

Request for Proposals

Evaluation Programme

External Evaluation of Genomics Public Engagement Project

Budget: £22,500 (including VAT)
Proposals by: 14:00 (UK) on 12th May 2021
To Start: June/July 2021
To Finish: 8th Feb 2023

Notes: This request for proposals is tendered alongside a second DTOL brief for front end Audience Consultation. Interested parties can submit proposals for one, or for both of these briefs. The Discovery Phase Audience Consultation brief can be found [HERE](#). Both schemes of work are outside IR35 for HMRC purposes.

Project Overview

The [Darwin Tree of Life](#) [DTOL] requests proposals for a public engagement evaluation programme [Project Evaluation] for events connected to a genome science research project. We invite proposals from individuals, who have the right to work in the UK, and organisations [Evaluation Partner].

DTOL is a world leading genomics research partnership, headed by the [Wellcome Sanger Institute](#). The DTOL public engagement programme runs alongside DTOL's highly ambitious scientific research, which aims to fully sequence the DNA of all complex life across Britain and Ireland (70,000 species of animals, plants, fungi, and protists) to create a new way of understanding biodiversity and transform how we do biology.

The DTOL public engagement programme will deliver a wide array of opportunities for audiences around the UK to experience cutting edge genomic science, hands on. From the Norfolk Broads to the Scottish Highlands, school children, local communities, and citizen scientists will have the chance to get involved in finding and identifying specimens; will see how DNA from these specimens is extracted, sequenced, and analysed; and learn how this mammoth project can help protect the species that make our world so special.

In order to ensure that this work is effective and ambitious, a strong Evaluation Process is required to: a) identify aims and milestones; b) create tools for partners to register outcomes of public events; and c) pull out lessons learned from DTOL's activities for use in designing future public engagement on this and similar projects.

Project Objectives

The DTOL team wish to appoint an Evaluation Partner to conduct both desk-based and public consultation evaluation methodologies that will equip DTOL with:

1. An improved understanding of how to best evaluate the varied selection of public engagement activities in our programme;
2. A set of evaluation tools for use by our engagement delivery teams who will be collecting evaluation data at events;

3. Analysis, to ensure that projects can be adapted during the programme as our learning improves in order that outcomes align with our funder's expectations, and maximise positive experiences for our audiences and colleagues;
4. An understanding at the end of the programme of the impact and value of the programme to inform future projects.

We expect that the majority of this work can be completed remotely. One trip to the Wellcome Sanger Institute, Cambridgeshire, UK, for the final debrief in Feb 2023 would be preferred. Additional travel to the Wellcome Genome Campus and/or our DToL partners around the UK can be accommodated, if this fits within the project budget (*see Project stakeholders and Travel Requirements section*).

What are we looking for?

Key aspects of the role:

- Liaising with the DToL partners to build appropriate evaluation strategy across projects, and to provide these partners with evaluation tools and recommendations for them to gather appropriate data at engagement events;
- Producing interim evaluation reporting every six months during project delivery based on data gathered by engagement partners at their events, and delivered to the Evaluation Partner to an agreed schedule. The format of this reporting is for the interested party to propose, but should ensure that iterative learning can inform ongoing practice;
- Producing a detailed summative evaluation report by the end of the project in Feb 2023, including recommendations for implementing findings in future public engagement.

We are looking for an Evaluation Partner, with demonstrable track record in:

- Conducting science public engagement evaluation;
- Working on large, multi-institution projects;
- Writing summative evaluation reports.

Note: Alongside this Request for Proposals, DToL are also seeking a front end Audience Consultant to deliver research into audience and community perspectives on DToL's public engagement programme. The evaluation and front end consultation works streams are independent. We are open for candidates submitting expressions of interest for one or for both of these opportunities. The Audience Consultation brief can be found [HERE](#).

Context

The [Darwin Tree of Life's](#) ambition, to map the genome of every Eukaryotic organism in the UK and Ireland, is at the leading edge of the [Earth BioGenome Project](#) - a global effort to map the DNA of all complex life. DToL will be vitally important for UK species and UK genome science, and will lay the pathway for future biodiversity genome projects around the world. Public engagement is an integral part of this ambition. The Evaluation Programme will ensure that we maximise the impact of our planned public engagement, and can share all the lessons we learn delivering these activities with future projects.

