

# Request for Proposals:

## Experience Audit, Gap Analysis, and Opportunity Assessment

Reference: **ENEE-96FD71**

Issue date: **27/07/2026**

Submission deadline: **19/08/2026**

Indicative budget: Up to £30,000 excluding VAT

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# Introduction and Context

## Introduction

Experience North East England is seeking quotations from suitably experienced consultants, organisations or consortia to undertake a comprehensive North East England Experience Audit, Gap Analysis, and Opportunity Assessment.

The commission will establish a practical evidence base for experience development across North East England and inform Experience North East England's Experience Development Programme. It will also support the new regional visitor-facing brand and website by identifying experiences that are currently bookable, market-ready or campaign-ready, together with near-market opportunities that could be strengthened through targeted intervention

The commission should go beyond a simple audit of attractions. It should identify current and emerging visitor experiences, assess their commercial and digital maturity, understand where they are located, identify gaps in the offer, and recommend where future experience development investment should be targeted.

## About Experience North East England

Experience North East England is the destination marketing agency for North East England, promoting the region as a sustainable world-class destination to visit, meet and invest.

The organisation works with partners across industry, local government and the wider public and private sectors to attract more visitors, investment, innovation and opportunity to the region. Experience North East England builds on the legacy of NewcastleGateshead Initiative and marks a new phase of regional destination development, with a broader remit to support visitor economy growth across North East England.

Experience North East England works closely with the region's Local Visitor Economy Partnerships (LVEPs) and partners, including Visit Northumberland, Visit County Durham, NewcastleGateshead, all seven local authorities, the North East Mayoral Strategic Authority, Newcastle International Airport and visitor economy businesses across the region.

The organisation's work spans destination marketing, experience and product development, travel trade, business events, inward investment, research and intelligence, accessibility, sustainability and strategic partnerships. A central ambition is to support the long-term growth of the North East visitor economy by helping the region attract more domestic and international visitors, increase visitor

spend, encourage longer stays and strengthen the region's reputation as a compelling destination.

## Background & Strategic Context

North East England has an ambition to double the value of its visitor economy by 2035. Achieving this will require a stronger pipeline of authentic, high-quality and bookable visitor experiences that reflect the region's distinctive strengths and appeal to priority domestic and international markets.

Recent work commissioned by Experience North East England and partners has demonstrated that the region has strong underlying assets and business appetite. However, it has also identified recurring challenges around visibility, commercial readiness, online bookability, distribution, travel trade engagement, content creation, marketing capability and regional coordination.

This RFQ is informed by previous and ongoing work, including experience development programmes in outdoor tourism and food and drink, specialist support on online bookability and distribution, business support research, perceptions research, the emerging visitor-facing website, and the commissioned Visitor Economy Spatial Strategy for North East England.

The Spatial Strategy will map visitor economy clusters, gaps, connectivity, accommodation, attractions, mobility, and environmental indicators. This Experience Audit should complement that work by providing a more detailed understanding of the visitor experience offer, especially experiences that are bookable, emerging, commercially viable, or capable of being developed into market-ready products.

## Purpose of the Commission

The purpose of this commission is to establish the first comprehensive regional understanding of North East England's current and potential experiential tourism offer, and to identify the priority opportunities that should guide future investment in experience development.

The findings will inform:

- The future design and delivery of Experience North East England's Experience Development Programme, including potential interventions, support mechanisms and delivery models.
- The new North East England visitor-facing website and bookable experience offer.
- Regional marketing campaigns, PR and content planning.
- Travel trade, business events and incentive travel activity.

- Future discussions with LVEPs, local authorities, funders, sector partners and the wider business support ecosystem.

In a sentence, this commission is intended to provide the evidence, strategic insight, and recommendations required to shape Experience North East England's future Experience Development Programme.

