

# Northern Roots

Marketing Consultancy Brief

Funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund

**NORTHERN  
ROOTS**



## **Welcome to Northern Roots**

**We're creating the UK's largest urban farm and eco-park in the heart of Oldham, Greater Manchester, including a £12million Visitor and Skills Centre, opening in 2026. We're a unique new community asset and visitor destination, already benefitting people, planet and place.**

We're harnessing the potential of 160 acres of urban green space, next to some of the most deprived communities in England. Formerly the site of cotton mills, a coal mine, and the Council tip, by 2030 we will be the UK's largest urban farm and eco park.

We're transforming neglected land, connecting communities and creating opportunities for all to grow. It's the UK's most ambitious project to bring contaminated urban green space back into use as a community asset.

The people on our doorstep will benefit from heritage, nature, creativity, learning, leisure and growing to improve their health, wellbeing and livelihoods. Landscape, water and wildlife will be revitalised - to flourish once again.

It's a bold and innovative plan, with a sustainable model to engage and support the most deprived in our communities.



**Now we need support to develop a better understanding of our audiences and potential audiences (including segmentation), and a Marketing Plan to maximise opportunities to attract local audiences and regional tourist visitors in the run up to the opening of our Visitor Centre in 2026. This work will dovetail with an Interpretation Strategy designed to help engage our communities effectively in the heritage of our site, including nature.**

**The work forms part of a project supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund to help us build our organisational sustainability to better save heritage, protect the environment, and engage communities in our heritage.**

**The role:**

We are looking for a specialist marketing consultant or agency with experience in market and audience analysis/segmentation, and in developing marketing plans for the cultural, heritage and tourism sectors, ideally with a good knowledge of the North West regional market.

They will undertake Market/Audience Analysis and deliver a Marketing Plan which can be used effectively by our modest communications staff once the contract is complete. As such, we expect the consultant to work closely with our staff as the analysis and plan develops, so that staff are confident to deliver the plan in practice.

The successful candidate will be able confidently to get under the skin of our audiences, and then plan effective marketing strategies for a wide range of visitors from families arriving on foot and looking to keep the kids occupied for a few hours at low or no cost, to tourists expecting a memorable day out to tell their friends about, and with money to spend on high quality experiences, food, drink and locally made goods to take home.

We are also keen to attract school and college groups, and clubs and societies (e.g. scouts, guides, ramblers, history and conservation societies, W3A and WI groups etc).

Many of our audiences will be, or could be, participants in arts, heritage, sporting or environmental activities.

The consultant will need to work in parallel with an Interpretation Planning consultant whose work will focus on how to engage audiences and participants in all aspects of Northern Roots, once they are on the site, and also in community locations across Oldham. The Interpretation Planning consultant will work closely with our Citizen Researchers, Citizen Rangers and Heritage Champions, who represent the needs and interests of the diverse audiences on our doorstep, many of whom live in challenging circumstances.

**Deliverables:**

The selected consultant will be responsible for delivering Market/Audience Analysis, and a Marketing Plan to cover the period from March 2026 in detail (encompassing the opening of our Visitor Centre in summer 2026), with an outline marketing strategy to March 2028.

Outputs must include the following:

1. *Internal and External Analysis, to include:*

- Local and regional context including competitor analysis
- Potential market size and catchment areas/travel times

2. *Situational analysis, to include:*

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Opportunities
- Threats

3. *The Northern Roots offer:*

- Product
- Price
- Place
- Promotion

4. *Marketing Plan & Strategy, to include:*

- Audience/participant segmentation of all potential local and tourist audiences using psychographic and demographic methodology (e.g. Audience Spectrum or similar)
- Key target audiences and participants (segments)
- Visitor targets and objectives, including repeat visit potential

- Promotion strategy and two-year action plans, timetables and budgets, for each segment, including barriers/needs (including accessibility needs), channels, appropriate product and price, positioning and messaging.
- Marketing campaign plans including timetables and budgets, for our tentpole events including Illuminate (February), Visitor Centre opening (May/June) and HarvestFest (September).
- Monitoring and evaluation guidance

## **Methodology**

We envisage the work falling into two main periods, with an early phase to carry out situational and audience analysis, and a later phase to develop the marketing plan and strategy. Between these two phases our Creative Producer, Learning Manager, Rangers, Growers, Interpretation consultant, Citizen Researchers, Citizen Rangers and Heritage Champions will be developing and trialling a variety of pilot activities, in part informed by the situational and audience analysis. The learnings from these pilot activities will then be made available to the Marketing Consultant to help inform the Marketing Strategy and Plan.

