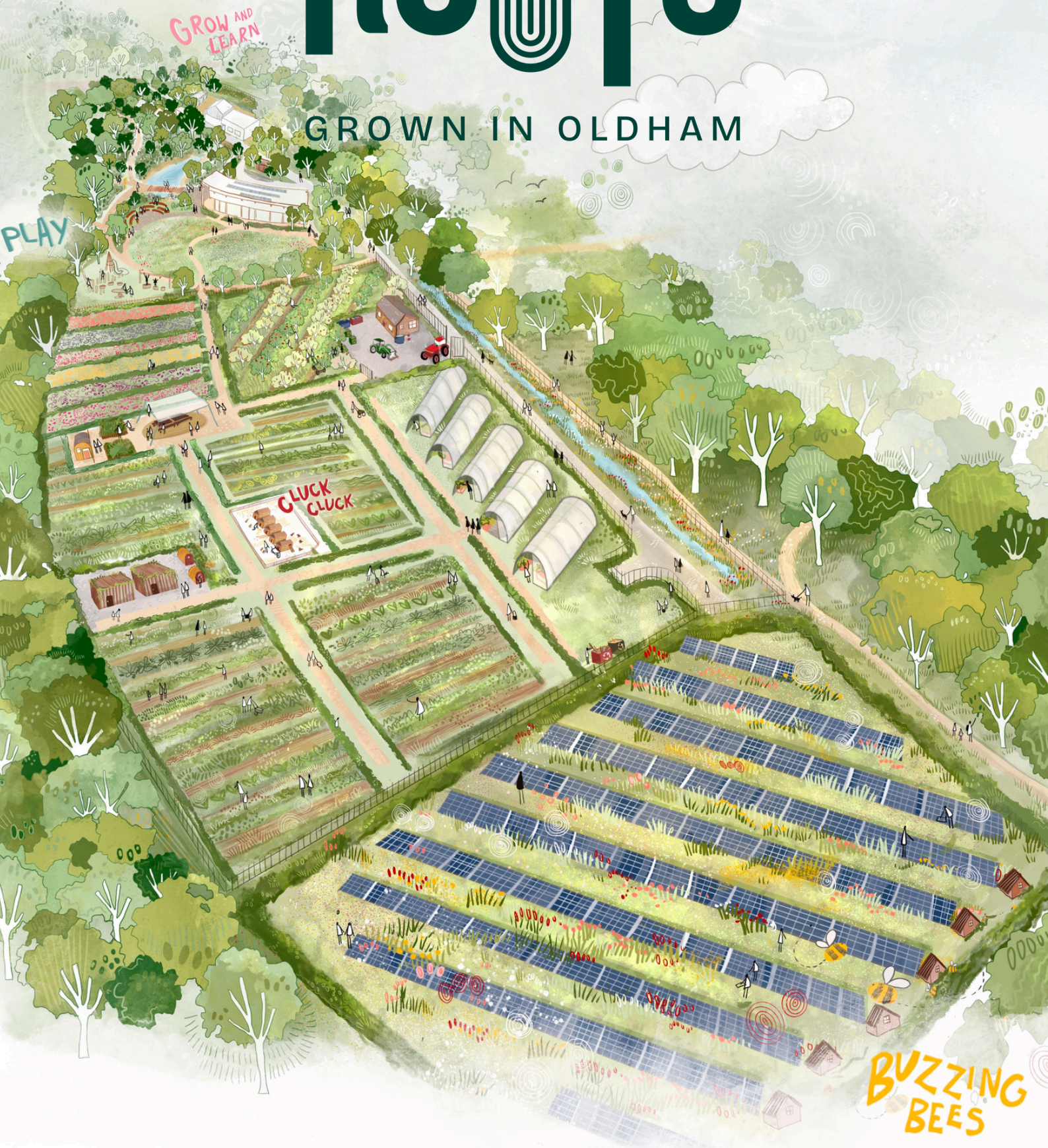


NORTHERN ROOTS

GROWN IN OLDHAM



NORTHERN ROOTS, OLDHAM



Northern Roots is creating the UK's largest urban farm and eco-park on 160-acres of underused green space in the heart of Oldham, Greater Manchester. The first phase includes a £12million Visitor Centre, Forestry Skills Centre, outdoor amphitheatre and four acres of Urban Farm opening in summer 2026.

The Northern Roots charity is developing a **unique new community asset** and **visitor destination**, already benefitting people, planet and place.

Formerly the site of cotton mills, a coal mine, and the Council tip, by 2030 Northern Roots 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 learning, leisure, heritage, creativity, nature 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 better engage our communities and visitors effectively in the heritage of our site, including nature, building on our existing successful Community Champions programme. This work will dovetail with work 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.

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

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW

Visit our website - www.northern-roots.uk



@northernrootscoop



@northernrootsoldham



Northern Roots Urban Farm & Eco-Park

INTERPRETATION CONSULTANCY BRIEF

Beautiful Oldham: Where Next?

The role:

We are looking for a specialist heritage interpretation consultant or agency with experience in working in partnership with communities to **co-produce heritage and site interpretation of all types**, including public activities, physical interpretation, and digital assets. The successful contractor is likely to have experience in working with built, **intangible** and natural heritage. They will work closely with our Heritage Champions, Citizen Researchers and Citizen Rangers, who represent the needs and interests of the diverse audiences on our doorstep, many of whom live in challenging circumstances.