## Project Requirements

### Objectives

The appointed supplier will be required to:

1. Create a comprehensive audit of existing and emerging visitor experiences across North East England.
2. Assess the extent to which those experiences are bookable, paid, free, seasonal, year-round, accessible, campaign-ready and travel trade-ready.
3. Identify where experiences are currently bookable, including direct websites, booking platforms, OTAs, visitor-facing platforms and offline routes.
4. Map experiences against themes, audience segments, geographic areas and their contribution to visitor journeys, sense of place and the distinctiveness of North East England.
5. Identify gaps in the regional experience offer by theme, geography, market, accessibility, seasonality, commercial maturity and digital readiness.
6. Assess where there are strong clusters of visitor experiences and where strong assets exist but bookable product is limited.
7. Identify and prioritise quick wins or near-market opportunities that with support could be made campaign-ready and suitable for future listing / integration into the forthcoming new regional consumer facing website.
8. Identify longer-term transformational opportunities for future experience development.
9. Provide practical, evidence-based recommendations that inform the future design and delivery of Experience North East England's Experience Development Programme, including potential interventions, support models and delivery approaches where appropriate.
10. Ensure the work aligns with ENEE's marketing, travel trade, business events, digital and spatial strategy workstreams.

## Key Research Questions

The following questions are intended to guide the commission and should be used by suppliers to shape their proposed methodology. Suppliers are encouraged to recommend additional lines of enquiry where they believe these would add value.

1. What visitor experiences currently exist across North East England?
2. Which experiences are currently bookable, and where are they bookable?
3. Which experiences are free, paid, seasonal, or year-round?
4. Which experiences are market-ready, campaign-ready, travel trade-ready or suitable for business events and incentive travel, and which could reach those positions with targeted support?
5. Which experiences align most strongly with priority audiences, visitor trends, future growth opportunities and strategic themes?
6. Where are the geographic, thematic, commercial, digital, accessibility and market-readiness gaps?
7. Which experiences could be quickly improved or made bookable with targeted support / what targeted support would bring forward quality bookable experiences quickest?
8. Which thematic areas have strong experience clusters and which areas have strong assets but limited bookable product?
9. Which themes/places should ENEE prioritise through future experience development support, and why?
10. How would you recommend connecting the region's experience offer to the new visitor website.

## What Success Looks Like

The successful completion of this commission will provide Experience North East England with the strategic evidence base required to inform future investment in visitor experience development across the region.

By the conclusion of the project, Experience North East England should have:

- A robust understanding of the current visitor experience offer across North East England, including its breadth, quality, distinctiveness, commercial maturity and distribution.
- A clear picture of the regional offer by geography, theme, audience, season, bookability and route to market.
- A strategic baseline of authentic visitor experiences that can be used to inform future experience development, destination marketing, travel trade, business events and digital activity.

- A clear understanding of where the region's experience offer is currently strongest & distinct, where gaps exist, and where (and when) there are opportunities to develop new visitor experiences aligned with priority themes, seasons, visitor markets and regional ambitions.
- Practical recommendations identifying where future investment in experience development would have the greatest potential to increase visitor numbers, visitor spend, length of stay and regional dispersal.
- A prioritised pipeline of opportunities that can inform the development of Experience North East England's proposed Experience Development Programme.
- A searchable, reusable experience dataset that can be maintained by Experience North East England and used to support future experience development, website content management, destination marketing, business events, and travel trade activity.
- Recommendations that are realistic, evidence-based and deliverable within the context of North East England's visitor economy ambitions.

In summary, success will be measured by the quality of the strategic insight and recommendations produced, rather than the creation of a simple database.

## Expected Methodology

Experience North East England recognises that compiling a comprehensive understanding of the visitor experience offer across North East England will require information from a wide variety of sources and that the availability, consistency and quality of data is likely to vary considerably across the region.

Rather than prescribing a fixed methodology, Experience North East England welcomes proposals that demonstrate an innovative, proportionate and evidence-based approach capable of delivering the objectives of this commission within the available budget and timescales.

Suppliers are encouraged to combine quantitative and qualitative research methods where appropriate and to make effective use of existing evidence, stakeholder engagement and primary research.

As part of their proposal, suppliers should clearly describe:

- The methodology they propose to use.
- The key data sources they intend to utilise.
- How existing research and datasets will be incorporated.
- Their approach to stakeholder engagement.
- Their proposed quality assurance process.

- How findings will be validated.
- Any innovative techniques or technologies that could strengthen the commission.

