



BRIEF FOR A CONSULTANT TO EVALUATE THE GROW SAFE ACCESS PROJECT

The Association of Independent Museums (AIM) is looking for an Evaluation Consultant to undertake a thorough evaluation of the Safe Access Project. The project has recently commenced and AIM would like an Evaluator to write and implement an Evaluation Plan and framework, provide interim reporting and write a final Evaluation Report; to capture the learning, successes and impact of Grow Safe Access, to inform the production of the project's resources and outputs, and to also provide insight for the development of future projects of this nature.

INTRODUCTION TO AIM

AIM is a thriving UK museum membership organisation with over 1,000 museum members. We represent a wide range of the UK's museum and heritage organisations, from some of the largest attractions in the country to small, grassroots heritage organisations across a huge range of subject areas and localities. AIM helps heritage organisations prosper. We believe that museums must grow to fulfil their purpose and demonstrate the relevance of heritage to everyone.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Safe Access is an inclusion-focussed project funded by the Heritage Innovation Fund, created by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). Having completed the 'Explore' and 'Test' phases, and having moved from Cornwall Museums Partnership (now closed) to the Association of Independent Museums (AIM) during the second phase, we are now working on a two-year £250k programme aimed at iterating and improving wellbeing in heritage settings for diverse people engaging with sensitive collections and stories.

We want museums and heritage organisations to be able to support everyone who engages with their collections and exhibitions: workforce, volunteers, partners, local communities and visitors. During the Grow phase, the Safe Access programme will:

- Build a community of museums and heritage organisations determined to embed wellbeing-focussed and trauma-informed approaches in all aspects of their working practices and programming
- Develop a resource for organisations to improve how people from marginalised communities can engage with collections, covering culture change, good working practices with communities and freelancers, and sector-wide actions.

We will enable approx. 12 museums and heritage organisations to participate in two Pilot Cohorts to test out the Wellbeing Framework, and work towards embedding a Trauma Informed Approach. The 'selection' of these organisations will be based on their level of

interest in experimenting with ways to improve wellbeing and developing safer approaches to working with marginalised communities and people with under-represented perspectives and stories.

Being steered by the draft Wellbeing Framework's principles and themes, the Peer Cohort organisations will initiate a series of interventions and receive specialist support to best meet their and their communities' needs. To support this work, they will each receive small implementation funds.

We will be developing a capacity-building and workforce development programme for the two Pilot Cohorts, to provide specialist guidance, regular mentoring, as well as peer-learning and sharing; building on the capacity-building approach of the AIM grant programmes New Stories, New Audiences (NLHF-funded), Re:Collections (Welsh Government), and Connected Communities (Department for Culture, Media and Sport via Arts Council England).

This Peer Learning & Support Programme will be developed and managed by freelance Cohort Facilitators (who have recently been appointed). Whilst the majority of the Learning & Support Programme's activities will be held online, we are aiming to hold a residential event in the second year of the project to bring together all participating organisations.

As well as helping the Pilot Cohort organisations to engage reflectively in this work and deliver to their developmental needs in line with Safe Access, the Peer Cohort Learning & Support Programme is intended to create a core network of supporters to help spread Safe Access approaches across the sector through their practice and advocacy, both during and beyond the programme.

Taking an agile and iterative approach, we will be using the Pilot Cohorts' reflections and experiences of using the draft Wellbeing Framework to further develop the content. And, in the last stage of the phase, we will develop a series of learning resources and potentially a digital course to more widely share the Wellbeing Framework as well as the project's broader outputs and approaches.

PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

Our aims and objectives for the evaluation are to assess the effectiveness and impact of the Safe Access programme, focusing on the following key areas:

- The development and implementation of the Wellbeing Framework
- The effectiveness of the Wellbeing Framework and the adoption of a Trauma Informed Approach in participating organisations
- The effectiveness and impact of the capacity-building and workforce development programme on participating organisations
- The extent of positive change made at organisations that has resulted in improvements for diverse workforce, volunteers, community groups and visitors.

