PURCHASING SERVICES

Invitation To Tender

CONTRACT TITLE

Measuring the Value of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships in the UK's UNESCO Sites

Commercial Specification

Preamble

The UK National Commission for UNESCO (UKNC), in partnership with The Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre (Creative PEC), is commissioning research to measure the value of multi-stakeholder partnerships in the UK's UNESCO sites. We welcome proposals up to the value of £40,000 (including VAT) to deliver this piece of research between June 2025 and July 2026.

About the UK National Commission for UNESCO

Established in 1946, UKNC is a vital part of UNESCO's unique global network of 190+ national cooperating bodies known as National Commissions. An independent, not-for-profit organisation, UKNC is a constitutional part of the UK's membership of UNESCO, supported by grant funding from the UK government.

About Local to Global

Local to Global is a flagship programme of UKNC, supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, that strengthens and connects UNESCO Designated Sites across the UK.

More than 60 land-based UNESCO Designated Sites exist in the United Kingdom, Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories. Collectively, these tell the story of the British Isles in an unparalleled way: its creation, formation, biodiversity, occupation, invasion, monarchy, religion, industry, culture, scientific invention, and creativity.

By connecting local heritage to global goals, Local to Global demonstrates the power of UNESCO sites to inspire change, test new approaches, and amplify their impact. This evolving network empowers UK communities to preserve their unique heritage while contributing to a more sustainable and inclusive future.

- For more information on UKNC, visit: https://unesco.org.uk/
- For more information on Local to Global, visit: https://unesco.org.uk/projects/local-to-global-programme
- For more information on the UK's network of UNESCO Designated Sites, visit: https://unesco.org.uk/our-sites

About Creative PEC

Creative PEC works to support the growth of the UK's creative industries through the production of independent and authoritative evidence and policy advice.

Led by Newcastle University with the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), Creative PEC comprises a core consortium of Newcastle University, The University of Sheffield, Sussex University, and Work Advance, which produces regular State of the Nations reports across four high-level priority areas: Internationalisation; Arts, Culture and Heritage; R&D, Innovation and Clusters; and Education, Skills and Talent. Alongside this activity, Creative PEC commissions and co-commissions research that responds to evidence gaps and live policy issues.

Creative PEC consults industry stakeholders about the challenges facing the sector, testing emerging questions with researchers, and feeding findings back to policymakers. This unique model ensures that resultant reports and recommendations are relevant and meet the needs and priorities of people working in and for the creative industries.

- For more information, please follow this link: https://pec.ac.uk/
- Further information about Newcastle University and the RSA is available from www.ncl.ac.uk and www.thersa.org

Background to the Research Project

UNESCO's global Programme Implementation Report (2025) identified the need to articulate the value of its global network of UNESCO sites more effectively — economically, culturally, and socially — and to align more closely with national priorities. The commissioning of the proposed research responds directly to this need, aiming to strengthen the evidence base and narrative around the impact of UNESCO sites in the UK. It is hoped that the methodology developed through the research will help support UNESCO sites in other countries to demonstrate their value in the future, as well.

The proposed research will build on and update the methodology used in the *National Value of UNESCO to the UK* (2020) report, and the findings of the *UNESCO Sites for Sustainable Development* (2022) report, particularly the attributes of UNESCO sites as holders of multi-stakeholder partnerships. Bidders should appraise themselves of these reports and *The Costs and Benefits of World Heritage Site Status in the UK (2007)* when preparing their submissions.

In addition, the proposed research aligns with Creative PEC's vision that independent data, evidence and policy advice should enable the UK's creative industries to thrive, fuelling economic growth, international influence and innovative solutions to global challenges. Within this frame, reports from Creative PEC centred on Arts, Culture and Heritage seek to build place-based evidence and support these sectors as a core part of millions of people's cultural lives.

Scope of the Research Project

The proposed research seeks to quantify the economic and non-economic value generated by the multi-stakeholder partnerships held by the UK's UNESCO sites. It is hoped the findings will lead to a better understanding of the role of UNESCO designation as an anchoring mechanism for partnerships with and beyond the cultural sector.

Delivering the research will require the development of a methodology to identify and assess the range and nature of partnerships that are held by the UK's UNESCO sites, at both a local and national level. Specifically, the methodology should allow for robust determination of the economic and non-economic value of these partnerships. In addition, the methodology should provide a blueprint for collecting and analysing data, both qualitative and quantitative, which could be applied to sites beyond the UK.