## Stakeholder Engagement

Experience North East England anticipates that stakeholder engagement will form an important component of this commission and welcomes suppliers' proposals regarding the most appropriate and proportionate approach.

Stakeholders that the appointed supplier may wish to engage with include, but are not limited to:

- LVEPs, Strategic Authority, and Local Authorities
- Tourism businesses & experience providers
- OTAs / Travel Trade

Stakeholder engagement may include, but is not limited to:

- One-to-one interviews.
- Workshops.
- Focus groups.
- Light-touch surveys.
- Existing stakeholder forums.
- Desk research and analysis of existing evidence.

In particular, Experience North East England would welcome approaches that help identify:

- Existing visitor experiences.
- Visitor experiences currently in development.
- Future product development opportunities over the next three years.
- Barriers preventing businesses from developing or commercialising experiences.
- Current challenges relating to online bookability, travel trade readiness and distribution.
- Areas where businesses would benefit from future support or intervention.

Suppliers are encouraged to consider how stakeholder engagement can help provide both a snapshot of the current experience landscape and an understanding of the future pipeline of visitor experiences across North East England.

Experience North East England does not prescribe the level or format of stakeholder engagement but expects suppliers to propose an approach that is proportionate to the objectives, budget and timescales of the commission.



## Risks and Assumptions

Experience North East England recognises that some aspects of this commission may present challenges in relation to data availability, consistency and accessibility.

Suppliers are therefore requested to:

- Identify where they anticipate the greatest challenges in obtaining data or evidence.
- Explain what they believe is realistically achievable within the proposed budget and timescales.
- Clearly identify any assumptions that underpin their proposed methodology.
- Explain how they would seek to address data gaps or limitations.
- Distinguish between findings that are evidence-based and those that rely on professional judgement or estimation.

Experience North East England is not seeking a perfect inventory of every visitor experience within the region. Instead, the ambition is to establish a robust strategic baseline that provides sufficient confidence to inform future investment decisions and the development of the Experience Development Programme.

Suppliers are encouraged to recommend alternative or enhanced approaches where they believe these would add value, provided they remain proportionate to the overall objectives.

## Scope of Work

Experience North East England recognises that suppliers may propose alternative approaches where these better achieve the objectives of the project. The suggestions below should therefore be viewed as indicative rather than prescriptive. Each stage below sets out both the activity involved and the specific deliverable it produces; a summary checklist of all deliverables follows this section.

### Phase 1 – Inception & Methodology

The appointed supplier will be expected to:

- Attend an inception meeting with Experience North East England.
- Review existing research, strategies and commissioned work produced by Experience North East England, LVEPs, local authorities and other relevant stakeholders.
- Refine and agree the project methodology and confirm the proposed approach to stakeholder engagement.

- Confirm project governance, communications and reporting arrangements.
- Identify any anticipated risks, assumptions or data limitations.

## **Deliverable 1 – Project Plan:**

Following the inception meeting, the appointed supplier will be expected to produce a short, refined project plan/inception report to confirm:

- The agreed methodology & approach to stakeholder engagement.
- The timelines, deliverables, and key milestones including a gantt-chart.
- Requirements of Experience North East England.
- Any recommended refinements to the project scope.
- Data sources.
- Any risks & mitigation measures.

The updated project plan will be reviewed and agreed with Experience North East England before substantive project delivery begins.

## **Phase 2 – Experience Audit & Evidence Base**

The supplier should undertake a strategic audit of visitor experiences across North East England. The audit should focus on visitor-facing experiences as defined in Appendix A and should go beyond a simple list of attractions.

In parallel with the Experience Audit, Experience North East England anticipates that stakeholder engagement will play an important role in validating findings and identifying future opportunities for experience development across the region.

Experience North East England welcomes suppliers' proposals regarding the most appropriate and proportionate approach to stakeholder engagement. This may include one-to-one interviews, workshops, focus groups and/or light-touch surveys with stakeholders such as LVEPs, local authorities, tourism businesses and experience providers.

Stakeholder engagement should seek to complement the findings of the audit and may help identify future product development opportunities, barriers to growth, and support requirements.

