



Evaluation Consultant Brief: Emergency Stoneworks Audience Development

Project Title:

Evaluation of Audience Development Programme – Emergency Stonework Project 2025–2026

Commissioning Organisation:

Leeds Castle Foundation

Maidstone, Kent ME17 1PL

Registered Charity No. 268354

Brief for Evaluation Consultant

We seek to appoint an experienced freelance Evaluation Consultant to work with the Leeds Castle team to develop and coordinate the evaluation of all aspects of the Stoneworks Audience Development programme and write the final evaluation plan in line with the guidelines and principles set out by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and the ambitions of Leeds Castle staff, volunteers, and Trustees. We expect the consultant to work closely with the project team, including Leeds Castle staff and volunteers and key external project partners throughout development and evaluation of the project.

During this time, we require the consultant to undertake the following:

- Devise evaluation tools to effectively monitor the project programme and approved purposes in line with the evaluation and monitoring requirements of Leeds Castle and project funders.
- Produce a mid-project evaluation report answering the following questions and provide recommendations for the team to ensure that the project achieves all the outcomes and approved purposes:
 - What has been delivered so far?
 - Who is participating?
 - What is going well?
 - What improvements could be made?
 - What lessons can we learn for the rest of the project?
- Produce a detailed and comprehensive Evaluation Report as part of project completion; this may be submitted to funders and should report against objectives, heritage outcomes and answer the following questions; it should also be a tool to help Leeds Castle with future development steps:
 - What went well?
 - Who participated?
 - What was challenging?
 - Were there any unexpected outcomes?
 - What lessons have been learned?
- We expect the Consultant to lead on the collection of baseline and summative data using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods

This contract runs from August 2025 – May 2026.

Please note this role will require site visits to Leeds Castle in Kent, including conducting on-site evaluation activities.

1. Background

Leeds Castle is undertaking a major conservation initiative – the Emergency Stonework Repairs Project (Oct 2025 – April 2026) – to address critical structural issues on the South West and West elevations of the Castle. Alongside essential conservation work, the project includes a comprehensive audience development programme which aims to:

- Enhance public awareness and understanding of Leeds Castle’s charitable activities
- Raise awareness of Leeds Castle’s work to conserve the castle for future generations
- Inform and engage Day Visitors, special groups (including schools) and online audiences about the nature of the work undertaken through enjoyable and inspiring activities, content and campaigns
- Provide opportunities for visitors, including special groups, to take part in demonstrations and other hands-on activities
- Create new volunteering opportunities
- Establish public access to the Armand-Albert Rateau archive

The Audience Development programme activities include:

- Day Visitor Engagement including on-site and online interpretation, multimedia content, talks and tours
- Community Engagement including hands-on workshops and open days, talks and tours
- Schools and Learning including learning resources and on-site activities/workshops
- Events and Marketing including ancillary programming and online engagement
- Digitisation and Presentation including on-site and online interpretation

The target audiences for the engagement programme include Day Visitors, schools (primary and secondary), local/regional community-based organisations, and workshop/open day participants.

This evaluation will assess the effectiveness and impact of the audience development activities and measure how the project has influenced public perception of Leeds Castle as a charity delivering public benefit.

2. Purpose of the Evaluation

The evaluation will:

- Collect quantitative and qualitative data to assess the reach, quality, and outcomes of the audience development activities.
- Evaluate the extent to which the project improved public understanding of Leeds Castle’s charitable role.
- Provide evidence of impact to inform future programming and support funding applications.
- Offer recommendations for enhancing future audience engagement and interpretation strategies.

3. Scope of Work

The evaluation will cover:

Audience Development Activities

- “Conservation in Action” interpretation (internal and external, including multimedia).
- Heritage Skills Open Days for schools, community groups, and the public.
- Staff and volunteer training to enhance visitor engagement.
- Digitisation and interpretation of the AA Rateau Archive.
- Development and delivery of new volunteer-led “Design Insight” talks

- Recruitment of new volunteers.
- Accessibility improvements, including the upgraded platform lift and sensory packs.

Public Perception and Charitable Impact

- Changes in visitor awareness and understanding of Leeds Castle as a charity.
- Perceived public benefit from the project (e.g. access, education, wellbeing).
- Impact on community groups (e.g. Kent Young Carers, MIND, 21 Together).
- Visitor feedback on interpretation and engagement activities.