You will work alongside our Heritage Engagement Manager, Creative Strategist, Creative Producer, Learning Manager, Marketing and Evaluation Consultants and partner organisations (e.g. Oldham Heritage, Libraries & Arts) to **develop an effective Interpretation Strategy and Plan**, based on the **heritage stories** which have already been identified as important to local communities by our Heritage Champions and Citizen Researchers. You will also need to liaise with our Rangers, Urban Farm team and Citizen Rangers to **understand the natural heritage of our site** and the work we are doing to record and conserve and enhance it. The final plan will run from Summer 2026 to Winter 2027, encompassing the opportunities afforded by our events and activity programme, as well as the opening of our £12m Visitor Centre in summer 2026.

You will also liaise with our Marketing and Evaluation Consultants to ensure that the heritage interpretation product offer is appropriate for **key target audience segments**.

The final Interpretation Plan will encompass appropriate interpretation methods and action plans for a range of audiences including local people living close to the site in urban Oldham, community groups, clubs and societies, families, school and college students, and tourist visitors. Some interpretation activity may take place off site in community locations such as libraries and community centres.



DELIVERABLES

The selected consultant will be responsible for delivering an Interpretation Strategy, and an Interpretation Plan to cover the period from Summer 2026 to Winter 2027 in detail (encompassing the opening of our Visitor Centre in summer 2026).

Outputs must include the following:



Confirmation of heritage, environmental and project stories to be explored and interpreted.



Documentation of those stories, in a format that can be used by Northern Roots staff to inform design and delivery of interpretation methods and activities. To include sample copywriting for key stories.



Plans for appropriate interpretation methods and activities, including digital, for varied audiences, including local visitors, families, schools, colleges, tourist visitors etc, encompassing built, intangible and natural heritage.



Accessible interpretation guidance.



Plans for future physical interpretation on site (NB: physical interpretation will likely be installed beyond the scope of this project when Northern Roots has a lease for the site in place). To be scoped in the context of wider site signage and wayfinding.



Timetable and action plan.



Budget.



Monitoring and evaluation objectives, guidance and plan.



METHODOLOGY

The consultant will be expected to use a combination of desk research, existing specialist knowledge, and consultation with our staff, Community Champions, and key partners to develop the plan.

We will be able to share existing documents including the evaluations of previous projects and events, Audience and Market Segmentation, Visitor Centre plans, recent visitor and engagement survey (by University of Salford), recent Rebranding exercise, and ongoing results of our Community Champions' consultation etc 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 and other Oldham locations on several occasions to get to know our work, and to liaise with staff and Community Champions.

FINAL REPORT

The Interpretation Plan should be presented as a final written report, with a face to face presentation to key staff, Community Champions, and stakeholders.

It should be a working document which will be easily accessible and straightforward to implement by staff and Community Champions.

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

The contractor will report to Anna da Silva, Chief Executive, Northern Roots.

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

The fee for the contract is **£15,000 inclusive of any VAT or expenses**.

The fees will be paid as follows:

- 25% on exchange of contracts and start up meeting
- 50% on submission of first draft report
- 25% on submission of final report 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 reduction in the final instalment.

HOW TO APPLY

In your proposal, please provide the information set out below in the form of a **Word document** to info@northern-roots.uk. Before writing your application, please see the award criteria below and incorporate them into your answers.

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)

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.

At least **three examples of previous work** demonstrating how you have successfully delivered a similar project (maximum 4 x A4 pages).

Explain how you would approach the brief and the key activities and milestones you envisage during the contract period, including working with Northern Roots staff and consultant team.

An overall cost for the work, broken down by milestones.

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.

The **deadline** for proposals is midnight, **Monday 8th September 2025**. Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an interview at Northern Roots, or online, on Wednesday 17th and Thursday 18th September 2025.

A final decision will be made following interviews, and all shortlisted candidates will be informed by Monday 29th September 2025.



AWARD CRITERIA

Candidates will be assessed against the following criteria:

Criteria	Assessed by	Scoring		Total Marks
Understanding of North West regional/GM community and heritage context, including outdoor/natural heritage.	Written application and interview	Fully meets or exceeds	5	5
		Partially meets	2-4	
		Does not meet/barely meets	0-1	
Understanding of National Lottery Heritage Fund supported heritage interpretation projects	Written application and interview	Fully meets or exceeds	5	5
		Partially meets	2-4	
		Does not meet/barely meets	0-1	
Experience of working in a community-led heritage interpretation context directly with diverse local communities	Written application and interview	Fully meets or exceeds	5	5
		Partially meets	2-4	
		Does not meet/barely meets	0-1	
Understanding and experience of heritage interpretation methods for a range of audiences including schools, families, students, local communities and community groups, and tourist audiences, including digital interpretation	Written application and interview	Fully meets or exceeds	5	5
		Partially meets	2-4	
		Does not meet/barely meets	0-1	
Experience of working or ability to work with a specialist marketing consultant to develop heritage product offers or similar	Written application and interview	Fully meets or exceeds	5	5
		Partially meets	2-4	
		Does not meet/barely meets	0-1	
Experience of working or ability to work with staff and Community Champions so they are fully able to implement Marketing Plan	Written application and interview	Fully meets or exceeds	5	5
		Partially meets	2-4	
		Does not meet	0-1	
Member of appropriate professional organisation e.g. Museums Association, Association for Heritage Interpretation	Written application	Member of professional organisation	3	3
		Not a member of a professional organisation	0	
TOTAL MARKS				33