

JOINT INFORMATION SYSTEMS COMMITTEE (JISC)

INVITATION TO TENDER

Strategic Content Alliance: Business Modelling and Sustainability for Digital Content

Introduction

1. The JISC, on behalf of the Strategic Content Alliance (Alliance), invites tenders to develop a range of activities and tools aimed at improving business modelling and sustainability planning in the public and not-for-profit sectors for practitioners (project leaders) and policy-makers (funders) in the development of sustainable digital content.
2. The Alliance commissioned a number of research projects to increase knowledge and understanding in business modelling and sustainability for sustainable digital content. The outputs to date have included empirically researched reports, in-depth case studies, workshops, briefing papers and the first draft of a potential “decision making” document. This document consists of a series of questions aimed at leading practitioners through options available to them.
3. In order to improve and enhance the existing portfolio of documentation, the Alliance wishes to update the existing twelve case studies and develop new research into public sector and not-for-profit funders attitudes, policies and practices in awarding funding for sustainable digital content.
4. The new work will need to reflect the realities of the cultural, economic and political environment of the United Kingdom, including but not restricted to professional attitudes and skills, the impact of public sector funding cuts, divergent organisation and funding agencies policies and complex government agendas across the United Kingdom (including the devolved governments in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales).
5. The aims of the work are:
 - i. To improve public sector and not-for-profit funders techniques and methodologies in the development of sustainable digital content by undertaking research into the attitudes, policies and practices being used by funders¹ in the development business modelling and sustainability planning for digital content.
 - ii. To develop the necessary tools for funders with particular reference to the evaluators/markers of funding applications to help steer effective decision making on the merits or otherwise of sustainability plans.
 - iii. To facilitate constructive dialogue amongst funders in the continued development of sustainable digital content.
 - iv. To revisit and update the information on the existing twelve Alliance case studies².

¹ For example JISC, Museums, Libraries and archives Council (MLA) and the Heritage Lottery Fund in the UK and the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Mellon Foundation in the US

² The twelve case studies can be found at <http://sca.jiscinvolve.org/business-modelling-publications/>

6. Total funding of **£75,000-£85,000** (including VAT, travel and subsistence) is available for this project.
7. The deadline for proposals is **12 noon UK time on 11 January 2010**.
8. It is envisaged that bidders will be notified of the outcome of the evaluation process by **5 February 2010**.
9. The successful bidder will be expected to start work on or around **1 March 2010**.
10. The work should be completed no later than **31 March 2011**.

Background

11. The JISC is a joint body of the UK Higher and Further Education Funding Councils. It was established to support the further and higher education sectors in the use of information communications technology (ICT). It does this by providing a network service and by funding ICT development and services that support learning, teaching and research.
12. The JISC wishes to commission this study to support the JISC Strategy in its intention to stimulate innovation in collaboration with national partners to increase the take-up and widen access to content. As part of this approach, JISC is a key sponsor of the Strategic Content Alliance and its ambition to nurture the development of a UK e-Content Framework.
13. The Alliance³ is sponsored by six organisations JISC, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), British Library (BL), Becta, Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and the NHS Library for Health (NeLH). It builds on the work of the Common Information Environment in collaboration with others across the public, not-for profit and commercial organisations.
14. The Alliance aims to build a common information environment underpinned by a UK e-Content Framework of principles and good practices for deployment as a prototype. This has been developed so that users of publicly funded digital content can gain best value from public investment through reducing the barriers that currently inhibit access, use and re-use of digital content.
15. The Alliance has commissioned a series of case studies, reports etc which are of relevant to this piece of work (see below). Bidders are invited to cite additional authoritative resources and other relevant activity as part of their bid.

Business Models and Sustainability:

- Ithaka Sustainability and Revenue Models for Online Academic Resources (Ithaka S+R 2009)⁴
http://sca.jiscinvolve.org/files/2008/06/sca_ithaka_sustainability_report-final.pdf.
- Sustaining Digital resources: An On-the-Ground View of Projects Today. *Ithaka Case Studies in Sustainability* (Ithaka S+R 2009).
http://sca.jiscinvolve.org/files/2009/11/sca_ithaka_sustainingdigitalresources_fund_ersedition_with_casestudies_uk.pdf.
- On Building a New Market for Culture: Virtue and necessity in a screen-based economy; (Intelligent TV 2009)⁵.

