware after having submitted a Bid of a change in circumstances or information supplied, it should notify OxLEP of this as soon as possible.

Appendix One

Response to Tender Format

As well as the response requirements set out elsewhere in this tender invitation, please ensure your tender response captures the following in an electronic format (i.e. MS Word/PDF):

1. Understanding of and alignment to the requirements of this tender specification
2. Your Approach and methodology
3. List of key personnel alongside their relevant experience and anticipated input.
4. Commercial Information (see Appendix two)
5. Demonstration of experience of providing similar commissions
6. Financial proposal- costs should be exclusive of VAT with a breakdown of estimated charges and expenses.
7. Quality Assurance
8. References for 2 organisations for whom you have delivered similar work within the last 3 years.

Appendix Two

COMMERCIAL INFORMATION – TO BE COMPLETED

A1.1 Bidder details	Answer	
Full name of the Bidder completing the Tender		
Registered company address		
Registered company number		
Registered charity number		
Registered VAT number		
Name of immediate parent company		
Name of ultimate parent company		
Please mark 'X' in the relevant box to indicate your trading status	i) a public limited company	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	ii) a limited company	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	iii) a limited liability partnership	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	iv) other partnership	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	v) sole trader	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	vi) other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Please mark 'X' in the relevant boxes to indicate whether any of the following classifications apply to you	i) Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE – defined as a non-governmental organisation that is value-driven and which principally reinvests its surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural objectives.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	ii) Small or Medium Enterprise (SME) ¹	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes

	iii) Sheltered workshop	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
	iv) Public service mutual	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes

A1.2 Contact details	
Bidder contact details for enquiries about this Tender	
Name	
Postal address	
Country	
Phone	
Mobile	
Email	

Appendix Three

Anticipated stakeholders and consultees

TTG

The OxLEP Tourism Task Group will oversee the commission for OxLEP.

DMP Steering Group

A second wider DMP Steering Group (incorporating members of OxLEPs Culture and Visitor Economy Subgroup) will be created to also include the two DMOs Experience Oxfordshire and Cotswolds Tourism and three key businesses who can meet regularly.

Key stakeholders

Key stakeholder participants will include:

- OxLEP board
- The Future Oxfordshire Partnership (FOP)
- The five local authorities and their key departments/functions: economic development; tourism/recreation; arts/culture/heritage; planning; transport; environment/countryside
- University of Oxford
- Oxford Brookes University
- Business representation tbc

Other wider consultees.

Private sector – representative bodies and/or key tourism enterprises.

Growth Hub Visitor Economy businesses

Experience Oxfordshire partners

Cotswolds Tourism partners in Oxfordshire

Cultural and heritage partners

Oxford City Centre businesses

Civil society/ voluntary interests – community, civic, environmental.

Town centre businesses groups