4. Key Evaluation Questions

- To what extent did the audience development activities meet their intended objectives?
- How effective were the activities in engaging new and existing audiences?
- What was the quality and accessibility of the interpretation and engagement materials?
- How did the project influence public perception of Leeds Castle as a charitable organisation?
- What were the outcomes for participating community groups and schools?
- What lessons can be learned for future audience development and interpretation?

5. Methodology

Working in collaboration with the Emergency Stonework Project Team, the consultant is expected to propose a mixed-methods approach, which may include:

- Support the development of user-friendly tools and materials to help Leeds Castle staff and project partners embed evaluation into their activity.
- Surveys of visitors, volunteers, and community participants.
- Focus groups or in-depth interviews with key stakeholders.
- Analysis of digital engagement metrics
- Observation and feedback from Open Days or other planned activities
- Review of internal data and reports (e.g. visitor numbers, volunteer recruitment).

6. Deliverables

- Evaluation Framework and Delivery Plan (including methodology and timeline), developed in close collaboration with the Leeds Castle team
- Regular updates to the project team. The frequency of these will be agreed on appointment and in line with project progress.
- Training for any staff/volunteers supporting visitor engagement with evaluation
- Interim Report (progress update and early findings)
- Final Evaluation Report (including executive summary, findings, conclusions, and recommendations)
- Presentation of Findings to Leeds Castle Foundation staff and stakeholders

7. Delivery Timeline

Start Date: TBC July/August 2025

Finalised evaluation framework and delivery plan: September 2025

Interim Report: December 2025

Final Report Due: May 2026

8. Management of the Commission

- Day-to-day management of the commission rests with the Project Co-ordinator.
- Accountability will be to the Emergency Stoneworks Project Board

9. Budget

Please provide a detailed budget proposal, including daily rates, travel, and any additional costs excluding VAT.
A TOTAL fee of £4,000 + VAT is available for this project (inc. all professional fees and expenses).

10. Tender Requirements and Consultant Profile

Tenders should be submitted in electronic format (ie. MS Word/PDF) and include the following:

- Introduction
- Proposed methodology and approach, including timescale, key development and delivery milestones
- Work programme
- Details of comparable experience
- CV(s) for key personnel
- A fixed-price quote, exclusive of VAT, including a breakdown of costs. Quotes should include travel, materials, expenses, etc.
- Confirmation that the consultant/agency has the capacity to complete the work within the brief and to the agreed timescale;
- Copies of Insurance Certificates for Professional Indemnity, Public Liability, and Employer's Liability (Employer's Liability not applicable to sole traders)
- Three references.

Tenders will be assessed based on the following breakdown:

- Proven experience of similar work in a similar context, and demonstrable success at that level (20%) – please note this will represent the first sift and tenderers not meeting this requirement will not progress further.
- understanding of the brief, assessment of key issues and how objectives will be met (30%)
- methodology (30%)
- value for money/tender price (20%)

We are seeking an experienced evaluator with:

- Proven track record in evaluating the delivery of heritage or cultural projects, including audience consultation.
- Undertaking formative and summative evaluation of varied project activity including evaluating community engagement programmes
- Experience of leading on evaluation involving designing programmes, models and tools within the heritage sector
- Experience of monitoring and evaluating outcomes
- Experience in audience development and public engagement evaluation.
- Strong qualitative and quantitative research skills.
- Understanding of accessibility and inclusion in heritage settings.

11. Submission

Applications from freelance consultants and consultancies are welcome. All applicants for undertaking this piece of work are required to submit a project proposal by 11.59pm on 20 July to dominiquebouchard@leeds-castle.co.uk.

The shortlisted candidates will be asked to attend an interview expected on 7/8 August. If candidates cannot make either of the interview dates they should state so in their submission.

- Deadline for tender submissions 20 July 2025 at 11.59pm
- Shortlisting submissions 21 July to 25 July 2025
- Interview dates 7 and/or 8 August 2025
- Successful consultant notified week beginning 11 August 2025
- Contract begins from 18 August 2025
- The principal contact for the tender process will be Dr Dominique Bouchard Heritage and Engagement Director
- Tenders must be marked 'Leeds Castle Emergency Stoneworks – Evaluation Plan Consultant Tender.'
- Short-listed candidates may be invited to attend an interview process.