³ <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/contentalliance>

⁴ http://sca.jiscinvolve.org/files/2008/06/sca_ithaka_sustainability_report-final.pdf

16. Particular activities JISC is currently involved in of relevance to this piece of work are listed below: Bidders are invited to cite any additional JISC work in their submission.

Business Models and Sustainability:

- JISC Sustainability Handbook – Available from Claire McNally c.mcnally@jisc.ac.uk .

17. Requirements of the work include:

Research into the attitudes, policies and practices of funders

18. Undertake in-depth research into funders' methodologies to include attitudes, policies and practices around business modelling and sustainability for digital content. To better understand the impact of funders' policies and practices on the digital content projects they support. This research should include interviews with project leaders (grant recipients), to learn more about how their perceptions of funders' requirements and expectations have shaped their work and guided their thinking about the sustainability plans they have developed for their digital content projects.
19. Desk research and interviews with funders should include an assessment as to the level of competency and capacity amongst funders, including the peer review process. How and to what extent does the peer review process take into account effective business models and sustainability plans should be reviewed. For example, what sustainability plans are required in an application process and how are these evaluated – at the time of application and subsequently. The level and type of support offered by funders to project leaders (grant recipients) should also be evaluated. How do funders' measure return on investment and risk when considering "next round" funding or project extensions.
20. This should include, where feasible, an assessment of the effects funders policies have on the long term sustainability of digital content. Bidders are invited to identify the funders they will focus upon and the rationale for selecting the funder.
21. This research would result in a report highlighting best-in-class policies and practices, including short case studies and/or profiles to assist funders develop competencies and capacity in the funding of digital content projects.
22. Preliminary results and plans will need to be shared amongst delegates at the international funders meeting in London on, or about, 7 May 2010 and final outputs peer reviewed by funders in early 2011.

Tools to assist Funders and the funding processes

23. To develop a range of tools which can be customised by funders to evaluate digital content project proposals and help sustain them over time. These could include the development of a funding application checklist, visualisation charts to help navigate the existing Alliance and other documentary evidence base (case studies and guides), and a best practice guides for peer review evaluators.
24. An online survey which will include the "state of play" regarding cultural and scholarly digital content sustainability is envisaged. This would be a self-assessment audit as to the short, medium and long sustainability, specifically which digital content maybe "at risk" either through "digital decay" or becoming completely unavailable.

⁵ http://sca.jiscinvolve.org/files/2009/07/sca_intelligenttv_sponsorship_report_v1-final.pdf

25. These tools will need to ensure that they inform not just the start-up of a project, but its digital content life-cycle “stages” i.e. a recognition that things change over time. The tools should include the ongoing development of the prototype Alliance “decision making” documentation which is based upon a series of questions to help project leaders navigate through the sustainability options open to him/her. These tools will need to be modular to allow funders to customise the tools according to their particular requirements.
26. The research and tools development, particularly the “decision making” tools must undergo recognised acceptance testing to ensure that they meet the needs and expectation of users. Bidders will be expected to scope, facilitate and report on the workshops to be held at the JISC offices in London at key stages of development.

Facilitate constructive dialogue amongst Funders

27. The successful bidder will be invited to present their preliminary findings and plans at an international funders meeting in London on, or about, 7 May 2010. In addition the successful bidder will be expected to scope and manage at least one funders meeting at JISC meeting rooms in London in early 2011 to peer review the research findings and tools.
28. In addition to events, the successful bidder is invited to identify how they would encourage and facilitate a constructive dialogue amongst funders in the development of business modelling and sustainability policies and practices.

Update Alliance Case Studies

29. This research would need to revisit the original 12 case studies to update the information, including financial information on each. This should be undertaken in mid-2010. The editorial should follow the existing case studies format. This will specifically seek what, if any, changes have occurred since the original research was carried out in 2008-09.

