

The Blagrave Trust

Invitation to Tender (ITT) for the Provision of Auditing services

September 2024

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Instructions

You are invited by The Blaggrave Trust to submit a tender for our external audit contract.

Please note:

1. The objective of this tender is to identify the proposal which offers the most robust service, value for money and best aligned to Blaggrave's mission. Tenders will be evaluated as detailed in this document.
2. This contract is for the provision of external audit for three years including the current financial year, which ends on the 31st of December 2024.
3. Please submit tenders via email to geraldine.warren@blagravetrust.org
4. Tenders must be submitted by **5pm on Thursday the 24th of October 2024**. Late tender bids will not be considered.

If you require this document in an alternative format, please email
geraldine.warren@blagravetrust.org

Introduction

The Blaggrave Board of Trustees are seeking to appoint external auditors for the provision of Financial Audit related services for the period of three years commencing with the current financial year which ends on the 31st of December 2024, with an option for two further one-year extensions subject to an annual review of performance and costs.

About The Blaggrave Trust

Blaggrave is a Charity Incorporated Organisation (CIO) dedicated to serving young people who are challenging and experiencing injustice in their individual lives and within society. We hold investments of c. £40 million, which along with other income sources, funds all the work we do including grant-making. We fund work nationally, as well as having a specific focus on several counties in the Southeast of England.

Our mission is to promote and empower young people as powerful forces for change, and support work that ensures their voices are heard in matters that affect them. We do this primarily by providing grants to organisations working with young people, influencing youth policy alongside them and investing directly in young changemakers. We also increasingly act as a facilitator and agent for change, bringing groups of young people and partners together to explore, share and learn together.

You can read our full 2022 – 2026 strategy [here](#).

What we are looking for

We are an ambitious, agile, collaborative, and passionate organisation. Our focus and direction are increasingly driven by what the young people we are here to serve prioritise and we are working to develop ways of being accountable to those young people. Our work is underpinned by strong values, including being intentional in the use of all our resources in pursuit of our mission, and inclusive and equitable, bringing diverse people together to redress power imbalances.

Over the last 10 years Blaggrave has been on a rapid journey of transformation, and we are committed to continue this journey with an opportunity to now ensure our financial service providers are in line with this mission. Therefore, we are looking to work with an auditor that is values aligned.

We are specifically looking for an organisation that:

- Shares Blaggrave's commitment to utilising our resources to tackle climate change and reduce our environmental impact.
- Takes an anti-oppressive approach - treating everyone fairly, and practice transparency - as an employer.
- Blaggrave is a Real Living Wage employer, meaning we pay the Real Living Wage. We would expect this or a similar commitment from our auditors.

External Audit Tender Process

The purpose of this Invitation to Tender is to invite proposals for the provision of Audit and related services for the Blaggrave Trust.

1. Instructions to Tenderers

Tender submissions should be completed in full and returned by 5pm on Thursday the 24th of October 2024.

Prices quoted should exclude VAT but must indicate clearly where VAT is applicable.

You should submit your offer based on the specifications and service requirements detailed in this document.

You will be required to report on the financial statements of the charity in accordance with the UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice and the requirements of the Charity Commission.

You will be required to carry out whatever examination of the statements and supporting records and control systems are necessary to reach an opinion on the statements.

From time to time, you may be required to provide additional services beyond the scope of the annual audit.

The engagement partner will be required to present the audit findings at an annual Trustee Board meeting in June (exact date tbc).

2. Conditions of Tender

Your tender is to be made strictly in accordance with the requirements of this Invitation to Tender. The proposal document and any information provided in relation to this exercise will be treated in the strictest confidence by both parties.

Blaggrave will not be responsible for any costs incurred or in connection with the preparation of the tender.

Blaggrave will evaluate the tender against a pre-determined set of criteria and will not award on price alone.

3. Treatment of Tender

Any contract arising from this Invitation to Tender will be awarded to the Tenderer who submits the economically and ethically most advantageous offer that best fulfils the criteria specified. Tenders will be evaluated against the criteria detailed and questions asked within section 5 of this document.

Following evaluation, a shortlist of Tenderers may be required to attend a virtual interview. However, Blaggrave reserves the right to appoint based on proposals alone.

Blaggrave is seeking to ensure that its audit arrangements are maintained at the best possible standards whilst achieving good value for money.

The successful Tenderer will be expected to provide regular progress reports on work being undertaken for the organisation and/or any other accounting or charitable issues that may be relevant for our organisation.

All questions relating to this tender should be sent to Geraldine Warren at geraldine.warren@blagravetrust.org

4. Tender Proposal

Your proposal should include an outline of your organisation, size and registrations with relevant bodies.

You will need to describe your approach to developing an audit plan, strategy and the timeframe required. Including how you deal with the matters of audit scope and materiality; and carry out the reporting arrangement.

Your proposal should describe how you identify and respond to critical audit issues.

The tenderer should identify the partner and manager who will be responsible for the external audit work together with details of their relevant experience, qualifications, identify how much of their time we will receive and how they will communicate with Blaggrave and coordinate the audit process

Your proposal should include endorsements from two previous/current clients and their details to allow Blaggrave to follow up requesting references if required.

Your proposal should include a clear detail of the fees and rates applicable for your service in relation to the annual audit and whether these fees will be fixed, and if not, how will any year-on-year increases be implemented e.g. linked to CPI. Also include information on additional work that may be required above the core requirement – please give examples where this may be necessary and the additional rates that would be used.

5. Criteria and Questions

The selection of the successful Tenderer will be based at the sole discretion of Blaggrave, based on the responses to the above points and the following criteria and questions:

Essential Criteria:

- Understanding of the organisation, particularly auditing and Charity reporting consistent with SORP requirements
- Demonstration of areas of expertise and experience that your company possess
- Quality and experience of Audit Team
- Quality assurance arrangements
- Provision of any additional services which may relate to Blaggrave
- Arrangements for resolution of disputes and handling of complaints
- Approach to conflicts of interests
- Rates and charges
- Being a Real Living Wage Employer or similar commitment

Questions:

In addition to the above criteria, please provide responses to the following two questions:

1. Blaggrave is committed to utilising our resources to tackle climate change and reduce our environmental impact. How is your organisation responding to the climate crisis?
2. Blaggrave takes an anti-oppressive approach – treating everyone fairly, and practicing transparency – how would you as an organisation demonstrate you operate in an anti-oppressive way?

Timetable

- **24th of October:** Written proposals must be received by 5pm.
- Evaluation and shortlisting will be completed by Blaggrave.
- **Week commencing the 4th of November:** If required, presentations from the shortlisted firms will take place.
- **20th of November:** A report will be presented, and recommendations given to the Board of Trustees for the appointment of the successful firm on.
- **22nd of November:** The successful Tenderer will be formally notified.
- **Week commencing 9th of December:** Introductions meeting.