
Old Deptford Library

Evaluation Consultant Brief



November 2025

1.0 Overview

The Arthouse Partnership is inviting tenders from a suitably qualified Evaluation Consultant for a repair and renovation project at the Partnership's home – the old Deptford Central Library. The project successfully achieved a Development Phase grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (Heritage Fund).

The appointment is for the Development and Delivery Phases, with a break clause.

The Consultant is required to review existing documentation and work in consultation with the Partnership and other appointed professionals – including the Architect Design Team, Activity, Engagement and Interpretation Consultant, Business Plan Consultant, Cost Consultant and Project Manager – in order to develop the proposals.

Skills and Experience Required

- Experience of working on capital Heritage Fund schemes of similar scale
- Experience of working on heritage sites of significance
- Experience of working with not for profit/ volunteer-led/ community-focused organisations
- Ability to work collaboratively in a timely way, assimilating a wide range of information such that it can be incorporated into a coherent and compelling vision
- Experience of working with charitable organisations and reporting to a Board of Trustees, and a range of community stakeholders
- Experience of preparing Evaluation Plans and reports in line with Heritage Fund guidance

Fee

Please provide a fee and breakdown for each workstage as per the Form of Tender. We do not have a dedicated budget in Development Phase for this work so please advise what you feel is appropriate. We have a budget of £30k in Delivery Phase for evaluation.

2.0 About the Project

Who we are

The South East Arts London (charity number: 1162739) and Lewisham Art House Limited (Registered Society, 28058R) partnership have secured major funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to deliver its ambitious plans to repair and renew the Carnegie Grade II-listed Old Deptford Library (ODL).

The £368,000 development grant was awarded to develop its “Creativity, Access and Cooperation: A future for the Arthouse partnership at the Old Deptford Library” project which will reinvigorate and celebrate the ODL. The project will maintain and extend its current function as a community arts centre and artists’ studios – the ‘Arthouse’ – by building on our heritage of, and commitment to, creativity, access and cooperation. The project will launch a new chapter for the building and its contemporary arts and community programme.

This is a conservation-led building project, which will improve our heritage management through training and increased staffing, deliver powerful community arts and heritage programming, increase visibility on the street and through communications, and loudly celebrate our building and its story.

By improving spaces and facilities for artists and the public, embedding the building and programme firmly into the townscape and local area, enhancing our work with local residents and partners and taking full advantage of the opportunity to take on a long- term lease for the ODL, we will develop a sustainable operating model that both protects our built heritage and our unique history of cooperation.

Over the next 18 months or so, we will develop detailed plans to unlock a further £2.8M from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, and secure match funding of £1.4M.

The project is being delivered through the Lewisham Art House (LAH) and South East Arts London (SEAL) partnership.

LAH is an artist-led cooperative, established in 1992. Since March 1994 it has occupied the Old Deptford Library, registering it as an Asset of Community Value.

Within it, LAH has 46 artists’ studios, a gallery and a workshop, and delivers a programme of artist development, education and outreach, open house heritage events, and contemporary visual arts and music events/workshops. It works in partnership with a range of community/creative partners including Goldsmiths College, Deptford X, Youth Build, Heart n Soul and Brockley Max.

SEAL, the charity, was established in 2014 by LAH in order to take on a full repairing lease on the Old Deptford Library and to control the extent of their liability for future repairs. SEAL consists of seven board members, including one “resident artist member” which ensures connection and communication between the two bodies. Both parties are supported by the work of the General Manager who acts for both.

The ODL was designed by the architect Sir Alfred Brumwell Thomas, whose previous commissions included Belfast’s City Hall and Woolwich town hall. It opened on 18 July 1914. It is a grand building in the baroque revival style, with façades of Berkshire bricks, with porticos, entablature and balustrade in Portland stone. It has three floors and a footprint of c.1440m².

The external and interior condition is poor with major repairs required to the roof and external elevations, and to original features including timber parquet, marble staircase and foyer, book lift, original oak shelving, and treatment/repairs of timber doors and Morris & Co. windows. The walls also require replastering/painting.

The parties' joint aims are to:

- Secure the Lease in order to repair and renew the ODL; preserving it for future generations, and making it function better for artists and communities within the borough of Lewisham and its environments.
- Protect, adapt and strengthen the Cooperative Society/Artist Membership model which has proven to have significant impact on local communities, building management and artist development, and to become more resilient in the future.
- Commission external advisers to assist the Parties in their adaptation and renewal plans, including architects, consultants with expertise in conservation, business and activity planning within the local environment/relevant sector.
- Plan programmes that renew LAH's objectives for social/community/art impact and access, and enable those objectives to be realised.
- Collaborate on fundraising activities and applications required to deliver these objectives.
- Develop a business model which is able to generate sufficient income to cover all future maintenance and repair costs.

The Works

SEAL and LAH will repair and renew the Grade II-listed ODL, maintaining and extending its current function as a community arts centre.