## **Deliverable 2 – Experience Audit Database:**

The supplier will produce a structured database of visitor experiences across North East England. The database should be developed in a format that can be maintained and updated by Experience North East England following completion of the commission.

The database should include, where appropriate, agreed information relating to:

- Experience name.
- Business/operator.
- Geographic location.
- Local authority area.
- Experience theme(s).
- Experience type.
- Paid or free.
- Bookable or non-bookable.
- Booking platform(s).
- Website.
- Price range.
- Seasonality.
- Capacity (where available).
- Target audience(s).
- Commercial maturity.
- Travel trade, incentive travel, and business events suitability.
- Accessibility & language availability information (where available).
- Existing digital assets (where identifiable).
- Other agreed fields.

Suppliers may recommend additional database fields where these add strategic value.

## Phase 3 - Experience Gap Analysis and Opportunity Assessment

Building on the Audit and stakeholder engagement, the appointed supplier should undertake a strategic assessment of the current visitor experience offer across North East England.

This phase should move beyond simply cataloguing experiences and instead seek to understand the strengths, maturity, distinctiveness and distribution of the current experience landscape, identifying where opportunities exist to strengthen the regional offer and where future experience development activity could have the greatest impact.

The appointed supplier should also consider the role experiences play in expressing local identity, storytelling, sense of place and the distinctiveness of North East England as a visitor destination.

The assessment should be proportionate and designed to identify where targeted intervention could have the greatest impact, rather than providing a detailed accreditation or scoring exercise.

As part of this assessment, Experience North East England is particularly interested in identifying:

- Prioritised quick wins and near-market opportunities, that with targeted support can be made campaign-ready and suitable for future listing or integration on the forthcoming new regional website.
- Opportunities to strengthen existing experiences & create new authentic visitor experiences.
- Priority businesses or sectors that would benefit from future support.
- Opportunities to increase online bookability and distribution.
- Opportunities to better align the regional experience offer with priority visitor markets and the future regional consumer-facing website.
- The extent to which experiences are unique to North East England & the potential of experiences to differentiate North East England within the UK and international visitor economy.

The appointed supplier should identify and prioritise key opportunities arising from the commission, outlining a summary of the opportunity and any suggested interventions that Experience North East England may wish to consider as part of its future Experience Development Programme.

### **Deliverable 3 - Experience Audit, Gap Analysis and Opportunity Assessment Report**

The appointed supplier will produce a strategic report that establishes a robust evidence base for future experience development across North East England.

The report should provide a clear understanding of the current visitor experience landscape and identify the opportunities that have the greatest potential to support future visitor economy growth.

The report should include, as a minimum:

#### **Current Position:**

- Executive summary.
- Overview of the regional visitor experience offer including quality, distinctiveness, and competitive advantage.
- Geographic distribution of experiences.
- Thematic, commercial and digital maturity analysis.

- Bookability and distribution overview.
- Examples of notable, unique, or innovative experiences.
- The role experiences play in expressing local identity, storytelling and sense of place.
- Stakeholder perspectives, including future product development ambitions, common barriers to growth and identified support requirements.

#### Gap Analysis:

- Geographic gaps.
- Audience gaps.
- Thematic gaps.
- Seasonal gaps.
- Commercial & digital gaps.

#### Opportunity Assessment:

- Prioritised quick wins & opportunities
- Medium to longer term opportunities
- Suggested interventions.

Opportunities should, where possible, be prioritised according to strategic fit, visitor demand, economic impact, deliverability and speed to market.

The report should establish the strategic baseline upon which future strategic recommendations are based and provide the evidence, insight and opportunities required to inform the future design and delivery of Experience North East England's Experience Development Programme.

## Phase 4 - Strategic Recommendations

The supplier should provide a concise set of practical, prioritised and evidence-based recommendations arising directly from the findings of the commission.

Recommendations should be designed to inform the future design and delivery of Experience North East England's Experience Development Programme and should remain proportionate to the scope of the commission.

Recommendations may include, where appropriate:

- Suggested interventions to address identified gaps and opportunities.
- Recommendations for future experience development activity.
- Recommendations to improve online bookability and distribution.
- Recommendations to strengthen collaboration and experience packaging.