We therefore want the evaluation to:

- **Provide key insights & reflections:** Gather and present regular reflective analyses to inform the iterative development of the Wellbeing Framework

- **Assess the implementation of the project's outputs:** Evaluate how well and to what extent the Wellbeing Framework and Trauma Informed Approach have been integrated into the participating organisations.
- **Measure impact:** Determine the impact of the programme on the wellbeing, knowledge/understanding and working practices of the participating organisations.
- **Identify best practices:** Highlight successful strategies and practices that can be replicated across the sector.
- **Provide recommendations:** Offer actionable recommendations for further development of the project and its various elements.

EVALUATION APPROACH & DELIVERABLES

We are looking for a consultant (or team of consultants) to undertake an evaluation of the programme in line with the details provided above. They will be expected to deliver the following:

1. **Evaluation Plan/Framework:** Outlining the planned methodology and timeline, as well as any necessary tools that can be implemented by AIM and the participating cohort organisations to collect data
2. **Regular updates:** Providing details of progress and preliminary findings at critical points of the project
3. **Interim Evaluation Report:** To provide detailed analyses, summaries and recommendations for the iterative development of the Wellbeing Framework
4. **Final Evaluation Report:** Summarising the findings, impacts, conclusions and recommendations
5. **Presentation:** A summary presentation of the evaluation findings to key stakeholders

(Please note: the Freelance Safe Access Project Manager will be available to collect and collate evaluation data, and to carry out additional evaluation activities, if and as required, throughout the lifecycle of the project.)

The Safe Access Project has collaboration, wellbeing and inclusion at its core and we would like these values to be embedded within the Evaluation Plan and the methods employed. With multiple organisations participating in this project, we would ideally like for the appointed Evaluator to support these organisations in designing their own evaluation activities for gathering feedback from their stakeholders about the initiatives they will be developing.

In addition, we would like the appointed consultant(s) to consider how the Evaluation Plan can embed the Creative Health Quality Framework and the Centre for Cultural Value's Evaluation Principles.

As such, we will be looking for an evaluation approach that is participatory, inclusive, iterative and that will ensure the voices of all stakeholders are considered and heard.

TIMELINE

We would like for the evaluation to be conducted across the duration of the Grow phase, with intended key milestones as follows:

June 2025	Inception phase: including initial meetings with the Project Team and development of the Evaluation Plan
June/July 2025	Evaluation Plan written and subsequently signed-off by AIM
June/July 2025 - April 2026	Evaluation Plan implemented: data collection, collation and analysis
April 2026	Interim Report delivered
April - October 2026	Continued data collection, analysis and light-touch reporting
November 2026	Final Evaluation Plan delivered and presented

REQUIRED EXPERIENCE

The ideal Evaluator for this project will have:

- Proven experience in evaluating heritage and/or cultural projects.
- Expertise in or understanding of wellbeing and trauma-informed approaches.
- Strong qualitative and quantitative research skills.
- Excellent communication and report-writing abilities.
- Familiarity with the Creative Health Quality Framework and Cultural Value Evaluation Principles.

PROJECT VALUE

This is a competitive quote based on the submission of a project proposal that can be fully delivered within the allocated budget to include all expenses, materials and VAT. The schedule for payment will be agreed at an initiation meeting. Phased payments are anticipated.

The indicative budget available for this work is £16,000.

PROCUREMENT PROCESS & TIMELINE

If you are interested in tendering for the evaluation of this project, please submit your application by emailing the following documents to jenna.marrion@aim-museums.co.uk

- A covering letter that outlines your suitability for the role
- A proposal of your suggested methodology and considerations for this project (maximum one page)
- A budget breakdown that provides the daily rates of each team members' expenses and if VAT is applicable.

- The contact details of two referees who can be contacted to confirm the consultants' expertise and experience.
- Examples of previous evaluation reports that you have produced

All applications should be submitted by 5pm on 19th May 2025.

We will be shortlisting submissions as soon as possible thereafter and should we wish to invite shortlisted candidates to interview, this would be on either 22nd or 23rd May.

We will notify all applicants of the outcome of their tenders by 26th May.

We would like to award the tender and for the successful Evaluator to be engaged in the project by Friday 6th June 2025.

If you would like to ask any questions or discuss the project, please contact the Safe Access Project Manager, Jenna Marrion, on jenna.marrion@aim-museums.co.uk / 07867 754344.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The Creative Health Quality Framework

The Creative Health Quality Framework provides a comprehensive set of principles and guidelines to ensure high-quality, effective, and safe delivery of creative and cultural initiatives that are aimed at supporting health and wellbeing. We adopted this Framework to guide our work in the Test Phase of Safe Access and our intention is to continue with implementing the methodology in the delivery of Grow Safe Access.

