

Request for Quote

for Interpretative Plan and Business Plan for RDS Foundation Institute including Archives

Introduction

The RDS is seeking to engage a consultant(s) to carry out an interpretative plan and a business plan that will inform decision-making regarding the development of a RDS Foundation Institute building which will include reference to the history of the RDS, and include the RDS Archives.

The RDS

On June 25, 1731, the Dublin Society held its first meeting in the Philosophical Rooms, now the Old Library, of Trinity College, Dublin. The minutes of the meeting record that the founding aims of the Society were to assist in the improvement of “husbandry [agriculture], manufactures and other useful arts...” in Ireland. (DS: 1731, [p.1]). The Dublin Society advanced these foundation aims through the distribution of grants from the Irish Parliament and its own premium scheme, originally proposed by the Rev. Samuel Madden and outlined in *“A Letter to the Dublin Society”* written in 1739. (Madden, 1739). The Society agreed to purchase “all the Works, Journals, & Transactions, which shall for the future be published, by other Societies, & private Persons, which shall contain any useful Improvement, or Discovery in Nature, or Art” on 18 December 1731, and at the same meeting, agreed that a ‘Wainscot Press’ should be purchased to contain these books and papers.

The Dublin Society received its first Charter from George II on April 2, 1750 and adopted the title of Royal Dublin Society (RDS) in 1820 in recognition of its patron George IV on his visit to Ireland in the same year. In 1815, the RDS established its headquarters at Leinster House. Here it continued to build on the cultural and scientific interests developed during the previous century, expanding the Library and Museum collections and administering the Drawing Schools and the Botanic Gardens.

The Dublin Science and Art Museum Act of 1877 saw the transfer of the cultural possessions of the RDS to the State. The RDS Museum and Library collections formed the foundation collections of the National Library and National Museum of Ireland, its Drawing Schools became the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art, later NCAD and its Botanic Gardens the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin.

In 1924 the RDS sold Leinster House to the Government of the Irish Free State and moved its headquarters to its Showgrounds at Ballsbridge: here the RDS continued to expand, developing its grounds and exhibition halls which formed the foundation of the largest exhibition and events venue in Ireland.

The Library became a significant attractant of Members during the twentieth century and operated a postal service for country members for many years, circulating 100,000 books per annum at its peak. Book purchasing was significantly reduced in the 1980s and currently 10% of the Membership body borrow books, generally in fiction and biography. The Library is now a space for Members to borrow books, read newspapers, and is a quiet space to work. The RDS also now opens its Archives to researchers by appointment. Further details on the RDS Archives are available in the Appendix.

Today, the RDS is acknowledged as one of the world's oldest philanthropic societies continuing to support Irish science, arts, enterprise, agriculture and equestrianism through its work programme, which is overseen by Committees of RDS Members and funded by RDS commercial lettings and charitable fundraising.

Vision Statement for the RDS Foundation Institute:

Plans for the RDS Foundation Institute are in very early stages, and it is hoped that the vision will be developed partly through this exercise. The current thinking regarding the RDS Foundation Institute is that it:

1. Should contribute to the mission of the RDS to further the cultural and economic development of Ireland, through providing a central 'hub' for the RDS Foundation programme. While some projects may need to avail of other venue space, within or outside the RDS, the new RDS Foundation Institute would be the base for the programme.
2. Should facilitate the development of the RDS as a think-tank, as identified in the *RDS Foundation Development Plan 2018 -2022*.
3. Should communicate some of the history of the RDS over the last three centuries, linking the history of the Society to the current programmes.
4. Should provide a standard compliant storage, use and display environment for the RDS Archives and Treasures.
5. The Foundation Institute is envisaged as a flagship project to enable the RDS to commemorate its tercentenary in 2031, with an exciting and ambitious programme, which will be well-bedded down in its new home.