- Recommendations to improve alignment between experience development, destination marketing, travel trade, business events and the future visitor website.
- Recommendations relating to future support models (e.g. accelerators, incubators, mentoring or specialist support).
- Recommendations for future research and monitoring where appropriate.

## **Deliverable 4 – Strategic Recommendations Report**

The appointed supplier will produce a concise report that translates the findings of the commission into practical recommendations for Experience North East England and its partners.

The report should clearly articulate:

- What Experience North East England should consider doing next.
- Why these actions are recommended.
- Which opportunities should be prioritised.
- Which partners may need to be involved.
- Any dependencies or considerations that should be taken into account.

Recommendations should remain proportionate to the scope of this commission and should not constitute a detailed delivery strategy or implementation plan.

## **Phase 5 & 6 – Final Reporting & Presentation**

Two further deliverables draw together the findings of all preceding phases:

### **Deliverable 5 – Executive Summary**

A concise executive summary should be provided that clearly communicates key findings, strategic conclusions, priority opportunities and recommended next steps. The executive summary should be suitable for sharing with senior stakeholders and decision-makers.

### **Deliverable 6 – Final Presentation & Workshop**

The supplier will present the findings of the commission to Experience North East England and invited stakeholders, summarising the methodology, key findings, gap analysis, priority opportunities, strategic recommendations and suggested next steps.

The appointed supplier should also facilitate a discussion/workshop with attendees. The workshop should be designed to support Experience North East England and its partners in translating the findings of the commission into future experience development activity.

Presentation slides should be provided in editable Microsoft PowerPoint format.

## Optional Enhancements

Experience North East England welcomes additional recommendations from suppliers regarding outputs that could enhance the value of the commission. However, suppliers should clearly distinguish between the core deliverables included within their quotation and any optional enhancements.

## Deliverables / Outputs

A summary checklist of the deliverables set out in the Scope of Work above, for ease of reference. Full specifications for each sit with the corresponding phase.

| # | Deliverable                                                       | Summary                                                                                                                        | Suggested Format                  |
|---|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Project Plan                                                      | Agreed methodology, timeline and risk register, signed off before delivery begins                                              | Word Report                       |
| 2 | Experience Audit Database                                         | Structured, maintainable database of all identified experiences                                                                | Excel / GIS Software              |
| 3 | Experience Audit, Gap Analysis, and Opportunity Assessment Report | Strategic narrative report on the current experience landscape, highlighting gaps and opportunities for experience development | Word                              |
| 4 | Strategic Recommendations Report                                  | Prioritised, evidence-based recommendations for the Experience Development Programme                                           | Word                              |
| 5 | Executive Summary                                                 | Concise summary suitable for senior stakeholders                                                                               | Word / PowerPoint                 |
| 6 | Final Presentation & Workshop                                     | Presentation of findings plus a facilitated workshop on next steps                                                             | PowerPoint / Facilitated Workshop |

# Project Management

## Governance and Reporting

The successful supplier will work closely with Experience North East England throughout the duration of the commission.

The project will be managed by Experience North East England's Senior Manager for Visitor Economy Development, who will act as the primary client contact and be responsible for day-to-day project management.

The appointed supplier will be expected to work collaboratively with Experience North East England and a range of regional stakeholders throughout the commission. This is likely to include representatives from:

- Visit Northumberland - the LVEP for Northumberland.
- Visit County Durham - the LVEP for County Durham.
- NewcastleGateshead LVEP.
- North East Mayoral Strategic Authority.
- Local authority tourism teams.
- Destination marketing, travel trade and business events teams.
- Tourism businesses.
- Other relevant stakeholders identified during the inception phase.

The supplier will be expected to provide regular progress updates throughout the commission and maintain open communication with the project manager. As a minimum, the appointed supplier should allow for:

- An inception meeting to agree the methodology, project plan, timelines, and governance arrangements.
- Regular project update meetings (anticipated monthly, although the appointed supplier may propose an alternative approach).
- Written updates as required.
- Review meetings following completion of key project milestones.
- Presentation of draft findings.



- Presentation of the final report Experience North East England and key regional partners.
- A workshop (following the presentation of results) to discuss recommendations and agree next steps.

