

SMART Project Consultancy Brief

Work Package 1: Review of standards in the museum care of archaeological collections.

Particulars of appointment

- Freelance contract fee: £4500 (inclusive of all expenses and VAT, materials and equipment).
- Delivery date/timescale: Sign off and completion by 2 August 2019.
- Payment terms: full payment will be made on receipt of a satisfactory final report
- Insurance: evidence of professional indemnity cover to be provided at application stage.
- Reports to: SMA SMART Project Advisory Board
- Flexible and remote work arrangements: communication conducted in the main via email, telephone and online platform, and occasionally in person.

SMA is committed to

- promoting equality, increasing opportunity and encouraging diverse talent.
- encouraging equality and diversity amongst its membership and committee, as well as the people and organisations it works with.
- eliminating unlawful discrimination.
- creating a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all individuals are recognised and valued.

SMA aims to be truly representative of all sections of society and for each member, employee or contractor it works with to be respected. When providing goods and/or services and/or facilities, SMA is also opposed to, and will avoid, unlawful discrimination of its both its membership and the public.

Context

The Society for Museum Archaeology (SMA) is a fully constituted membership society recognised by Arts Council England (ACE) as the Subject Specialist Network (SSN) for British Archaeology in the UK. It exists to:

- Promote museum involvement in all aspects of archaeology and emphasise the unique contribution of museums to the essential unity of the archaeological profession

- Promote greater public understanding of the archaeological past and a fuller public appreciation of the importance of archaeology
- Campaign for the acceptance of museums as guardians of a vital part of the nation's heritage and as the appropriate location for the storage and interpretation of all archaeological material
- Develop a coherent philosophy for the role of archaeologists in museums

It aims to achieve this by:

- Acting as a pressure group within the museum profession and offering advice to the Museums Association (MA) and other national bodies on current issues of archaeological importance
- Encouraging closer relations with colleagues outside museums, and with other organisations involved in archaeology
- Working towards the improvement of all aspects of archaeological work in museums

More information about SMA, its activities and constitution can be found on its website:

www.socmusarch.org.uk

Project Brief

- **Overview**

The Society for Museum Archaeology has been awarded funding by Arts Council England (ACE) that will be used to deliver the SMART Project (Society for Museum Archaeology Resources and Training Project). The SMART Project represents a step-change for the Society in its ability to address in a practical way the challenges facing those charged with the care of archaeology collections: these challenges have been brought into sharp focus by the survey work SMA has been doing on behalf of Historic England from 2016 to 2018.¹

The overall impact of this training programme will be to help museum staff to acquire and develop the necessary skills to unlock the potential of archaeological collections for a wide range of audiences. The project will also enable SMA to reach more non-specialists, and to promote its role as a source of advice and support to all those responsible for curating archaeology collections regardless of their background or areas of expertise. In short SMA's aim is to:

- Enable museum staff and volunteers to develop the skills to work with archaeological collections proactively and confidently across collections care, interpretation and public access.
- Connect museum staff and volunteers with subject specialist expertise in order to facilitate knowledge exchange, and strengthen expertise in museum archaeology.

¹ <http://socmusarch.org.uk/projects/hesma-annual-survey-of-museums-collecting-archaeology-reports/>

- Ensure toolkits and guidelines are updated, and readily accessible to museum staff and volunteers through the SMA website, and those of other key stakeholders.

This will be achieved through:

- Work Package 1: A review of museum archaeology collections care and management standards to ensure they are updated and easily digested resources for all museum staff and volunteers working with archaeology collections.
- Work Package 2: The provision of free training workshops with travel bursaries for attendees, covering the key skills required for archaeological collections care and interpretation, with an emphasis on use of archaeological collections for public and community engagement.
- Work Package 3: The development of a peer networking and mentoring programme.

This consultancy brief relates specifically to Work Package 1 only.

- **Purpose and outcomes**

The overall purpose of this element of Work Package 1 is to undertake a thorough review of the now out-dated *'Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections'* published by the Museum & Galleries Commission, and to supply a written report to SMA that identifies the most appropriate subject matter and content to form the basis of a new set of flexible and easily-digestible online guidelines for the care and management of archaeological collections in museums.

The *'Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections'* was part of a series of publications produced by the Museums and Galleries Commission in 1992. This publication provided a comprehensive overview and recommended standards for the care, conservation, interpretation and use of archaeological collections in museums.² However, it is now almost 30 years old and no subsequent publication or guidance has been produced to update or replace it. As a result the Collections Trust, which provides online access to the standards, references them with the following caveat:

"Users are advised to exercise judgement when applying the standard, and to be aware that the practices recommended in the publication may no longer reflect best practice."

It is expected that:

² <https://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/standards-in-the-museum-care-of-archaeological-collections/>

- The appointed consultant will gather information, scope new guideline chapters and produce a written proposal for updating the guidelines.
- This task will involve a literature review to identify complementary standards and guidelines published by other sector-appropriate bodies and consultation with key stakeholders as well as museum archaeological professionals.
- The final report will be accompanied by a bibliography and links to appropriate online resources.

To enable this:

- The SMA Project Advisory Board will hold a briefing meeting with the appointed consultant to discuss the key issues with the outdated guidelines.
- The consultant will meet with stakeholders to identify and discuss key recommendations for the review.

Required key skills, knowledge and experience

Candidates will be expected to be able to demonstrate that they meet the following criteria:

COMPETENCE	Commensurate with 'MCIfA' level of the Specialist Competence Matrix – written to support those who work in/with museum archaeology. ³
EXPERIENCE	A proven track record of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful delivery of consultancy project work • Working with museum archaeology collections • Working in collaborative partnerships • Running stakeholder consultations • Research • Publication
SKILLS & KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation and report writing • Presentation • Communication • Time management • Project management • Collections management • The wider archaeology sector
PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works quickly and accurately • Motivated, can-do approach • Ability to problem solve
OTHER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness of museum ethics • Awareness of the purpose of and audience for sector guidance of this kind.

³

https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Museum%20Archaeology%20specialist%20competence%20matrix_final.pdf

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to equality and diversity and an understanding of how this applies to this role
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Proposal to tender

The consultancy proposal tender should include:

- A project timetable and design with a narrative description of how the programme of work will be delivered.
- A budget /pricing breakdown indicating day rates, expenses and any VAT payable (please ensure day rates are reflected in overall breakdown).
- Details of the relevant experience and competency possessed by the consultant and any other personnel who will work on the consultancy as listed under ‘Required key skills, knowledge and experience’ above. NB candidates should signpost comparable projects and outcomes they have delivered.
- CV.
- Names and addresses of two referees.
- Evidence of professional indemnity cover.

Deadline for proposal submission

Midnight 31st March 2019; anticipated interview date 18th April 2019

Evaluation criteria

We will evaluate your tender against the following criteria:

Criteria weighting	
Value for money	20%
Strength of proposal	45%
Relevant experience and skills	35%

Proposals must be submitted via email to:

Katherine Baxter: SMA Hon. Secretary katherine.baxter@leeds.gov.uk

Queries or questions about the SMART Project or this tender should be addressed to:

Gail Boyle: SMART Project Co-ordinator gail.boyle@bristol.gov.uk