



THE BOWES MUSEUM

- Role:** Funding and Investment Development Partner – Towards Bowes 2092
- Location:** Remote working and on-site at The Bowes Museum, Barnard Castle, County Durham, DL12 8PP
- Fee:** Up to £25,000 + VAT

1. Project Overview

The Bowes Museum invites expressions of interest from experienced and imaginative consultants to support our Towards Bowes 2092 project: a two-year transformational initiative that repositions The Bowes Museum as a civic, cultural and economic anchor for the region. Towards Bowes 2092 is central to our ambition to unlock the full potential of our buildings, collections, and parkland, ensuring The Bowes Museum thrives as a 21st-century institution rooted in place, powered by people, and ready for the future.

We are seeking an individual or an organisational partner to work with us to design our future Funding and Investment model. This work will translate our long-term organisational aspirations into a Funding and Investment Plan that underpins the other workstreams of the Towards Bowes 2092 project and the museum's current activities.

We are looking for a collaborator who can help us reinvent our current model to maximise investment income, stabilise our core funding, and identify strategies and opportunities for new funding and income. The successful candidate will be experienced in areas of investments, funding, and philanthropy, have a strong understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the culture and heritage sector, and have knowledge of capital projects and sector transformation. You will bring strategic clarity, financial fluency, and a relational approach to co-creating a confident, future-facing Funding and Investment model.

2. Introduction – The Bowes Museum

Vision: *We aim to unlock people's potential to shape a more interesting, equitable, and sustainable world.*



Mission: *As a future-thinking museum of Artists, Designers and Makers and through a spirit of generosity and collaboration, we will support and uplift the Northeast.*

The Bowes Museum is a registered charity that manages a Grade I listed, accredited museum and Grade II listed parkland in Barnard Castle. Founded by Joséphine and John Bowes over 150 years ago, this purpose-built museum brings together an extraordinary, designated collection of European fine and decorative art as a cultural resource for the people of Northern England, where today we celebrate artists, designers and makers.

We are a purpose-led, future-focused organisation that works sustainably to use our unique assets to make a difference in our communities, sector and region. Through our work, people will experience increased social and cultural mobility, feeling more connected to their place, to one another, and to the natural environment. Visitor numbers in 2024/25 were 97,000. Most of our audiences are local (living within a 60-minute drive of the museum), but the museum also attracts national and international visitors.

Our aims and objectives drive our work to:

- Take care of what's important (people, places and unique assets)
- Invest in the future
- Make a difference in our communities
- Create outstanding experiences
- Support our region's ambitions

The Bowes Museum is an independent museum. A key player in the cultural sector, it has an ambitious development programme that aims to underpin its role as one of the anchor destinations in County Durham and across the North. Already attracting a healthy share of the tourism market, the museum has the potential for significant growth by drawing audiences not only from the North but also from across the UK and internationally, through its high-profile, community-engaged programming and collections.

However, as with many similar organisations, The Bowes Museum carries a legacy of underinvestment, with periods of significant challenge. Today, increased operational costs, including wages, infrastructure, and services, coupled with buildings and technologies that have not kept pace with environmental and technical progress and needs, we are at a point in time where bold thinking is more important than ever.

3. Towards Bowes 2092

With 2025 marking the year of our co-founder Joséphine Bowes' bicentenary, we are examining why, and what we do as a museum and how we deliver our ambitions. As we pass the first quarter of the 21st century we are moving from short-term thinking about visitor numbers, finances, and water leaks, to long-term thinking about investment and



impact. We believe that creativity, ambition and risk-taking will provide the conditions for a vibrant and responsive Bowes Museum in 2092, echoing the creativity and ambition with which it was founded two hundred years before.

Towards Bowes 2092 is a two-year transformation project funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund. The project will kickstart the following for both The Bowes Museum, our communities, workforce, the sector and the region:

- Sustainable financial, environmental and technological capabilities – paying The Bowes Museum forward to 2092 and paying it back to the people in our communities.
- Buildings, parkland, collections and facilities that are fit-for-purpose and future-proofed.
- A confident workforce equipped to face the future, with excellent working conditions.
- Audiences and communities who are engaged and excited about our purpose and feel more connected to place, to each other, and to the natural environment.
- A thriving and accessible arts, heritage and cultural landscape that supports community, environmental and economic well-being and positively impacts the region.