The UNESCO sites of the UK and its crown dependencies total 61 in number (7 Biosphere Reserves, 13 Creative Cities, 10 Global Geoparks, and 31 World Heritage Sites). All will be given the opportunity to participate but it is understood that a smaller, representative selection may be the focus of the research.

UKNC and Creative PEC are interested to learn from bidders which approaches to assessing value would be considered most effective, and are open to suggestions of different methodologies, but the current intention is that the work will be delivered in two phases, each with particular concerns.

Phase One – Methodology and Data Collection
To begin, the chosen supplier will develop a methodology to measure and assess the place-based value generated through multi-stakeholder partnerships in the UK's UNESCO Sites, in the following ways:

1. The direct financial benefits generated through partnerships with UNESCO sites (such as tourism, services and job creation).

2. The indirect financial benefits generated through partnerships with UNESCO sites (such as investment in the wider environment, cost efficiencies through reduced silos, and strengthened local economies).

3. The broader non-financial value generated through these partnerships (social, environmental, and cultural), including contributions to community resilience, social inclusion, environmental stewardship, and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Agenda.

Following approval of the methodology by UKNC and Creative PEC, it is proposed that a survey of the UK's UNESCO sites will be run, with the aim of collecting the data necessary for implementation. As a minimum, the survey should collect data on the type and number of partnerships held by each UK UNESCO site, when these started, and what economic and non-economic value they have generated. It will also be important for the data to allow for analysis of the scope and impact of partnerships that exist across the UK UNESCO network - Biosphere Reserves, Creative Cities, Global Geoparks, World Heritage Sites – and to understand how the partnerships contribute to each UNESCO site. The survey should result in a standardised approach to data collection across the UK's UNESCO sites and be applicable to other countries. In addition, the data collected should align with the reporting needs of UNESCO and allow individual reports for each site to be generated. Ideally, the survey should also enable the production of case studies, which can be used to illuminate findings.

The study will not only assess the direct and indirect financial impacts of UNESCO sites as multi-stakeholder partnerships but will also evaluate their broader non-economic contributions. These could include, but are not limited to, their ability to drive wider societal outcomes such as strengthening community resilience, fostering social inclusion, promoting environmental stewardship, and contributing to the broader United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda

To help orient submissions, an example of a partial survey is included. Bidders are invited to expand or rework this survey, suggesting new and/or alternative fields that would need to be included to perform the desired analysis in line with the suggested methodology. The

final survey will be agreed with UNESCO UK, Creative PEC, and a small focus group of UNESCO Site Coordinators before going into the field.

NB 1) Each UK UNESCO site currently holds some data of interest, but it is proposed that a new data collection exercise should be undertaken, as the existing data is not consistent across the network. It is expected that the new data will be collected from nominated individuals working or volunteering in the coordination teams at the UK's UNESCO sites, but other approaches will be considered.

NB 2) To aid with pricing, bidders should note that it is proposed that the actual data collection will be undertaken by the UKNC team, with support from the chosen supplier. Therefore, suppliers need not include the cost of data collection within their proposal's budget as this will be covered by the internal capacity of UKNC. However, the chosen supplier will have sole responsibility for the methodology and survey design.

Phase Two – Analysis and Reporting

Following completion of the survey, the data collected will be analysed and written up in a report suitable for the audiences of UNESCO and Creative PEC, which includes academic, policy and industry stakeholders, both in the UK and internationally.

The report will outline the methodology used to collect data and suggest how this approach could be replicated for UNESCO sites beyond the UK.

Where appropriate, the report should reference other, related, work in the realm of the value of partnerships, highlighting where the new analysis supports or extends current thinking.

The report will clearly present findings - through text, figures, and appropriate data visualisations - to highlight the economic and non-economic value of the UK's UNESCO sites, individually, in comparison, and in composite.

It is expected that the report will be no longer than 60 pages in length, and its exact nature will be agreed with UKNC and Creative PEC.

NB 3) To aid with pricing, the stated maximum project budget does not include design costs, which will be covered separately by UKNC and Creative PEC.

Further Requirements

The research and associated activities must be undertaken in an ethical manner, in line with broader UN values and sustainable development frameworks.

Data Handling Requirements

Beyond the data collected through the survey, bidders should confirm if they plan to use any other datasets and, if so, for which elements of the analysis; which of these datasets they already have access to/which will require permissions; and the likely timelines for obtaining any permissions. Bidders should also make clear any limitations in using the datasets identified.

More broadly, bidders should confirm their intention to comply with the data handling requirements of UKNC, which include:

- Compliance with GDPR
- Identification of data risks
- Secure storage of data
- Submission of a data plan, for approval, including confirmed approach to assuring the quality of the data collected

A data handling agreement will be drawn up between UKNC and the chosen supplier.