As part of the development of the RDS Foundation Institute, the RDS Foundation Board and the RDS Library & Archives Committee are conducting a study to determine the feasibility of this ambitious project. Envisaged as two separate documents, the Interpretative Plan and the Business Plan should:

- Provide a well-illustrated outline plan showing the development of the new buildings complex;
- Provide estimated costs of the various phases of development, and projections of staffing requirements, running costs and visitor figures;
- Demonstrate to the RDS by means of one or more visual presentations, the potential benefits of development for RDS members, the wider community and visitors to Ireland. The social and cultural benefits that an expanded development will deliver should be covered in detail;

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- Make developmental recommendations based on an assessment of the success or otherwise of comparable heritage developments elsewhere;
- Provide decision makers with the basis for re-location and supporting analysis;
- Comment on the potential for furthering the strategic and development aims of the RDS.

Interpretative Plan

The main aim of the Interpretative Plan is to:

1. Assess the content for a facility such as the RDS Foundation Institute, enabling it to show the history of the RDS and its current role. This has previously been framed as a RDS Museum, possibly based on the RDS Archives: however the consultant can interpret the term 'RDS Museum' very broadly;
2. Assess the value of the current RDS Archives and RDS Treasures as a way of showing the history of the RDS that would be interesting to members of the public;
3. Identify potential new audiences for the work of the RDS, and make recommendations regarding the development of these audiences;
4. Identify themes for permanent or temporary exhibitions appropriate for these audiences, and based on the RDS story;
5. Strengthen the RDS Foundation Institute's reputation as a resource for researchers through increased access to the Society's archival records.

Business Plan

The main aim of the Business Plan is to:

1. Assess the economic viability of the proposed RDS Foundation Institute. It is envisaged that funding will come from philanthropic donations and from earned income.
2. Assess potential visitors (numbers and profile) for the historical elements of the RDS Foundation Institute.
3. Assess the costs for the development of the RDS Foundation Institute.

The external assessor will be required to provide **the two draft written documents by Friday 9 November at 5pm and final written documents by Tuesday 20 November at 5pm.**

Experience

Potential consultants are expected to have experience in the production of business and interpretative plans for cultural organisations. Consultants may submit a proposal for one aspect only. In addition, consultants can also submit joint proposals as a consortium.

Quotes

Please submit a **quote** to include the following:

- Proposed Methodology
- Evidence of relevant experience
- 2 references
- All Costs (Fees quoted should be inclusive of VAT)

Documents to be provided to the successful consultant:

An initial report on the costing and construction of a new RDS archive and museum building was carried out in 2016. This report recommended that a comprehensive feasibility study should be carried out on the potential new build. The first part of this study has been undertaken, resulting in an audit of the RDS Archives – this document will be made available to the successful consultant.

1. Preliminary order of magnitude costs developed for an RDS Foundation Institute to include archival storage;
2. Audit of the RDS Archives.

TIMELINE

The timeline for this project is as follows:

Issue of Request for Quote: 31 August, 2018

Deadline for submission of Clarifications: 4 September 2018

Deadline for submission of Quotes: 21 September, 2018

Appointment of contract: 28 September 2018 – consultants may be called to interview on the week starting Monday 24 September, and must indicate their availability for such a meeting.

Delivery of final documents by consultants: 20 November 2018

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Late quotes will not be accepted. Submission of quotes via email and any queries for further information are to be made to:

Senan Healy

Library & Information Systems Manager

Senan.healy@rds.ie

Joanna Quinn

Foundation Director

joanna.quinn@rds.ie

Consultants must identify (including relevant experience) the programme principal/ team lead/co-ordinator. Consultants must identify (including relevant experience) personnel involved in the delivery of the project or any proposed arrangements to sub-contract out development and delivery.

BUDGET

Budget should cover all anticipated costs and include a breakdown of fees, any other associated expense and VAT.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The successful consultant will be required to provide a current Tax Clearance Certificate and all appropriate insurances. Consultants must be able to demonstrate prior relevant experience in the successful execution and delivery of equivalent projects.