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a) Repair & renew the Grade II Old Deptford Library on Lewisham Way

The ODL is in a poor state of repair. This project focuses on immediate repairs, with the bulk of funds allocated to the roof. Other repairs include external elevations, timber window/door repairs, dealing with damp, and internal repairs/finishing/floors.

With regards to new works, these focus on facility upgrades and new greening and access works at both the front and rear. Our aim is to create a more impactful and welcoming arrival to the ODL, and to inspire new vision for Lewisham Way creating an improved connection between two town centres – New Cross and Lewisham.

b) Upgrade public facilities & spaces

Currently facilities, heating and lighting are in a poor condition (or non-existent). This project seeks to address this by installing new services, complete reordering of the principal public areas (gallery and community workshop space), with improved toilet and kitchen facilities. It will use the original configuration (the former News and Periodical Rooms) to inform the new layout so that the heritage can be better understood. It will also install new studio space partitions for artists that better align with the historic building whilst not losing the potential for income and creativity.

c) Create & equip new shared/open access areas

At present, access for the general public is limited to the front ground floor spaces. Through this project, we want to open access to other areas. This will include the creation of a new reception/open-access area (where the original reception desk was within the Lending Library) which will be open to the wider community and provide views into artist studios at ground level.

d) Digitise our archive to enable new heritage-inspired programming

Our archive is rich and tells our heritage story. We want to increase access, through digitisation/interpretation, and use it to inspire new programming including a “Discuss and Disseminate” series of activities and events.

e) The heritage-inspired community arts commissions, in collaboration with targeted communities and other stakeholders.

“The Lewisham Arthouse has been an amazing and accessible opportunity for Heart n Soul's young learning disabled and autistic artists...These works have gone on to be shown and used as part of the Imagine Children's Festival at The Southbank centre.”

We want our heritage story to inspire new community arts/engagement experiences, and we want to support our artists and partners to help us with this. This project therefore includes funding for a series of heritage-inspired community arts commissions. The briefs would ask artists to respond in collaboration with targeted communities, to our heritage themes of 1) A struggle for space: A public good; 2) Pioneers: Open-Access, “Extra-Mural” & Cooperative; 3) Reclaim & Resist: The interconnection of arts and civic movements.

Timetable

The timetable for the project as a whole is anticipated as follows:

Kick Off Meeting	January 2026
RIBA Stage 2 Presentation	May 2026
RIBA Stage 3 Presentation	November 2026
Development Phase: Review Meeting	December 2026
Development Phase: Stage 2 Deadline	February 2027
Delivery Phase: Capital Works start	June 2028
Delivery Phase: Completion date	May 2029

Supporting Documents

The following documents are issued with this Brief:

- Condition Report
- Sketch/Design proposals
- Access Review
- Programme

3.0 Schedule of Service

3.1 Development Phase

- 3.1.1 Collate baseline data from secondary sources and from development phase when a range of consultation mechanisms for the project will be undertaken as part of the design development.
- 3.1.2 Provide a full draft evaluation framework for the Development Phase review with NLHF and then update following feedback.
- 3.1.3 Complete the evaluation column on the Activity Action Plan in coordination with the Activity Planner.
- 3.1.4 Develop a robust evaluation framework to accompany the Delivery Phase application.
- 3.1.5 Contribute relevant information regarding evaluation into the Delivery Phase application.
- 3.1.6 Evaluate the development phase and submit a report that meets NLHF requirements that can be submitted with the Development Phase completion report.

3.2 Delivery Phase

- 3.2.1 Develop, pilot and refine evaluation tools that any Staff or volunteers can use to evaluate any activities, events and the volunteering experience to learn lessons and feed back into future activities.
- 3.2.2 Evaluate programmes with partners.
- 3.2.3 Work with the client team to collate data on user patterns, demographic etc.
- 3.2.4 Set up and implement a framework to evaluate digital engagement.
- 3.2.5 Undertake a series of qualitative interviews with members of the Project Board, and Project Team including Design team, consultant and staff involved in the capital restoration to feed into interim report.
- 3.2.6 Manage training sessions with staff and volunteers on using evaluation tools effectively and managing data.
- 3.2.7 Assist the Project Manager and client with the collection of information on activities, volunteering, training, formal and informal learning, which can be used in preparing NLHF quarterly reports.
- 3.2.8 Prepare annual interim evaluation reports of the Project.
- 3.2.9 Prepare a final NLHF compliant evaluation report of the Project, that focused on the extent to which the project met its intended outcomes for inclusion, skills, wellbeing, the local area, economy and organisational resilience. The report should provide a narrative of the story of change, what went well, what went less well and lessons learnt for the future of the church, other similar projects and NLHF itself.

Coordination will also include the following:

- Prepare for and attend some Project Team meeting(s) ensuring sufficient material is provided in at least one week in advance to the Client Project Manager.
- Provide quarterly progress reports.