

ASCEL: Invitation to Tender

Title: SparkSpace – Co-created Content for Online Learning Module, Toolkit and Resources

Return to: lucy.banks@ascel.org.uk

Deadline for receipt of tender proposals: 12 noon 13 June 2025

1. INTRODUCTION

This Invitation to Tender (ITT) specifies the requirements for developing and delivering co-created content for a new online learning module (SparkSpace), plus a toolkit and resources. This module, toolkit and resources will be used to support the learning and development of the library workforce across the UK, including volunteers.

The following details are outlined in this document:

- Background
- Objectives of this project
- The Brief
- Contract Management and Governance
- Workplan and milestones
- Budget
- The terms of business relating to the award of any contract
- Process for submitting proposals
- Further Information
- Compliance

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 ASCEL <https://www.ascel.org.uk/>

ASCEL is the national network for senior leaders in children's, public and schools library services. Created by and for members, we provide training, peer support, best practice, resources and networking initiatives that enable our members to give children and

young people a dynamic, exciting and innovative library experience and amplify their voices.

Our network of active regional committees support place-based partnership working across the country and help to drive our national impact.

ASCEL is a charity that receives funding from Arts Council England as an Investment Principles Support Organisation (IPSO). We are a membership organisation that supports every public library service for children and young people and school library services in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

2.2 Engaging Children and Young People – ASCEL's existing work

ASCEL's Youth Engagement Network programme supports library services to build meaningful relationships with children and young people whose voices are often unheard in libraries. Through this programme, libraries co-create activities with children and young people, including those from marginalised or deprived backgrounds, and gain access to invaluable learning and development opportunities. Our aim is to extend this learning to the wider library workforce, giving them the knowledge and skills they need to engage and co-create more meaningfully with children and young people. We want libraries to be confident in creating opportunities for children and young people to:

- Have their voice heard in libraries, especially in any decision-making that impacts them
- Learn new skills
- Work as part of a team and feel part of their community
- Volunteer in libraries and more

3. OBJECTIVES OF THIS PROJECT

The SparkSpace project is funded by the Foyle Foundation, and will enable library services to work inclusively, equitably and co-creatively with all children and young people, including those with lived experience of marginalisation or deprivation. This online module will be freely available to all library teams including volunteers and partners beyond the library sector. We will use the rich learning from our Youth Engagement Network programme, plus our member skills audit, to build an interactive learning experience that's co-created with children, young people, our members and expert partners, and which will bring much-needed specialist skills and direction to the library workforce.

SparkSpace will include the following, which will be co-created with children and young people, our members and national partners:

- An online learning module
- A downloadable toolkit
- A downloadable pack of learning resources

4. THE BRIEF

The contractor will:

- Lead co-creative development sessions with their existing network of children and young people, and attend co-creative sessions with ASCEL members and national partners, to establish the following:
 - A suitable structure and approach for the online learning module, toolkit and resources
 - Suitable content for the online learning module, toolkit and resources
- Commit to safeguarding: The contractor will demonstrate that they have proactive policy and practice in place to fulfil their duty to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of all children and young people involved in the development of the learning module, resources and toolkit, both online and in person.
- Produce content for training: Based on the outcome of the co-creative process, the contractor will produce content for the online learning module, toolkit and resources. We anticipate this content will include:
 - Video content for the online learning module
 - Images for the online learning module, toolkit and resources
 - Written content for the online learning module, toolkit and resources
 - Visual presentation for the toolkit and resources (i.e. content presented appropriately using a tool such as Canva).
- Ensure all content has the appropriate approvals and permissions for use in the public domain.
- Respond to feedback from the children and young people, ASCEL members and national partners, and amend the content based on this feedback.
- Liaise with the freelance Project Manager, attending steering group meetings and providing status updates when required.
- Produce one short video for ASCEL to use as promotion on our social media channels.
- Liaise with the Learning Module Developer to establish the right structure and presentation for the online learning module, by no later than early September 2025.

- Provide the Learning Module Developer with all content, including video content and images, by mid-October 2025.
- Gather feedback and quotes from the group of children and young people regarding their experience of the co-creative process, to use in the project evaluation and marketing.

