

Evaluation Consultant Brief

Project: Reimagining Railways: Interpreting the Locomotive Collection at Leeds Industrial Museum

Client: Leeds Museums & Galleries (Leeds City Council)

Budget: £11,800 (inclusive of expenses; exclusive of VAT)

Contract Period: July 2026 – October 2027

Location: Leeds Industrial Museum, Armley Mills, Leeds, LS12 2QF

Deadline for proposals: 9am Friday 12 June 2026

1. Project Overview

Leeds Museums & Galleries (LMG) is delivering *Reimagining Railways: Interpreting the Locomotive Collection*, an NLHF-funded project to redisplay and reinterpret the historic Locomotive and Railway Gallery at Leeds Industrial Museum (LIM). The project will reopen the space after over a decade of closure, presenting Leeds's nationally Designated Industrial History collection through inclusive, co-curated interpretation.

The £230,000 project (including match funding) will:

- Reopen the Locomotive and Railway Gallery following MEND-funded structural repairs and flood resilience works.
- Redisplay major locomotives, and supporting objects through accessible interpretation and design.
- Co-curate narratives with partners, including local communities, schools, SEND partners, and heritage organisations.
- Embed inclusive and sustainable practice across all aspects of delivery.
- Strengthen organisational capacity for future conservation, community engagement, and income generation.

The project is guided by the **National Lottery Heritage Fund's four Investment Principles:**

1. Saving Heritage
2. Protecting the Environment
3. Inclusion, Access and Participation
4. Organisational Sustainability

The evaluation will capture impact across these principles and inform LMG's future planning, skills development, and funding bids.

2. Purpose of the Evaluation

The evaluation will:

- Assess how well the project meets its intended outcomes for heritage, people, and organisational learning.
- Generate evidence to inform reporting to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Leeds City Council.
- Capture learning to shape future displays, co-curation models, and sustainability practice across the LMG service.
- Support reflective practice among staff, volunteers, and community partners.

The consultant will provide both **formative (during delivery)** and **summative (final)** evaluation. This includes establishing a baseline during 2026 and producing a final report in Autumn 2027.

3. Scope of Work

Phase 1: Evaluation Framework (July 2026)

- Review all project documents (PEF, Delivery Plan, Budget, Risk Register, Investment Principles Review, and Activity Plan).
- Agree outcomes, indicators, and data-collection methods aligned to NLHF Evaluation Guidance. Establish baseline metrics (e.g., audience reach, accessibility measures, energy and carbon data, conservation outputs, staff and volunteer skills).
- Produce an **Evaluation Plan** setting out research questions, timelines, and responsibilities.

Phase 2: Ongoing Evaluation (August 2026 – August 2027)

- Gather and analyse qualitative and quantitative data including:
 - Staff and volunteer surveys/interviews
 - Community partner and visitor feedback
 - Observations of engagement and co-curation activities
 - Environmental performance data (energy savings, local procurement evidence)
- Attend up to three project review meetings to support reflection and adaptive learning. Provide brief update reports for the Project Board and NLHF reports.

Phase 3: Final Evaluation (September – October 2027)

- Produce a **Final Evaluation Report** (approx. 40 pages) assessing delivery against outcomes and the four Investment Principles
- Present findings and recommendations to LMG senior management.
- Supply a concise **Summary Report** (c. 4 pages) for public dissemination.
- Ensure final materials are suitable for long-term organisational learning and future funding applications.

4. Key Areas of Evaluation

The evaluation should address, but not be limited to, the following:

Saving Heritage:

- Condition reporting and conservation of large objects
- Skills transfer from external conservation experts to staff and volunteers.
- Enhanced care and interpretation of the locomotive collection.

Protecting the Environment:

- Evidence of low-carbon delivery (LED lighting, local suppliers, recycled materials).
- Use of interpretation to increase environmental awareness among visitors.

Inclusion, Access and Participation:

- Impact of co-curation with community, SEND, and diaspora groups.
- Volunteer engagement, skills gained, and accessibility improvements (including BSL content).

Organisational Sustainability:

- Staff training, confidence, and systems for maintaining new standards.
- Partnerships, visitor growth, and operational resilience at LIM and across LMG.

5. Deliverables

1. **Evaluation Framework & Baseline Report** – August 2026
2. **Progress update reports** – August 2026–July 2027
3. **Final Evaluation Report** – October 2027
4. **Summary Evaluation (for NLHF and public use)** – October 2027

All outputs must comply with **NLHF Digital Guidance** (open-access and accessible for five years).

6. Skills and Experience Required

The appointed consultant or consultancy should demonstrate:

- Experience in evaluating NLHF-funded or comparable heritage projects under £250,000.
- Understanding of museum practice, co-curation, and inclusive engagement.
- Knowledge of conservation or industrial heritage contexts desirable.
- Experience designing qualitative and quantitative evaluation frameworks.
- Commitment to accessible and sustainable evaluation methods.

7. Budget and Reporting

- **Total budget:** £11,800 (inclusive of expenses; exclusive of VAT)
- Invoice submission schedule for payment (Leeds City Council policy of 30 days payment):
 - 25% on submission of Evaluation Plan (August 2026)
 - 25% following first progress report (Nov 2026)
 - 25% following third progress report (May 2027)
 - 25% on submission of final report and summary evaluation (Nov 2027)
- The consultant will report to **Chris Sharp (Keeper/Project Manager, Leeds Industrial Museum)**, with oversight from **Leeds Museums & Galleries Senior Management Team**.

8. Submission Requirements

Proposals should include:

- A short outline of approach and methodology (max. 2 pages)
- Proposed timeline and outputs
- CV or company profile demonstrating relevant experience
- Fee breakdown including VAT (if applied)
- Two client references.

Please submit proposals by 5pm Friday 12 June to:

Chris Sharp, Keeper at Leeds Industrial Museum, christopher.sharp@leeds.gov.uk

9. Evaluation Criteria

- Understanding of brief and NLHF framework (30%)
- Relevant experience and track record (30%)
- Quality of proposed methodology (25%)
- Value for money (15%)
- If required to select the successful submission, we also may invite applicants for a conversation as part of this evaluation process.