Conduct of the Work/Methodology

30. The methodology should take into account the diverse range of practitioners and policy makers in cultural heritage, education and research, health; and public service broadcasting space. Bidders are encouraged to outline how they will engage with the Alliance sponsors and their respective audiences.
31. Successful bidders are encouraged to develop and maintain links, as well as sharing knowledge with other research projects being undertaken in the area of business modelling and sustainability. Bidders are encouraged to outline how they will encourage the take-up and use of these resources when they are completed.
32. Bidders will be expected to contribute to the Alliance’s Quarterly Newsletter⁶ either in ‘feature’ or column form using proof read UK English and provide ad hoc news/research updates for inclusion in the Alliance’s social web applications e.g. blog, twitter. It is envisaged that the total time commitment will not exceed four days over the period of the grant.
33. The work will be overseen by the JISC Executive on behalf of the Alliance sponsors.

⁶ <http://sca.jiscinvolve.org/category/newsletter/>

Outputs and Timetable

34. The work should commence on, or around, 1 March 2010 and should be completed by 31 March 2011.
35. The successful bidder will be required to participate in a start up meeting either face-to-face or teleconference in London week commencing 22 February 2010. Progress meetings will take place every 2 months thereafter or as required by the successful bidder or JISC Executive.
36. The main deliverables will be:
 - i. A report highlighting best-in-class policies and practices, including short case studies and/or profiles to assist funders develop competencies and capacity in the funding of digital content projects.
 - ii. Present preliminary findings and plans at the international funders meeting in London on, or about, 7 May 2010 and scope and manage at least one funders peer review meeting of the outputs in early 2011.
 - iii. A funding application checklist, visualisation charts and guides for funder peer review evaluators.
 - iv. An online survey of the “state of play” amongst projects, including “at risk” cultural and scholarly digital content.
 - v. Revisit and update the 12 Alliance case studies.
 - vi. Dissemination activities to support the iterative development of the above and at the conclusion of the activity.
37. All deliverables should be submitted in proof read in UK English and will be required by 31 March 2009 as RTF and Word documents (other formats by mutual agreement).

Terms and Conditions

38. JISC’s standard terms and conditions of funding can be found at http://www.jisc.ac.uk/fundingopportunities/bidguide/proj_tocgrants.aspx. Bidders must view these prior to submitting a proposal. The terms and conditions must be followed by all project holders.
39. As a general rule, JISC does not seek to retain IPR in the project and/or service outputs created as part of its programmes. However, funding is always made available on the condition that project outputs are made available, free at the point of use (or ‘at cost’ where appropriate), to the UK HE, FE and Research community in perpetuity and in accordance with JISC’s Open Access and/or JISC’s Open Source Software Policy wherever possible, and that these outputs may be disseminated widely in partnership with JISC.
40. JISC, however, reserves the right to acquire all Intellectual Property Rights, including, without limitation, copyright, database right, performers rights, patents and trademarks, whether registered or unregistered, in any works created by you as a result of the funding either indefinitely or for a certain fixed period of time on behalf of HEFCE. JISC also reserves the right to request that all Moral Rights are waived. This ability to acquire the Intellectual Property Rights will only be used under exceptional circumstances and in any such case where JISC considers this necessary, the JISC will explain in writing to you the reasons for the transfer. This includes the situation where JISC is funding the creation of a national service for the community and there may be a need for HEFCE, on behalf of JISC’s funding partners, to retain ownership

of certain rights in order to maintain flexibility of future provision and availability of the service.

41. For all project and/or service outputs, acceptance of the terms and conditions of the grant will provide JISC or its representatives with an irrevocable, non-exclusive royalty-free licence in perpetuity to exploit the outputs in any way it sees fit, including enabling the JISC to use, archive, preserve and disseminate the outputs.

JISC Management of the Project

42. The project will be overseen by Stuart Dempster (s.dempster@jisc.ac.uk) based in the London JISC Office.
43. The successful bidder will be expected to follow the normal JISC project management guidelines⁷ including adhering to good project management practices, regular reporting and participation in meetings as appropriate. Bidders are advised to view these prior to submitting a proposal.

