



## Brief for Services

### AHF Support Officer

- Contract role: Freelance Support Officer  
Specialising in Communications, Public Relations and Marketing
- Client: Architectural Heritage Fund
- Contract period: 1 April 2017 to 30 September 2019: approximately 120 to 150 days each year (to be negotiated) for 2.5 years over the contract period.
- Contract terms: As per Agreement for Provision of Services.
- Fee: £30,500 per annum including fee and all expenses, rising by 2.5% annually from October 2017
- Location: Home-based, in the north of England or southern Scotland. The contractor will act as the lead Support Officer for the North East region of England so must be willing to travel to projects and events within that region. The role will also require occasional travel to London.
- Responsible to: Architectural Heritage Fund, with a reporting line to the AHF Operations Manager

### Overall purpose of the role

The overall aim of each Support Officer (SO) role is to assist local communities who are seeking to rescue and re-utilise a historic building which they value. The AHF places particular emphasis on targeting help towards supporting community enterprises that wish to set up and/or grow their businesses in historic buildings, particularly those that are at risk and/or transferred from public ownership. Working as part of the Operations Team, the SO will take a proactive approach to tackling heritage at risk by actively seeking out new projects and new types of beneficiaries of Architectural



Heritage Fund (AHF) support, in collaboration with Historic England's Heritage at Risk (HAR) teams, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and other partners.

## Background

The AHF is a charity established in 1976. Its purpose is to support the sustainable re-use of historic buildings, bringing social, economic and cultural benefits to communities by providing loans, grants and advice.

In 2012, part-funded by English Heritage (now Historic England) the AHF began an outreach initiative, commissioning freelance SOs to form a Development Team covering England. This initiative has significantly increased the number and type of projects that the AHF is supporting, but there are areas where there is potential for new activity that has not yet been fulfilled. There are a number of priority projects which have received a high level of support and would be at risk of stalling without continued effort.

The AHF has now expanded its SO service in England in response to the anticipated increase in the numbers of historic buildings being transferred from Government ownership and the growing interest amongst community enterprises that wish to locate their businesses in historic buildings. Continued funding from Historic England and additional funding from the Treasury has made it possible to recruit 5 new SOs in England. The new posts enable us to broaden the services we offer to our clients.

The work of the SOs is critical to the AHF achieving the objectives set out in its new 2016-19 Strategy. We have identified some areas of specialist need which we wish to address through the recruitment of SOs with expertise in the following fields:

- Commercial or social lending, preferably including work with voluntary sector organisations, social enterprises, and/or SMEs
- Social finance, including Community Shares and SITR (social investment tax relief)
- Business planning, preferably in the context of social enterprise
- Property management, including understanding of the community asset transfer process and community rights in relation to property
- Communications, public relations and marketing (this role)

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### Aims of the SO role

The specific aims of the SO role are to:



1. Help unlock the potential of historic buildings in England by supporting not-for-profit organisations to develop viable projects involving the repair and reuse of redundant historic buildings, particularly those that are transferred from public sector ownership;
2. Build the capacity of voluntary sector heritage groups in England so that more are equipped with the skills, resources and confidence to take on historic building projects and build their businesses;
3. Encourage greater participation from heritage groups in new voluntary sector enterprising initiatives such as Heritage Enterprise, Power to Change and Big Local, community asset transfer, community rights and other opportunities emerging as a result of the Localism Act 2011 where these can help the delivery of viable solutions for historic buildings that are potentially at risk;
4. Promote greater co-ordination and partnership working between the AHF and other organisations actively involved in the enterprising re-use of historic buildings in England – particularly Historic England, Locality, the Association of Preservation Trusts, Civic Voice, the National Trust, RIBA and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

## Main services and responsibilities

These will include:

1. Provide direct support to new and existing AHF clients to help them develop realistic and viable proposals for the reuse of historic buildings, including advising on appropriate organisational models, assessing applications for AHF grants and monitoring the delivery of grant-funded work.
2. Act as the lead AHF Support Officer on PR, marketing and social media to AHF clients, helping them develop effective strategies to maximise opportunities for publicising AHF support and significant events such as project openings, fundraising events and launches of Community Share issues.
3. Advise AHF clients on community engagement techniques with a particular emphasis on overcoming barriers to participation and involvement of groups currently under-represented in voluntary sector heritage organisations, including young people and people from black and minority ethnic communities – and, as a result, achieve greater success with funders such as the Heritage Lottery Fund.
4. Act as the lead AHF Support Officer on communications, PR and marketing within the Operations Team, advising on strategies to raise AHF's profile regionally and key messages on social media.