	Criteria	Weighting
1.	Understanding and interpretation of the brief	25
2.	Relevant prior experience detailing relevant key expertise	25
3.	Price	25
4.	Methodology	25
		100

Further information about the RDS Library & Archives is available at www.rds.ie/library

Appendix:

RDS Archival Collections

The RDS archival collections are comprised of two distinct collections:

RDS Library rare and early printed books: This collection includes all books with pre-1820 publication dates, all limited or numbered editions, all books with a financial value in excess of €5,000. Much of the material in this collection is of Irish interest and includes a comprehensive collection on and by Irish scientists including early printings of works by Boyle, Tyndall and Kelvin. The collection also includes the Tighe Bequest, gifted to the Library in 1890, comprising a collection of early European printings of Horace, Virgil and other classics that includes examples of the Aldine, Baskerville and Plantain presses and a very fine early fifteenth century humanistic manuscript of Lactantius' *Divinae institutiones*.

RDS archival collections (1731-1990)

This collection is the administrative archive of the RDS and includes material from the foundation of the RDS in 1731 to 1990. The collection is mostly on paper, but includes other formats such as glass plates, photographic prints, negatives, film, audio and video recordings and textiles. The collection can be broken down into five subject areas:

1. RDS Council and Administrative archive (1731-1990): This collection includes the earliest manuscript minutes of the Dublin Society (1731-1764), the minutes and correspondence of the RDS Council, RDS President and Executive Committee (1750-1990), RDS House and Premises Committees, the files of the RDS Registrar and the printed books connected with the Society including; the RDS printed proceedings by-laws and charters.

2. RDS Membership and Library Archive (1731-1990): This collection includes RDS Membership committee minutes and correspondence (1900 RDS member lists (1731-1990), member publications (newsletters, calendars) ephemeral material (tickets and fliers for member events), RDS Library archive (1819-1990) includes minute books, accession lists, printed and manuscript catalogues.

3. RDS Science archive (1731-1990): This collection includes minutes and correspondence of the RDS Committees of Chemistry, Botany and Natural Philosophy (1800-1890), minutes of Committees of Science and its applications and Science and Technology (1890-1990), exhibition catalogues, glass plates, photographic prints and negatives, material relating to scientific lecture series, material relating to the RDS Radium Institute news-clippings, and a substantial collection of scientific correspondence relating to the history of Irish science.

4. RDS Agricultural archive (1731-1990): This collection includes minutes and correspondence of the RDS Committee of agriculture, pamphlets, show catalogues, photographic prints and negatives, news-clippings, the archives of the RDS Spring Show (1831-1992) and the Dublin Horse Show (1868-1990)

5. RDS Art and Manufactures archive (1731-1990): This collection includes minutes and correspondence of the RDS Fine Arts and Manufactures Committees (1800-1990) It includes exhibitions catalogues, photographic prints and news-clippings.

RDS archival collections 1990-2012

The paper records of the RDS dated 1990-2012 are awaiting archival processing and appraisal for inclusion in the RDS archival collections or disposal in accordance with current RDS record management policy. They are currently stored in two different locations on the RDS campus. The Pembroke store holds the non-confidential paper records of the RDS commercial, marketing and foundation departments on approximately 300lm of wooden shelving. The RDS Main Office store holds the confidential paper records of the RDS CEO, Registrar, finance, commercial, marketing and foundation departments, on approximately 100lm of metal shelving. There are box lists available for the material stored in both locations.

In 2013 the RDS archival policy identified the need for significant improvement to the current storage facilities to ensure the continuing preservation of the RDS archival collections. The current archival storage area located in the RDS Library is now at total capacity and the collection is currently exposed to associated risks of inadequate shelving and storage space.

There is also no further room to develop the collections in this storage area. The Pembroke archive is not suitable as an archival storage space due to its location and its unsuitable environmental conditions.