Funding Available

44. Funding of **£75,000-£85,000** is available for this work including all travel and other expenses and any applicable VAT. Bidders should ensure that they charge VAT for the proposed activity if required; JISC does not recover VAT. VAT should be charged as proposed at the applicable rate at the time of bidding; any increases to VAT rates will be honoured by JISC.

Costing and Pricing a Proposal

45. All bids submitted by UK higher education institutions should use the Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) methodology in order to cost the activity. An example budget and guidance on the budgetary terms used can be found at **Appendix A** to this document.
46. Bidders should then consider how they wish to price the activity (by considering the level of institutional contribution) in order to submit a competitive bid.
47. Other institutions and organisations submitting bids should use their usual costing and pricing practices, but all costs should be clear and transparent, clarifying the number of days each individual working on the activity will provide, in order to assist the evaluators in determining the value for money of a proposal.

Structure of Proposals

48. A guide to bidding for JISC projects can be found at <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/bidguide>.
49. Tenders should include:
 - i. a completed cover sheet (**Appendix B**) The completed cover sheet will not count towards the page limit;
 - ii. a description of the proposed work;
 - iii. a detailed programme of the work to be undertaken, including a work plan showing key date/milestones and deliverables;

⁷ <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/fundingopportunities/projectmanagement>

- iv. a summary of relevant experience and technical knowledge to undertake the work proposed;
- v. short descriptions of key personnel who would work on the activity, including relevant experience and qualifications;
- vi. an assessment of the risks associated with the work and how these will be managed;
- vii. the total cost and a breakdown of costs across academic years (August – July) including a statement on VAT. Staff costs should be broken down into the estimated number of days to be contributed to the project by each person/ percentage of FTE; the cost per person; salary grade (if applicable). Calculation of other costs, such as travel and subsistence; hardware and software (if applicable) should also be clarified. All costs must be justified. Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) methodology must be used to calculate costs in bids from UK HE institutions. Any institutional contribution should be clearly identified.

50. Tenders should clearly demonstrate:

- An understanding of the area.
- Clear and unambiguous understanding for the need of the two aspect approach to the development i.e. narrative and template design;
- The need/rational for the proposed project and work programme;
- A realistic understanding of the scale of the work;
- The methodologies to be adopted;
- Clear project management set up;
- Clear outputs and deliverables;
- An appropriate mix of skills for the project, including rationale for collaboration in the case of consortia bids;
- The risks associated with the project have been considered;
- An outline of the areas to be covered in the final report;
- Clear, easy to understand costs for the project, with a clear rationale/breakdown of costs provided.

Evaluation Criteria

51. The proposals will be considered by an evaluation panel appointed by the JISC.

52. Evaluation criteria, in no particular order, to be used to evaluate the proposals are as follows:

- Understanding of the issues;
- Relevant experience;
- Feasibility of approach;
- Project management;
- Risk assessment & management;
- Value for money.

Legal Requirements

53. Potential bidders should be aware that as a public body, JISC is subject to legislation such as the Race Relations Amendment Act, 2000, Equality Act 2006 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005⁸. JISC is also subject to the Data Protection Act 2002 and the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000. JISC requires any potential bidder to be aware of and abide by these regulations.

⁸ <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/lgm/divers/>

54. Any information that a bidder considers to be commercial in confidence will need to be put into a separate annex in the tender submission. JISC may still be obliged to make this information available if challenged. All tender submissions other than information in this annex will be disclosable under the FOI Act. No additional security settings should be activated for PDFs to allow JISC to redact information if necessary prior to any release under FOI. However, JISC would never disclose any information during the actual tendering process, to avoid any prejudice to this process.

Submitting a Proposal

55. The deadline for receipt of submissions is **12:00 noon UK time on 11 January 2010**. Bids should be sent to Avalon McAllister (a.mcallister@jisc.ac.uk). **Late proposals will NOT be accepted.** It is the responsibility of the bidder to ensure that the proposal has arrived by the deadline stated.

