

INVITATION TO QUOTE: November 2020

Platforms for delivering training and Shared Reading groups online

*A spring overflowing its springbox. A freshness
in the center of the chest. This other intelligence
does not turn yellow or stagnate. It's fluid,
and it doesn't move from outside to inside
through conduits of plumbing-learning.*
Rumi, *Two Kinds of Intelligence*

Please note this is one of three live tenders. Each tender is individual in its own right, but each has a digital element to it and there may be some overlap. The other two tenders currently live are:-

- Group member/beneficiary data collection
- Evaluating the digital aspects of our alternative provision moving forward

About The Reader www.thereader.org.uk

The Reader is a national charity bringing about a Reading Revolution so that everyone can experience and enjoy great literature, which we believe is a tool for helping humans survive and live well.

We bring thousands of people together on a weekly basis in small groups to share and discuss great novels, short stories and poems. We call this Shared Reading.

By reading with people in community centres, libraries, care homes, hospitals, prisons, secure units, workplaces and in high street cafes, and at our home in Calderstones Park in Liverpool, our work helps to improve wellbeing, reduce social isolation and build stronger communities.

Over **700** Shared Reading groups and one-to-ones happen every week around the UK, supported by **1000** volunteers and reaching over **10,000** people a year.

In 2020, people attending community Shared Reading groups said:

- 'I look forward to the group as an important event in my week' – 92%
- 'The reading sessions make me feel better' – 93%
- 'I've made new friends within the group' – 84%.

Why is this brief here?

The Reader's Training offer

The Reader has been delivering two flagship training courses since c2008

- Read to Lead – a training course that provides volunteers, staff and key individuals in partner organisations with the skills to run a weekly Shared Reading Group improving the lives of a wide number of beneficiaries. The three day course has undergone a number of revisions over the years to keep the content fresh, and to respond to trainee feedback about duration and flexibility.

This is very interactive course requiring live practice, giving feedback and sharing reflections with other trainees.

- A Little, Aloud – a much shorter course that provides staff, volunteers and key individuals in partner organisations with the skills to run a 1:1 Shared Reading session. There is a version of this course available for Adults, and one for Children. This is a one day course.

We also offer a variety of shorter courses designed to support and encourage reading with children.

When Covid-19 hit training had to be suspended. Over the next few months we devised an adapted version of Read to Lead and A Little, Aloud for Children that could be delivered online by Zoom. We also moved as many Shared Reading groups as possible onto Zoom. This has now been piloted and is being rolled out as a standard offer for the short term.

The Reader's support offer

Once staff, volunteers or partner staff are trained and regularly delivering their weekly activity we offer a programme of support that provides practical help and also ensures quality and maintains engagement. We have been successful in moving this support online during the pandemic via Zoom and Microsoft Teams. We have also recently launched our web-based 'online community hub'. This platform allows volunteers to access resources, report on activity and claim expenses.

The Reader's core offer

In additional to our training, we need to find new solutions for our 'core' offer – weekly shared reading groups or 1:1 sessions with adults or children that have always been live and in person. You can get a sense of what this was like by watching these short videos on our You Tube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcbjOMRw6hhIS-aSgigZnBw>

When Covid-19 hit we moved as much of our provision as we could online with the majority of staff and volunteers moving to Zoom. On the face of things, Zoom is working well because it is well known and it's easy for our volunteers to set up their own free accounts. But, the duration of our sessions has had to be reduced to 40 minutes or the session has to terminate and restart because it is not feasible or scalable for us to pay for accounts that allow for a session longer than the free 40 min duration.

Scope of the task

We feel reassured that our core offer and our training products translate well online. We now want to:

- Understand the range of products available to us to deliver our existing range of training online so that we can be sure we are using the best tools for the job now and for the future (with particular attention paid to accessible and creative features that will help us to bring literature to life for people)
- Understand the range of products available to us and our volunteers to deliver Shared Reading online so we can be sure we are using the best tool for the job now and for the future
- Explore how we can use e-learning platforms to enhance our CPD and support offer as we move forward. This may well include introducing new CPD products, or delivering CPD in new ways with less personal interaction from our staff
- Understand the pros and cons of our options in terms of functionality, usability, accessibility, price and the wide variety of different audiences we reach (ie from care homes to community centres and closed settings).
- Consider the relationship between proposed recommendations and our existing online community hub.
- Gather expert recommendations as to platforms that will best suit our needs for training and service delivery considering our aspirations and limitations.
- Consider what the best alternative tools are for those beneficiaries who are not digitally literate
- Consider the ongoing update/maintenance of platform/its long term upkeep including any budget considerations which should be minimized
- Move one or two of our training products onto the new platform in the short term

Success in this project looks like:-

- Clear recommendations to aid a decision on the best e-learning products for our training, support and delivery of Shared Reading now and in the future
- Support with purchase, implementation of and training for chosen platforms
- Set up and delivery of one or more training products using new platform, and delivery of pilot groups if appropriate.

Considerations / additional detail

Our user groups and audiences are wide ranging and include a large number of 50+ adults with limited IT skills and digital access.

Budget

The Reader is looking for a partner who can work with us to deliver this work at a very competitive rate, we have a budget of no more than £25,000 (incl VAT) for the consultancy work and the purchase of products and licences. Please make sure your quote provides a clear breakdown

between the two costs Please provide a whole project fixed fee with any relevant day rates. Please quote inclusive of VAT, any anticipated expenses and all outputs.

Timelines

Brief out	w/c 16 November 2020
Submission deadline	4 December 2020
Appointment made	w/c 14 December 2020
Project work and testing starts	w/c 21 December 2020
Project completion and all deliverables	1 March 2021

Submissions

Please submit the following details no later than December at 9am by email to lizziemurray@thereader.org.uk - submissions arriving after this deadline may not be considered.

- A short summary of your proposed recommended project approach
- Confirmation of your ability to complete the task with the time frames outlined above
- Your track record in similar projects and brief bio of key team members who will work on the project
- The fees/ costs break down for the proposed work including day rates inclusive of all expenses and VAT
- 2 references from organisations with whom you have worked recently
- Data protection policy
- Proof of Professional Indemnity Insurance valued at at least £1million

All proposals will be assessed for value for money, experience and quality of approach.

Contact

For questions please email lizziemurray@thereader.org.uk

The Reader is supported by players of People's Postcode Lottery, The National Lottery Community Fund and public funding from Arts Council England.

@thereaderorg #SharedReading

The Reader - Charity Number 1126806 (SC043054 Scotland)

This piece of work is supported by the Steve Morgan Foundation and Community Match Challenge - part of government's £750m support package for charities #CommunitiesCan