5. CONTRACT MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

- The contract will be directly managed by the Programme Manager at ASCEL.
- The work will be supported by a steering group of ASCEL Members and the ASCEL team, plus freelance Project Manager and Communications Consultant.

6. WORKPLAN AND MILESTONES

We envisage the project will follow this workplan, but proposals can set out an alternative timetable to meet the brief.

Overall programme plan

Activity	Time Period
Milestone	Date
Invitation to Tender published	Friday 23 May 2025
Closing date	Midday Friday 13 June 2025
Appointment of successful contractor	By Thursday 26 June
ASCEL member Steering Group meeting 1	Week beginning 8 July
Develop and deliver co-creative sessions	July - August
ASCEL member Steering Group meeting 2	Week beginning 8 Sept
Liaise with Learning Module Developer to agree structure and approach	Early September
Develop content for online learning module, toolkit and resources (to include amendments)	August – October
ASCEL member Steering Group meeting 3	Week beginning 10 Nov
Deliver content to Learning Module Developer	Mid-October
Contribute feedback for project evaluation	November
Presentation and sign off of final online module, toolkit and resources (Trustees, steering group, CEO and Chair)	December

Final evaluation of project submitted	December
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7. BUDGET

A maximum of £ 12,000 inclusive of VAT is available for this work, to include any costs incurred with developing and delivering video content, written content and images.

ASCEL will convene the member steering group and work with the Foyle Foundation to provide progress / final reports.

8. THE TERMS OF BUSINESS RELATING TO THE AWARD OF ANY CONTRACT

Payment at key milestones in two instalments subject to satisfactory progress and delivery of the project.

9. PROCESS FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

9.1 Procurement timetable

- Submission by 13 June 2025
- Award selection process completed by end of June, 2025

9.2 Proposal submission

Please submit proposals by email to lucy.banks@ascel.org.uk

Proposals must be submitted by 13 June 2025

Proposals should be no more than 2500 words and should include:

- Understanding of the brief
- An outline methodology for achieving the brief
- A statement of your skills and experience in context of this brief including names and experience of each person assigned to the project. Examples and links to relevant reports you have written or contributed to should be included
- An outline work plan and timetable for this work

- A clear breakdown of costs which includes all rates, fees, and expenses you are anticipating for the project. If you are VAT registered this must be included in your costings
- Evidence of your safeguarding policy and practice, and commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Two contactable referees who could provide a relevant reference of your suitability to work on this project

9.3 Evaluation of proposals

We will evaluate proposals using these criteria:

CRITERIA	WEIGHTING
Extent to which proposal demonstrates an understanding of the brief	25
Having a working relationship with a group of diverse children and young people, and the necessary skills to co-create the learning content with them, plus ASCEL members and national partners	25
Knowledge and experience relevant to the project, including experience of running co-creative sessions, development of learning materials, strategic planning and safeguarding	25
Ability to produce content that engages and inspires learners	15
Cost (Value for money)	10

10. FURTHER INFORMATION

For an informal discussion about the work, please contact: lucy.banks@ascel.org.uk

11. COMPLIANCE

ASCEL reserves the right to disqualify any provider's response to this ITT if it does not fully comply with the requirements contained therein. This is particularly relevant in relation to the stated closing date and time of applications.

ASCEL is not responsible for and will not pay for any expenses or losses you incur during, but not limited to, the application preparation, visits, negotiations, or interviews in relation to this procurement process. It is your responsibility to ensure that any consortium member, sub-contractor, and adviser abide by the conditions set out by ASCEL.

In submitting a response to this ITT, it will be implied that you accept all the provisions of this ITT including these conditions.

If ASCEL needs to change any information contained within this ITT before the closing date, you will be written to advise you of these changes, which includes the extension of any submission deadlines. ASCEL reserves the right to cancel or suspend this ITT process at any time but will notify you in writing as soon as possible if this occurs.

It is expected that the contractor will work within the values and behaviours of ASCEL and this will be part of the contract of engagement.

Our values are:

Progressive
Collaborative
Inclusive
Aspirational
Kind