56. Tenders should be no longer than 10 single sides of A4 pages (excluding the cover sheet and any confidential annex as described above) and should be typeset in Arial or a similar font at a minimum of 11-point size. **Any bids without a cover sheet or that exceed the page limit may be rejected by the Executive prior to the evaluation stage. NO additional appendices should be attached to the bid unless specifically requested in the ITT.**

57. An electronic copy of the tender should be received in PDF format by this deadline. This is an electronic-only submission process and, therefore, all documentation (including the cover sheet and any confidential annexes) must be submitted in PDF format, as a single file and in a zipped folder. If the size of the file exceeds 10Mb (note: any files exceeding 10Mb are likely to be returned by the mail server).

58. To summarise, a bid will be automatically rejected if:

- i. It is received after the stated deadline;
- ii. A cover sheet is not included;
- iii. It exceeds the page limit outlined in the tender.

Award of Contract

59. A selection panel will be established to review the bids received. JISC's procedure for evaluating bids can be found at <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/bideval>.

60. It is anticipated that bidders will be notified of the outcome of this tender exercise by **5 February 2010**. The successful bidder will be expected to start work on or around **1 March 2011**.

61. JISC will expect to work with the successful bidder to agree the workplan. The JISC shall determine the profile of payments to the successful bidder.

62. The JISC shall be under no obligation to accept the lowest, or any tender, and tenderers shall submit offers on the basis of doing so at no cost to the JISC.

Further Information

63. Further background information can be found at the Alliance web pages⁹ and the Alliance Blog¹⁰.

⁹ <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/themes/eresources/contentalliance.aspx>

64. Should you have any queries about this invitation to tender, please contact Stuart Dempster (s.dempster:jisc.ac.uk; Tel: 020 300 6062).
65. For enquiries regarding the submission process please contact Avalon McAllister (Email: a.mcallister@jisc.ac.uk; Tel: 0117 9317124).

**JISC Executive
November 2009**

¹⁰ <http://sca.jiscinvolve.org/>

JISC Invitation to Tender

Strategic Content Alliance: Business Modelling and Sustainability Activities

Certificate of Non-Collusion

We certify that:

- a) The prices in the Tender have been arrived at independently, without consultation, communication, agreement or understanding for the purpose of restricting competition, as to any matter relating to such prices, with any other Tenderer or with any competitor.
- b) Unless otherwise required by law, the prices which have been quoted in the Tender have not knowingly been disclosed by the Tenderer, directly or indirectly, to any other Tenderer or competition, nor will they be so disclosed.
- c) No attempt has been made or will be made by the Tenderer to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit a Tender for the purpose of restricting competition.
- d) No attempt has been made directly or indirectly to canvass any member of the JISC Executive or adviser of the JISC concerning the award of the contract which is the subject of this invitation to tender.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

Position:

On behalf of:

Example Budget for Tenders Submitted by UK HEIs¹¹

Directly Incurred Staff	August 09 – July 10	August 10 – March 11	TOTAL £
Post, Grade, No. Hours & % FTE	£	£	£
Etc.	£	£	£
Etc.	£	£	£
Total Directly Incurred Staff (A)	£	£	£
Non-Staff			
	August 09– July 10	August 10– March 11	TOTAL £
Travel and expenses	£	£	£
Hardware/software	£	£	£
Dissemination	£	£	£
Evaluation	£	£	£
Other	£	£	£
Total Directly Incurred Non-Staff (B)	£	£	£
Directly Incurred Total (A+B=C) (C)	£	£	£
Directly Allocated			
	August 09– July 10	August 10– March 11	TOTAL £
Staff	£	£	£
Estates	£	£	£
Other	£	£	£
Directly Allocated Total (D)	£	£	£
Indirect Costs (E)	£	£	£
Total Project Cost (C+D+E)	£	£	£
Amount Requested from JISC	£	£	£
Institutional Contributions	£	£	£
Percentage Contributions over the life of the project	JISC X %	Partners X %	Total 100%

¹¹ See overleaf for an explanation of the terms directly incurred, directly allocated and indirect costs.

Explanation of Terms

All applications from UK HE institutions for development funding from JISC should be costed on the basis of full economic costs (fEC). fEC is the total cost of a project.