The following bullets summarise our interpretation of where it fits within our project. These are the elements that we would like to be considered within the Evaluation Plan and, where relevant, incorporated in the evaluation methods:

Person-centred Approach

- **Tailoring to individual needs:** Ensure that the project is adaptable to the preferences, strengths, and abilities of participants
- **Empathy & respect:** Foster an environment of understanding and respect for each participant's unique experiences and perspectives

Equity & Inclusion

- **Accessibility:** Make the project accessible to all, including marginalised and underrepresented groups
- **Challenging inequalities:** Actively work to reveal and challenge structural inequities such as racism, ableism, sexism, and economic disparities

Collaboration & Partnership

- **Building strong relationships:** Develop strong partnerships with other organisations, stakeholders, consultants and relevant communities
- **Shared responsibility:** Emphasise collective effort and shared responsibility in achieving the project's goals

Quality & Safety

- **High standards:** Maintain high standards of quality and safety in all aspects of the project
- **Continuous improvement:** Use feedback and evaluation to continuously improve the project and its activities and outcomes

Reflective Practice

- **Learning from experience:** Encourage reflective practice among participants and stakeholders to learn from their experiences
- **Adapting & evolving:** Be open to adapting and evolving the project based on feedback and new insights

Sustainability

- **Long-term impact:** Centring wellbeing and a Trauma Informed practices across whole organisations to create sustainable, long-term culture change
- **Building capacity:** Develop the capacity of the organisation and its staff to continue delivering high-quality inclusive wellbeing initiatives

Evaluation & Evidence

- **Robust evaluation:** Implement a robust Evaluation Plan to measure the effectiveness and impact of the project
- **Evidence-based practice:** Use evidence and data to inform project activities and the iterative development of the Wellbeing Framework and accompanying resources

Creative & Cultural Value

- **Celebrating creativity:** Recognise and celebrate the intrinsic value of creativity and culture in enhancing wellbeing and inclusion
- **Cultural sensitivity:** Ensure that the project is culturally sensitive and relevant to the broad range of intended audiences and community groups

CCV's Evaluation Principles

The Evaluation Principles from the Centre for Cultural Value provide a robust framework for evaluating cultural and wellbeing-focused projects. Here are the key elements that we envisage might be considered within the Evaluation Plan for Grow Safe Access:

Purposeful

- **Clear objectives:** Define clear and specific objectives for the evaluation. Understand what you aim to achieve and why the evaluation is being conducted

- **Alignment with goals:** Ensure that the evaluation aligns with the overall goals and objectives of the project

Inclusive

- **Stakeholder engagement:** Involve a diverse range of stakeholders, including participants, staff, volunteers, and community members, in the evaluation process
- **Equity & accessibility:** Ensure that the evaluation process is accessible and equitable, taking into account the needs and perspectives of all stakeholders

Credible

- **Rigorous methods:** Use rigorous and appropriate methods to collect and analyse data, including both qualitative and quantitative approaches.
- **Transparency:** Be transparent about the evaluation process, methods, and findings; and clearly document and communicate how data will be collected, analysed, and interpreted

Ethical

- **Respect & confidentiality:** Ensure that the evaluation respects the rights and confidentiality of all participants, obtaining informed consent and protecting personal data
- **Integrity:** Conduct the evaluation with integrity, honesty, and respect for all stakeholders

Useful

- **Actionable insights:** Focus on generating actionable insights that can inform the production of project activities and resources, as well as the iterative development of the Wellbeing Framework
- **Timely reporting:** Provide regular, timely and relevant insights to AIM to support ongoing learning and development

Reflective

- **Continuous learning:** Encourage a culture of continuous learning and reflection; presenting the evaluation findings to inform future practice and policy
- **Adaptability:** Be open to being agile and adapting the evaluation approach based on emerging insights and changing contexts

Proportionate

- **Appropriate scope:** Ensure that the scope and scale of the evaluation are appropriate to the size and complexity of Grow Safe Access
- **Resource efficiency:** Use resources efficiently and effectively, balancing the need for thorough evaluation with practical constraints.