The consultant will be expected to use a combination of desk and field research as required. In support Northern Roots will provide:

- Access to our CEO, staff, board, Community Champions, and key partners to inform and sense check the plan. This will include an opportunity to join a workshop with the staff of Marketing Manchester who can provide considerable insights into the tourism and conferencing market within, and to, Greater Manchester.
- Access to our Evaluation Consultant and team of Citizen Researchers, who can carry out quantitative and qualitative research with local audiences to help inform the plan.
- Some access to our social media audiences to test proposals or plans.
- Existing research and documents including a recent Mosaic segmentation of local and regional visitors to Oldham Town Centre, our Business Plan, Visitor Centre plans, recent visitor and engagement survey (by University of Salford), evaluations from previous tentpole events, recent rebranding exercise including audience personas, and ongoing results of our Community Champions' consultation to help inform the work.

While much of the work can be undertaken off site, we would expect the consultant to visit the Northern Roots site at contract start, and to present the final report (see below). It may be necessary to undertake further visits to site to liaise with the Citizen Researchers, Interpretation Planning consultant and Northern Roots staff and stakeholders during the contract period.

## **Final report**

The Market/Audience Analysis and Marketing Plan should be presented as a two separate but linked written reports, with a face to face presentation to key staff and stakeholders. The Market/Audience Analysis should be completed by May 2025 and the Marketing Plan by January 2026.

It should be a working document which will be easily accessible and straightforward to implement by staff who are not necessarily marketing specialists.

## **Contract management:**

The contractor will report to Kimo Morrison, Communications, Arts and Engagement Lead, Northern Roots.

The contract will start in March 2025 and must be completed by February 2026.

The fee for the contract is £25,000 inclusive of any VAT or expenses.

The fees will be paid as follows:

- 25% on exchange of contracts and start up meeting
- 40% on submission of Market/Audience Analysis report
- 35% on submission of final Marketing Plan and presentation.

As this contract is funded through a grant from National Heritage Lottery Fund, it is essential that it is completed on time. No budget increase will be possible.

Failure to complete the contract and submit the final report by the specified date will result in a reduction in the final instalment.

### How to Apply

Your proposal should provide the following information to Northern Roots at [info@northern-roots.uk](mailto:info@northern-roots.uk) by **10am, Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January 2025**. Before writing your application, please see the award criteria below and incorporate them into your answers.

- 1) Details of staff allocated to the project, the project manager / lead contact should be identified. A brief CV, or the CVs of key personnel who would be working on the project, which sets out your skills and experience relevant to this role (maximum 2 x A4 pages or 4 x A4 pages for a partnership/agency).
- 2) An outline of the internal responsibilities and liaisons, the allocation of days between members of the team, and the daily charging rate of individual staff involved.
- 3) At least three examples of previous work demonstrating how you have successfully delivered a similar project (maximum 4 x A4 pages).
- 4) Explain how you would approach the brief and the key activities and milestones you envisage during the contract period, including working with an Interpretation Planning consultant, Evaluation consultant and Northern Roots staff.
- 5) An overall cost for the work, broken down by milestones.
- 6) Names, organisations and contact details of at least two referees who can provide confirmation of your experience and ability to deliver the brief. Please ensure referees are aware they may be contacted by us prior to the interview date.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an interview at Northern Roots, or online, on **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2025**.

A final decision will be made following interviews, and all shortlisted candidates will be informed by (date TBC).

### Award criteria

Candidates will be assessed against the following criteria:

Criteria	Assessed by	Scoring		Total Marks
<b>Understanding of North West regional tourism context, including outdoor attractions</b>	Written application and interview	Fully meets or exceeds	5	5
		Partially meets	2-4	
		Does not meet/barely meets	0-1	
<b>Understanding of marketing for arts, culture and heritage sector projects</b>	Written application and interview	Fully meets or exceeds	5	5
		Partially meets	2-4	
		Does not meet/barely meets	0-1	
<b>Experience of producing appropriate psychographic segmentation for cultural and heritage audiences</b>	Written application and interview	Fully meets or exceeds	5	5
		Partially meets	2-4	
		Does not meet/barely meets	0-1	
<b>Understanding and experience of marketing to and engagement with local communities</b>	Written application and interview	Fully meets or exceeds	5	5
		Partially meets	2-4	

		Does not meet/barely meets	0-1	
<b>Experience of working or ability to work with an interpretation or other specialist heritage consultant (e.g. curator, archivist, museum etc)</b>	Written application and interview	Fully meets or exceeds	5	5
		Partially meets	2-4	
		Does not meet/barely meets	0-1	
<b>Experience of working or ability to work with non-specialist marketing staff to ensure they understand Market/Audience Analysis and how to implement Marketing Plan</b>	Written application and interview	Fully meets or exceeds	5	5
		Partially meets	2-4	
		Does not meet	0-1	
<b><u>Chartered Institute of Marketing qualified</u></b>	Written application	Chartered Marketer	3	3
		Level 6 or 7 CIM qualification	2	
		Not CIM qualified	0	
<b>TOTAL MARKS</b>				<b>33</b>