Projects should be costed using the TRAC Research indirect and estates charge-out rates, and TRAC fEC methods for Research. If a project is not classified as Research under annual TRAC the Research charge-out rates should still be used. However, there is no need to amend the denominator or the numerator of the charge-out rate calculations to try to incorporate these projects.

Further guidance on fEC for JISC-funded research and development projects can be found at: <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/fundingopportunities/bidguide/fulleconomiccosting.aspx>.

Cost Headings

Directly Incurred

These are costs that are explicitly identifiable as part of the project, are charged at cash value actually spent and can be supported by an audit record. They include:

Staff – payroll costs requested for staff, full- or part-time, who will work on the project and whose time can be supported by a full audit trail during the life of the project. Academic-related staff who lead or work directly on a project should be classified as ‘researchers’ when costing the project and should be allocated indirect/estates costs. They should be included in the annual TRAC time allocation collection exercises when those are carried out, and their time on projects should be included in the denominator of the indirect and estates charge-out rate calculations when they are next calculated.

Unless a member of staff will be spending 100% of their time on a project, all estimates of time on a project should be made in numbers of hours or days, for each year of the project. This should then be converted to a FTE for use in calculating the indirect and estate costs charges.

Travel and Expenses – funds for travel and subsistence for use by staff who work on the project where these are required by the nature of the work. This should include attendance at programme meetings (two per year) and other relevant meetings dependent upon the project/programme.

Equipment – the cost of individual items of hardware or software dedicated to the project, including VAT, e.g. a computer for a newly recruited member of staff for the project.

Dissemination – the cost of any dissemination activities proposed for the project.

Evaluation – the cost of any formative or summative evaluation activities proposed for the project.

Other Costs – costs of other items dedicated to the project, including consumables, recruitment and advertising costs for staff directly employed on the project.

Directly Allocated

These are the costs of resources used by a project, which are shared by other activities. They are charged to projects on the basis of estimates rather than actual costs and do not represent actual costs on a project-by-project basis. They include:

Staff – proposals will need to show the costs of any principal investigators/project directors and any co-investigators/co-directors if their time charged to the project is based on estimates rather than actual costs. This may also include the costs of technical and clerical staff, and if a project is buying a small amount of one or more of a person's time.

Estates – these costs may include building and premises costs, basic services and utilities, and any equipment maintenance or operational costs not already included under other cost headings.

Other Directly Allocated – these costs may include, for example, access to institutional research facilities such as equipment and IT systems.

Indirect Costs

These include non-specific costs charged across all projects based on estimates that are not otherwise included as Directly Allocated costs. They include the costs of administration, such as personnel, finance, library and some departmental services.

NB: Budgets should clarify the FTEs used to calculate the indirect and estates charges, and indicate which staff have been included.

Indexation

Costings for subsequent years should factor in inflationary increases for salaries and other costs. All costings should be inclusive of any VAT applicable.

Project Partners

Funding for project partners, e.g. staff time, should be clearly identified in the proposal under the relevant heading. Resources to be provided by project partners, whether cash or in-kind contributions, should also be clearly identified in the proposal.

Justification of Costs

All costs associated with the project must be fully justified.

Virement

Directly Incurred Costs can be vired within the overall Directly Incurred budget heading, however, Directly Allocated and Indirect Costs cannot (they do not vary from the estimates made on project application).

Appendix B

Cover sheet for bids (all sections must be completed)

JISC ITT: Strategic Content Alliance
Business Modelling and Sustainability
Activities

Name of institution/organisation:
Project partners (if applicable):
Full contact details for primary contact: Name: Position: Email: Address: Tel: Fax:
Length of Project:
Project Start & End Dates (March 2010 - March 2011):
Total Funding Requested from JISC: Funding Broken Down Over Academic Years (August – July) 2009/10 AY(1 August 2009 – 31 July 2010): 2010/11 AY (1 August 2010 – 31 July 2011):
Outline Project Description
Tick this box to indicate that this proposal has been approved by an appropriate member of the institution/organisation <input type="checkbox"/>