Research Output Requirements

It is expected that the project will produce two outputs:

1) A methodology and associated survey instrument, designed to enable understanding of the economic and non-economic value of UK UNESCO sites' multi-stakeholder partnerships
2) A report no longer than 60 pages in length, analysing the data collected through the survey

Bidders should include a detailed project management plan, outlining how the required outputs will be produced.

Indicative Delivery Timetable

ACTION	COMPLETION DATE	OUTPUT
Publish ITT	12.05.25	ITT on UNESCO.org.uk website
ITT Open	06.06.25	-
Bids scored	13.06.25	-
Bid queries resolved	19.06.25	-
Preferred bidder identified	20.06.25	Preferred bidder contacted
Contracting	27.06.25	Contract issued
Kick off meeting	30.06.25	Research initiated
Methodology developed	31.07.25	Methodology agreed
Survey designed	15.08.25	Survey instrument agreed
Survey enters field	18.08.25	Data collection begins
Survey completed	10.10.25	Data collection ends
Data cleaning	17.10.25	-

Analysis period 1	28.11.25	-
Initial findings	05.12.25	Overview slides
Analysis period 2	27.02.26	-
Review copy of report sent	06.03.26	Draft full report
Revisions 1	27.03.26	-
Revisions 2	24.04.26	-
Manuscript signed off	22.05.26	Final pre-design report
Report launched	01.07.26	Publication

Proposed Milestones and Budget

Milestone 1: Kick off meeting and signing of contract
Milestone 2: Survey instrument signed off
Milestone 3: Data collection completed
Milestone 4: Initial findings presented
Milestone 5: Draft full report received
Milestone 6: Manuscript signed off

The maximum budget available for the above is £40,000 (including VAT). It is important that bids are priced accurately.

Payment schedule

Payments will be released according to the following schedule, aligned with the milestones above and structured as 50/25/25 instalments:

- £20,000 June 2025 upon attending kick-off meeting and signing contract
  (Milestone 1)
- £10,000 March 2026 upon submission of draft full report to specification
  (Milestone 5)
- £10,000 May 2026 upon successful completion of contract
  (Milestone 6)

The chosen supplier will be required to submit invoices to UKNC according to the above timings, with payment to be made within 30 days.

The chosen supplier will report to UKNC's Programme Lead, Liam Smyth.

ITT Response

Please note that proposals in excess of £40,000 (including VAT) will not be considered and prospective suppliers should note the weighting of the pricing schedule when preparing their commercial response.

In order to be considered for this commission, bidders are asked to send proposals that meet the requirements stated above (Scope of the Research Project, Further Requirements, Data Handling, Research Outputs), provide information on the suitability of the proposed delivery team, and include a pricing schedule.

Proposals should be submitted as PDFs, no more than 12 pages in length excluding pricing schedule and appendices, written in English, single spaced, in 11-point font and A4 in size. Hard copies are not required. The pricing schedule can be submitted either as table on a PDF or a locked excel spreadsheet. Appendices, if submitted, can take whatever form is appropriate.

Proposals should include the following [suggested page lengths in brackets]:

- A response to the stated Phase 1 requirements, **methodology and data collection**, including the proposed methodology and expected outputs [max. 3 pages]. NB data collection will be undertaken by UKNC, using the agreed survey instrument.
- A response to the stated Phase 2 requirements, **analysis and reporting**, including the proposed analytical approach and expected outputs [max. 3 pages]
- A response to the stated data handling requirements, including: identification of which datasets will be used to deliver the project; the conditions of access; confirmation of whether access has already been granted through ONS's Secure Research Service, and/or DfE's Data Sharing Service; and consideration of how GDPR obligations will be met with regard to the specific datasets identified [max. 1 page]
- A response to the stated research output requirements, including: a project management plan that features a proposed delivery schedule; proposed specification for methodological and output oversight and sign off; identification of risks and risk mitigations related to the project; identification of any ethical considerations; and a description of how the team will allocate the appropriate level of resource to manage the project alongside any concurrent work [max. 2 pages]
- Biographies of team members, including details of previous projects of relevance [max. 2 pages]
- Evidence of how the team has successfully analysed similar datasets in the past [max. 1 page]
- A separate pricing schedule
- Any appendices in support of the proposal

Proposals should be submitted by **16:00 on Friday 6th June 2025**, to **nhussain@unesco.org.uk** and **tom.cahill-jones@pec.ac.uk**

If you have any clarifying questions in advance of the application deadline, please email the above contacts.