This tender is one of five interlinked project workstreams. As such, the successful contractor may need to collaborate with other successful tender providers delivering across project workstreams as well as with our internal staff team and specialist advisory groups.

The interlinked project work streams are as follows:

1. (This work stream.) Research and develop a new Funding and Investment Model that includes new revenue streams, increased endowment, and operational efficiencies for long-term sustainability.
2. Develop a Capital Master Plan, Feasibility Study and Options Appraisal (recently completed and funded by National Highways).
3. Create an Environmental Sustainability Strategy: identifying opportunities for investment in sustainability technologies and practices to support Net-Zero ambitions.
4. Create a Digital Infrastructure Strategy to provide more engaging and accessible experiences and more effective/efficient internal operations.
5. Develop our workforce skills, capacity, and confidence to achieve our future vision.



4. Scope of work

The Bowes Museum is looking to engage an individual or organisational partner who will work with us to develop and enhance our Funding and Investment Model, to:

- Maximise investment income.
- Stabilise our core funding.
- Identify strategies and opportunities for new funding and income, including philanthropy.
- Realise the potential of our cultural and physical assets.
- Explore efficiencies in our working processes.

5. Skills and Expertise Required

The partner selected for this project will bring the following:

- Experience and expertise in developing compelling Funding and Investment Strategies for growth and impact, including financial modelling and business plans.
- Understanding of the challenges related to non-profit organisations operating in this time.
- Deep understanding and knowledge of the philanthropy and fundraising landscape, how this is changing and the ability to draw on innovative good practice, locally, nationally and internationally.
- High-quality networks with a willingness to advocate for The Bowes Museum and facilitate positive connections.
- Expertise in creating compelling Business Cases for investment and funding readiness, including producing engaging documents, visuals and presentations to engage stakeholders and funders.
- A track record in supporting organisations navigating change.

6. Project timetable

Closing date for proposals	Thursday 9 April 2026 (5pm)
Discussions with shortlisted individuals or agencies	From w/c 13 April 2026
Contract begins	April/May 2026
Contact ends	October 2026



7. Budget

The budget/fee for this work is up to £25,000 plus VAT with additional allowance for expenses as required.

8. Application Process

Due to the project receiving funding from public bodies, the Client must seek comparative quotations prior to the award of this work to ensure due process and best value. This is an open competitive process led by The Bowes Museum.

Please prepare and submit a single pdf proposal document detailing the following:

- Credentials and details of your experience related to this project, including case study evidence of previous work with outcomes and delivery of similar or relevant contracts over the past five years (1-2 pages).
- Your response on how you will fulfil the brief's requirements (approach and methodology) (1-2 pages).
- Capacity and Resource: Confirmation of capacity to complete the work, including a timeline for key deliverables as well as confirmation of the organisational team members who would be involved, their experience and role and an estimation of the time you anticipate they would spend on the project (1-2 pages).
- Cost breakdown as per the brief, with daily rates (1-2 pages).

Please email your proposal document incorporating a completed Appendix 1, (or any questions before submitting) to Lisa Bell: lisa.bell@thebowesmuseum.org.uk

Please title your email as: **your name/ company name, Tender for Funding and Investment Development Partner.**

The closing date and time for the receipt of documents is 5 pm on Thursday 9 April 2026. We will not consider any proposals received after this time.

All proposals will be evaluated using a two-stage process:

- An award analysis based on the information provided in tables 8A and 8B. In awarding the contract, the following criteria will be used: Price-30%, Quality-70%

Completion of Appendix 1. Pass/Fail



8A –Quality Aspect	Weighting
Details of your experience related to this project, including evidence of previous work and delivering similar or relevant contracts over the past five years.	30
Your response on how you will fulfil the brief’s requirements (approach and methodology).	20
Capacity and Resource: Confirmation of capacity to complete the work, including a timeline for key deliverables. Confirmation of the organisational team members who would be involved an estimation of the time you anticipate they would spend on the project.	20
Quality Total	70 %
Price Aspect	
Cost breakdown per the brief, with daily rates	30
Price Total	30 %
Total Quality + Price	100 %

As the predetermined quality-price split for each project is 70/30, the highest score is allocated the maximum, with the other quotations receiving a pro-rata score reflecting their lower scores. The quality and price scores are then combined to determine the overall score.

We reserve the right to invite shortlisted applicants to a face-to-face clarification interview. The interviews will clarify the panel’s understanding of the tenderer’s application.