Experience North East England encourages suppliers to propose a project management approach that they believe is proportionate to the scale of the commission while ensuring appropriate governance, communication and quality assurance throughout.

## Timeline

The below should be used as a guide only and subjective to change:

| Item                                                             | Date                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| RFQ issued                                                       | 27 <sup>th</sup> July 2026                                    |
| Clarification deadline                                           | 7 <sup>th</sup> August 2026                                   |
| Response to clarification                                        | 12 <sup>th</sup> August 2026                                  |
| Submission deadline                                              | 19 <sup>th</sup> August 2026                                  |
| Interviews                                                       | W/C 24 <sup>th</sup> August 2026                              |
| Appointment                                                      | 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2026                                  |
| Inception                                                        | W/C 31 <sup>st</sup> August 2026                              |
| Inception Report                                                 | W/C 7 <sup>th</sup> September                                 |
| Experience Audit                                                 | W/C 14 <sup>th</sup> September – W/C 12 <sup>th</sup> October |
| Experience Audit, Gap Analysis and Opportunity Assessment Report | W/C 12 <sup>th</sup> October – W/C 2 <sup>nd</sup> November   |
| Strategic Recommendations Report                                 | W/C 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2026                             |
| Summary Report                                                   | W/C 16 <sup>th</sup> November 2026                            |
| Final Workshop                                                   | W/C 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2026                            |

Experience North East England reserves the right to amend the timeline where necessary.

## Budget

Experience North East England has allocated an indicative budget of up to £30,000 (excluding VAT) for this commission.

The available budget should include all consultancy fees, project management, travel, accommodation, stakeholder engagement, workshops, data collection, reporting, presentations and any other associated project costs.

Suppliers should submit:

- A fixed project cost.
- A detailed breakdown of costs by work package or project stage.
- Details of any assumptions made in preparing the quotation.
- Details of any optional or additional services that could be provided should additional budget become available.

Experience North East England is seeking the solution that offers the best overall value, rather than simply the lowest cost.

Suppliers are encouraged to propose innovative or alternative approaches where these provide greater value or improve the quality of the commission, provided these remain proportionate to the overall objectives and available budget.

Experience North East England recognises that suppliers may identify additional opportunities, modules or work packages that could enhance the value of the commission. Suppliers are therefore welcome to propose optional enhancements or supplementary activities, provided these are clearly identified, itemised separately and are not dependent upon the delivery of the core commission.

Payment schedules will be agreed at the inception meeting. As a rule, payments are linked to project milestones.

## Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated against the following weighted criteria. Weights may be adjusted by Experience North East England if required and are given as a guide.

| Criteria                                                               | Weighting |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| Understanding of the Brief & Regional Context                          | 20%       |
| Quality and suitability of methodology and project management approach | 30%       |
| Team & Relevant Experience                                             | 20%       |
| Value for Money                                                        | 15%       |
| Ability to Deliver at Pace                                             | 15%       |

The appointment will be based on the proposal deemed to offer the most advantageous combination of quality, strategic fit, capability and value, and Experience North East England is not obliged to accept any proposal received.

Evaluation will be conducted by a carefully selected procurement evaluation panel consisting of stakeholders from across the region. Shortlisted proposals will be invited to an interview/presentation meeting with the evaluation panel before a final decision is made.

Unsuccessful submissions will be notified following shortlisting, however, depending on the volume of submissions received, Experience North East England may not be in a position to provide feedback to bidders not shortlisted.

All evaluation outcomes and procurement decisions made by Experience North East England shall be final.

## Supplier Requirements & Instructions

### Proposal Requirements

At a minimum proposals should include the following:

- Overview of your organisation
- Relevant experience / case studies of previous and relevant work carried out in the last 5 years
- Details of the project team, including personnel and key roles and responsibilities
- Understanding of the brief and requirements
- Proposed methodology and approach for all phases of the project
- Project timeline and milestones
- Detailed pricing and breakdown of costs
- Risk identification and mitigation
- Two references from comparable clients - Experience North East England should have permission to contact these references

### Supplier Requirements

Suppliers should provide the following with their quotation:

- Full legal and trading name, legal status, registered address, company registration number and VAT number, where applicable.
- Details of any consortium members or subcontractors involved in delivery.
- Current insurance certificates confirming a minimum of £5 million Employers' Liability, where legally required, £2 million Public Liability and £1 million Professional Indemnity cover.