The DToL public engagement grant will fund an expansive Participation Phase, and a Sharing Phase. This will involve participatory projects such as Bioblitz events; field trips; species walks; museum exhibits; online chat-rooms so that school pupils can talk with scientists; and other engagement activities (more detailed information will be provided on request).

Audiences and Partners

Our principle audiences are: children in schools with above average percentage of students receiving pupil premium (different events will cater for primary, secondary, and sixth form

students); nature enthusiasts who are members of expert-amateur groups who will help with collecting samples; and regional stakeholders, as many of our collection sites have strong relationships with local communities. The public engagement will also engage with wider cohorts beyond these groups, particularly with our partners who are visitor destinations in their own right.

As well as the Wellcome Sanger Institute, DTOL's public engagement programme will involve ten partner institutions around the UK: Earlham Institute, Norwich; EMBL-EBI, Cambridge; Kew Gardens, London; Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh, Edinburgh; Marine Biological Association, Plymouth; the Natural History Museum, London; and the Universities of Cambridge, Edinburgh, and Oxford.

Fees and terms

The maximum available budget for this Project Evaluation is £22,500 including expenses and applicable taxes.

We are offering this package of work on a part-time, freelance, self-employed basis to individuals or companies over a 19 month period. We expect a flexible working pattern, with fewer days in quieter months (Sept 21-Feb 22, and Oct-Dec 22), and more in busier periods (initial planning: Jul-Aug 21, busiest delivery: Mar-Sept 22, final writeup: Jan23). Candidates should clearly state the number of hours/days they have budgeted for in their proposal.

Anticipated Outputs and Timetable

An evaluation plan and milestone agreement by the end of July 2021. This will include a standardised set of tools provided to public engagement partners for their use in collecting evaluation data at their events, and an agreed schedule for data delivery by these partners.

Analysis of evaluation data throughout engagement projects Jul 21 – 8th Feb 23, with most activity Apr-Oct 2022.

Regular (e.g. quarterly) milestone check-ins throughout project timeline, to ensure iterative refinement based on available data and formal/informal learning. These will include online meetings with relevant DTOL staff.

A summary report, including identification and implementation of improved practice, by 8th February 2023, and a debriefing session with DTOL representatives by 8th February 2023.

Project stakeholders and Travel Requirements

The Evaluation Partner will report to Jack Monaghan, Public Engagement Coordinator for DTOL at the Wellcome Sanger Institute. The Evaluation Partner will also work closely with representatives from the DTOL engagement partners, who will deliver evaluation data from their planned engagement activities to the Evaluation Partner on a schedule agreed together in July/Aug 2021.

The Evaluation Partner will also work with members of the DTOL team, including:

- The public engagement teams and community partners leading each activity;
- Other consultants working on the project, e.g. the Discovery Phase Learning Partner.

We anticipate that this brief can be delivered remotely, with contact with the DTOL team and public engagement partners made via telephone or videoconference. Occasional travel to the Wellcome Sanger Institute in Cambridgeshire, UK would be happily accommodated, though no additional expenses will be available. We are open to different approaches to evaluation consultation, though any plans must be capable of adaptation to different Covid-19 lockdown scenarios without going over the allotted budget.

Preparation of proposals

Interested parties should respond to this tender in writing, submitted to Jack Monaghan (jm58@sanger.ac.uk) by 14:00 (UK) on 12th May 2021, and be able to begin work in June/ July 2021.

Responding individuals or organisations should submit the following:

- A short outline (max three pages) detailing how you would approach the required outputs, with impact of different Covid-19 lockdown scenarios and mitigation steps detailed;
- Examples of two previous projects that have demonstrated similar challenges;
- An outline of all individuals involved in delivery and their previous experience;
- A budget breakdown, including days worked and anticipated expenses (in GBP);
- To comply with HMRC IR35 regulations, please state your employment status: for example if you are employed by an umbrella company, an agency, or are self-employed.

Selection Process and Key Dates

Questions can be submitted to Jack Monaghan (jm58@sanger.ac.uk) up to 28th April 2021, and all Q&A's will be shared on 30th April 2021 with those who have registered an interest to tender before this date.

Proposals must be submitted by 14:00 (UK) on 12th May 2021.

DToL will review submissions and respond w/c 17th May 2021. Shortlisted suppliers will be invited to pitch via a 25 minute video call during the w/c 24th May 2021. Shortlisted suppliers will be given one week notice and more details to prepare their pitch.

Work is expected to start by June / July 2021, and an early start is preferable