5. Contribute to the development of AHF's communications and social media strategy, including providing content for AHF publications and website and organising an events diary identifying promotional opportunities for AHF at national conferences and regional events.
6. Act as AHF's lead contact with the PR & communications teams of key partners, including the Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic England and Locality, ensuring AHF support for individual projects is properly acknowledged and publicised via appropriate media.
7. Work with external organisations to identify new projects eligible for AHF grants and loans, targeting buildings on national and local heritage 'at risk' registers and projects involving community rights and community asset transfer, voluntary sector/private sector partnerships and community businesses. (Building on established links with Historic England and the Heritage Lottery Fund and developing new links with social enterprise networks.)
8. Work with the Heritage Trust Network to help grow and strengthen its membership, including encouraging new organisations to join its peer-to-peer network, building the capacity of inactive building preservation trusts and assisting with the organisation and delivery of regional meetings and national conferences.
9. Promote the role and services of AHF by helping to collect data on, and reporting on, the social impact of projects supported and delivering its communications strategy, including through networking, social media and public speaking.

## Expected outcomes

1. An increase in the number of voluntary sector groups capable of delivering projects involving the acquisition, repair and sustainable reuse of historic buildings;
2. A greater number of historic buildings transferred into community ownership and developed for social enterprise use;
3. Voluntary sector groups better able to negotiate the project development process and overcome obstacles to progress, reducing the time taken to bring projects to fruition, and better equipped to manage historic buildings on an economically sustainable basis;
4. AHF financial assistance targeted more effectively at viable projects and in particular those that lead to successful Heritage Lottery Fund bids;
5. Stronger partnership working between the AHF and other organisations,



particularly the Heritage Trust Network, Historic England and the Heritage Lottery Fund;

6. Increased capacity for the AHF to demonstrate social impact through the projects it supports;
7. Increased public understanding of AHF's role supporting the community-led regeneration of the historic built environment;
8. Increased participation from under-represented groups in historic building regeneration projects;
9. More effective collaboration between the AHF and partner organisations on promotional activities and media releases.

## Person specification

Skills, qualifications and knowledge required:

### Essential

- A relevant degree or equivalent qualifications or relevant experience
- Demonstrable skills and experience in Public Relations, marketing and social media
- Demonstrable skills and experience in community engagement techniques
- Demonstrable ability in problem solving
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a team to achieve shared outcomes
- The ability to negotiate effectively and influence individuals and organisations to achieve a positive outcome
- The ability to mentor and build capacity of volunteer-led organisations through sharing expertise and good practice
- Ability to work effectively on own initiative, set appropriate priorities and meet deadlines
- A willingness to travel, including overnight stays, and a full UK driving licence

### Desirable

Knowledge and/or experience in one or more of the following:

- Built heritage (architectural history, legislative framework including planning, conservation)
- Understanding of the voluntary sector (both heritage and non-heritage), including infrastructure organisations and support services, networks and funding climate
- Legal and governance issues in relation to charities and social enterprise, including knowledge of various organisational models



## Location

We are seeking a Support Officer that will be based in the North East of England, or based in a neighbouring region/country and willing to travel throughout the North East.

The Contractor will be required to maintain and develop their knowledge and expertise in delivering the services to and on behalf of the AHF, with appropriate support and training opportunities where needed.

## Remuneration

A fixed fee of £30,500 per annum is offered for this role, to cover time and all travel and other expenses, including travel nationally where required. This fee will increase each year by 2.5% from October 2017 onwards.

This is a 2.5-year contract. The Contractor shall provide 150 days of service per year during the contract period (to be negotiated), to be distributed across the period of the contract as determined by the Contractor, and agreed with the AHF, in order to deliver the requirements of this Brief.