Experience North East England reserves the right to undertake further proportionate due diligence before awarding the contract, including where

appropriate or necessary, requesting the suppliers latest available evidence of financial standing.

## Submission Instructions

Proposals must be submitted electronically via our Opportunities Portal.

The link below will redirect you to a Superhuman.com address, which is where our opportunities portal is hosted.

**Opportunities Portal →**

<https://enee.org.uk/opportunities-portal-form>

- You will need to provide a downloadable link to your submission documents. We require full permission to view and download any files. We recommend using a cloud service like Dropbox, Google Drive, SharePoint/OneDrive or a transfer service such as WeTransfer. If your submission consists of more than one file, please link to a folder containing all relevant material.
- There is space for you to provide any access instructions for your submission link, for example, if the link is password protected.
- If you are unable to use the form, please contact [opportunities@experieceenee.co.uk](mailto:opportunities@experieceenee.co.uk) for assistance.
- If you are unable to provide a download link to your submission documents, there is a file upload option which is limited to a maximum of 10MB per file. Please contact us first before using this option.

We aim to acknowledge receipt of submissions within 2 business days

## Clarification Process

Clarifications and questions should be submitted to [opportunities@experieceenee.co.uk](mailto:opportunities@experieceenee.co.uk) by Friday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2026.

Responses will be shared to all tenderers by Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2026.

Please do not contact or approach individual Experience North East England team members, even if you have a prior relationship with them.

Experience North East England may seek clarification of any aspect of a submission during the evaluation process but reserves the right to evaluate proposals based solely on the information provided.

## Important Submission Information

- Submissions can only be accepted electronically via the portal. In exceptional circumstances, we may accept submissions via email; however, this will only be agreed on a case-by-case basis.
- We will not accept any submission material via post; this includes any additional portfolio examples, brochures or promotional material.
- Submissions sent to any other email address or Experience North East England team member will not be accepted.

### Retention of Data and Submissions

- Submissions will be stored securely and will be treated as confidential in line with our [privacy policy](#).
- Submitted proposals will be retained for audit, governance and record-keeping purposes in accordance with applicable procurement and data protection requirements. Personal data contained within submissions will be processed in accordance with applicable data protection legislation, including the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.
- Submissions will only be accessed by those involved in the procurement, evaluation and contract award process.

### Submission Costs

- All costs associated with the preparation and submission of a proposal are the responsibility of the bidder. Experience North East England will not be liable for any costs incurred in connection with this procurement process.

### Intellectual Property

- Intellectual property rights in submitted proposals shall remain with the bidder. However, by submitting a proposal, bidders grant Experience North East England the right to use, copy and evaluate submission materials solely for the purposes of this procurement process. Once the bidder is appointed and contracted all IP will be owned and retained by Experience North East England.

### Right Not to Appoint

- Experience North East England reserves the right not to appoint any bidder, to amend the procurement process, or to withdraw this opportunity at any time without liability.
- Late submissions will not be considered.

## Appendices

### Definition of an Experience

For the purposes of this commission, an experience is defined as a visitor-facing activity that is structured, time-bound or itinerary-based, and offers some form of

interaction, participation, guided access, learning, storytelling, immersion or distinctive local connection.

The audit should include both paid and free experiences, although paid and bookable experiences should be given particular attention because of their relevance to visitor spend, website integration and travel trade.

The audit should not be limited to formal attractions. For example, a museum is an attraction, but a behind-the-scenes curator tour, maker workshop or after-hours experience is a visitor experience. A football club is a sporting asset, but a stadium tour, fan culture walk or matchday package is a visitor experience.

## Geographic Scope

The audit should cover the North East England region, working across the seven local authority areas and with relevant LVEPs and partners, including Visit Northumberland and Visit County Durham. The 7 Local authority areas include:

- Northumberland.
- North Tyneside.
- Newcastle upon Tyne.
- Gateshead.
- County Durham.
- South Tyneside.
- Sunderland.