Evaluation of Proposals

All submissions will be scored independently by a panel comprising members of UNESCO and Creative PEC. The independent scores will be aggregated according to the process below, to determine final scores. Final scores will form the basis of the decision to award the contract.

Each submission will be scored against three areas, with the following weighting:

Technical description of methods	50%
Experience of delivery team	20%
Pricing schedule	30%

The scoring criteria for each area will be as follows:

Technical Description of Methods (50% Overall Weighting)

The criteria below are weighted as indicated and add up to a total of 100 marks:

Appropriateness of proposed methodology and outputs	50%
Provide confidence in the ability to meet the stated data handling requirements, including access to, and processing of, the identified datasets within the timeline provided, and an explanation of how information will be stored, reported and protected	25%
Provide confidence in the ability to successfully deliver the project in a timely manner that takes ethical considerations into account, including: • A clear project management plan including a delivery schedule, proposed specification for methodological and output oversight and sign off, and a detailed breakdown of how milestones will be met • Identification of the main risks associated with undertaking the study, and proposed mitigations that can be applied within the project timelines • The approach to ensuring the work is compliant with relevant ethical codes of conduct, setting out any ethical considerations presented by the study along with details of the proposed arrangements for ethical scrutiny	25%

Each panel member will score each criterion above out of 4, as per the Scoring Table below. These scores will be aggregated and then converted to the weighting available, giving a total score out of 100. This score will then be calculated against the overall weighting in this area (50%). This percentage - **the technical score** - will be taken through to the calculation of the final score.

E.g. if a submission achieves a total score of 80 out of 100, that would convert to a technical score of 40%.

Experience of Delivery Team (20% Overall Weighting)

Two criteria, weighted equally:

Skills, expertise and experience in delivering similar projects, to provide confidence in the successful completion of the project, with appropriate knowledge of the subject area, and including experience with the datasets the supplier intends to use	50%
Overall balance of team to achieve requested project outcomes within the desired delivery timetable, including roles and availability of senior team members	50%

Each panel member will score each criterion above out of 4, as per the Scoring Table below. These scores will be aggregated and then converted to the weighting available, giving a total score out of 100. This score will then be calculated against the overall weighting in this area (20%). This percentage - **the experience score** - will be taken through to the calculation of the final score.

E.g. if a submission achieves a total score of 80 out of 100, that would convert to an experience score of 16%.

Pricing Schedule (30% Overall Weighting)

Prospective suppliers should provide a separate pricing schedule that includes a detailed breakdown of costs, including the rates and/or fees of all members of the delivery team. It is strongly advised that each element that will be delivered as part of the project is itemised, so that the total value of the final contract can be determined.

A formula will be used to determine the score of the pricing schedule, as follows:

(lowest total price received/prospective supplier's total price) x 100

To avoid doubt, the maximum budget for this research is £40,000 (including VAT)

This score will then be calculated against the overall weighting in this area (30%). This percentage - **the price score** - will be taken through to the calculation of the final score.

E.g. if a submission achieves a score of 80, that would convert to a price score of 24%.

Final Score

The final score will form the basis of the decision to award the contract. It will be weighted as previously explained and calculated as follows:

Final score = **technical score** + **experience score** + **price score**

Scoring Table

In scoring the above criteria, the following table will be used:

Score	Score Description	Definition
0	Unacceptable in Whole or Part	No response has been provided or the response fails to address the requirement; elements of the response are unacceptable in whole or part, with proposals not justified or unsupported by evidence where required; fails to demonstrate any understanding of the requirement.
1	Low Confidence	Lack of content/detail or significant gaps or lack of justification/evidence in response to the requirement; response given is generic and not relevant; fails to demonstrate understanding of the requirement. The response provides the University with low confidence that the Bidder has the capacity/capability to deliver the University's requirements.

2	Satisfactory	The response is satisfactory and meets some of the University's requirements with some gaps or lack of justification/evidence in response to the requirement. The answer provided is satisfactory and provides the University some confidence that the Bidder has the capacity/capability to deliver the University's requirements.
3	High Confidence	The response is good and meets most of the University's requirements providing most of the benefit/value/experience specified. The response provides the University with high confidence that the Bidder has the capacity/capability to deliver the University's requirements.
4	Full Confidence	The response is excellent and meets all the University's requirements providing the full benefit/value/experience specified. The response provides the University with full confidence that the Bidder has the capacity/capability to deliver the University's requirements.

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