The appointed supplier should consider how experiences link across boundaries and how they support visitor journeys, clusters, routes and itineraries rather than treating each area in isolation

## Potential Priority Product Development Themes

| Theme                | Strategic rationale                                                                                                                        | Examples of experience types to identify                                                                                                |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Food and Drink       | Linked to the North East's bid for European Region of Gastronomy 2029 and the region's distinctive producers, food culture and provenance. | Food tours, producer visits, farm experiences, fishing, foraging, cookery, drink experiences, chef-led experiences, food trails.        |
| Heritage and Culture | Linked to world-class heritage, castles, Hadrian's Wall, industrial heritage, museums, galleries and local stories.                        | Guided heritage experiences, behind-the-scenes access, craft, industrial heritage, cultural trails, living history, creative workshops. |

|                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Sport</b>                                                   | Linked to EURO 2028, golf tourism, Great North Run, parkrun, cricket, rugby, basketball and the region's strong sporting identity.                                                        | Football culture, non-league football, stadium tours, golf packages, running weekends, cricket experiences, matchday packages, active sport experiences. |
| <b>Outdoor and Wellness</b>                                    | Linked to the region's green and blue spaces, national parks, coast, National Landscapes, active travel, regenerative tourism and growing wellness demand.                                | Cycling, walking, trail running, cold water, sauna, retreats, dark skies, nature immersion, regenerative experiences.                                    |
| <b>Music</b>                                                   | Linked to globally recognised North East artists, major concerts and events (MOBOs and Mercury Prize), as well as grassroots music venues and the region's distinctive cultural identity. | Music trails, venue tours, live music weekends, artist/place storytelling, nightlife itineraries, music heritage experiences.                            |
| <b>Creative Industries (film &amp; tv, gaming, publishing)</b> | Linked to film and TV production, screen tourism demand and opportunities from regional productions.                                                                                      | Location trails, guided screen tours, themed itineraries, immersive experiences, screen and heritage crossover products.                                 |
| <b>Luxury and Bespoke</b>                                      | Linked to higher value visitors, premium itineraries, exclusive access and international travel trade potential.                                                                          | Private guiding, exclusive access, bespoke food/golf/heritage itineraries, concierge products, high-end hosted experiences.                              |

## Relevant Workstreams and Research

The appointed supplier is encouraged to make full use of the existing LVEP evidence and research to avoid duplication and to build on significant work already undertaken across the region.

To support this, Experience North East England will share, where possible and appropriate, existing data and relevant research and workstreams, with the appointed consultant, this may include:

- North East Spatial Strategy.
- Incentive Travel dataset.
- Investment monitor.
- FAM Trips database.
- Experience North East England Evidence Base.



- Other relevant existing databases from LVEPs and LAs.

There will be product development projects and activity being delivered in parallel to this piece of work. Experience North East England will ensure that insights, challenges, learnings, and opportunities are shared both ways throughout.

Experience North East England will also support the appointed supplier with introductions and engagement opportunities with:

- Existing ENEE business networks.
- LVEP networks.
- Existing and previous programme participants (Growing Outdoors, Food & Drink, Bookability, etc.).
- Existing stakeholder forums.
- Business events and travel trade contacts.

## Scope Boundaries

To protect the focus and value of the commission, the following are outside scope unless agreed as a separately priced optional enhancement:

- An exhaustive census of every attraction or event in the region;
- A detailed inspection, accreditation or scoring of every business;
- New large-scale consumer research where existing evidence is sufficient;
- Duplication of the Visitor Economy Spatial Strategy or production of a separate spatial strategy;
- Design, procurement or build of the regional website, booking engine or other digital platform;
- A full economic impact appraisal or business case for every opportunity;
- Preparation of the final Experience Development Programme or a new overarching strategy; and
- Ongoing maintenance of the evidence base after the agreed handover and knowledge transfer.

The commission is intended to establish a robust strategic evidence base rather than provide an exhaustive audit of every visitor experience across North East England.

Optional enhancements must be clearly separated from the fixed price for the core requirements and must not be necessary for the core deliverables to be complete and usable.