

# Invitation to Tender

## *Voices Through Time Programme: IT Support for Zooniverse Transcription Project*

### SUMMARY

Coram invites applications for the role of IT and Data Management Support, Zooniverse Transcription Project. We are digitising c.111,000 documents from the Foundling Hospital archive and these documents will be uploaded to the crowd-sourced research platform [Zooniverse](#) to enable volunteers to transcribe the documents online. Once transcribed, the documents and transcriptions will be moved to a dedicated website. We are looking for someone with knowledge of Python to write scripts that will ensure the project team can access and use the data needed efficiently. Experience of Zooniverse would be useful, but not essential.

This project is part of a four-year funded programme called *Voices Through Time: The Story of Care*. The online volunteer transcription project is a key part of the four year programme and is intended to increase access to, and encourage broader engagement with, the Foundling Hospital archive collection.

<b>Organisation</b>	Coram ( <i>The Thomas Coram Foundation for Children</i> )
<b>Brief description of supply</b>	Specialist services
<b>Estimated value of tender</b>	£6,160
<b>Estimated duration</b>	October 2020 – October 2023
<b>Name of Contact</b>	Amy Cotterill, Programme Manager: The Story Centre

### Procurement Timetable

- Response deadline: Applications received by 9am, Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October
- Clarification meetings: w/b Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October
- Confirmation of contract: Decision informed to applicants by Friday 16<sup>th</sup> October
- Start of project: October 2020
- Completion of work: March 2023

# Overview & Background

## About Coram

Coram is a children's charity which is committed to improving the lives of the UK's most vulnerable children and young people. We've created better chances for children for nearly three centuries, and today we are a group of specialist charities helping more than a million children, young people, professionals and families every year. Find out more at [www.coram.org.uk](http://www.coram.org.uk)

We support children and young people who need stable families, fight for those who are marginalised or at risk, and work with schools, local authorities, and young people themselves to increase skills and build resilience and sustainability.

In the UK today there are over 75,420 children and young people reliant on the state for their care and wellbeing, with 389,000 more needing some level of support from children's services – and the number is rising.

## Voices Through Time: The Story of Care

*Voices Through Time: The Story of Care* is a four-year programme funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which started in October 2019. The programme aims to digitise 25% of the documents in Coram's archive, going back to when it was originally founded in 1739 as The Foundling Hospital, and make them publicly available. It will also introduce Coram's history to care-experienced young people, creating an environment where they can safely use the archive to talk about their own lives.

Alongside the digitisation, young people will work with Coram and a range of partners on 10 themed projects to produce displays, theatre, film and other creative outputs that connect the stories from the past with their experiences of the present. There are also two young people's volunteering programmes – *The Story of Care Ambassadors* who will collaborate with us to co-produce our activities, and the *Stories of Interest Researchers*, who will research the lives of individual Foundling Hospital pupils.

A website and digital timeline will also be launched, presenting the story of care through the ages to gain new access, audiences and insight. There will also be a public media campaign and a range of exhibitions and other outputs.

# IT and Data Management Support, Zooniverse Transcription Project

We are seeking IT and data management support to write Python scripts and assist in the build of an online transcription project on the Zooniverse platform.

The transcription project will be launched in October and content will continue to be added throughout the programme running until October 2023.

We have set up a test project already, which is operating with a small group of volunteers. We need support to ensure that systems and processes produce reliable and usable data and are easily understandable by volunteers.

## Key Aims

- Ensure that Zooniverse workflows produce comprehensive and reliable data
- Ensure that the Zooniverse project produces customised statistics, for example the number of volunteer hours spent transcribing.
- Contribute to the creation of a user friendly site that volunteers will find engaging, rewarding and easy to use
- Contribute to the creation of a well-functioning project site that can continue to be used by the project team independently

## This will be achieved by:

- Writing scripts using the Python package to enable the project team to query and modify data produced from the transcriptions
- Creating workflows specific to the requirements of a number of different record sets
- Setting up automated processes using existing Zooniverse tools
- Ensuring effective reconciliation, validation and aggregation of data processes are in place
- Working with the project Archivist to ensure data produced by transcriptions is in line with London Metropolitan Archives cataloguing conventions
- Ensuring a system for bulk document uploads with accompanying csv manifests produces reliable and usable data
- Ensuring an effective use of keyword tagging for cataloguing through the transcriptions

# Project Deliverables

- Suitable workflows established
- Effective python scripts written
- Reliable and comprehensive data exports
- Useful project statistics produced
- Adapt existing, or create new, features in response to volunteer feedback

# Project Overview, Budget and Timeline

## Budget

The anticipated budget is £6,160 to include all expenses and VAT.

## Project Timeline

- Initial applications – September to October 2020
- IT Support appointed – October 2020
- Timeline agreed – October 2020
- October 2020 – March 2021 - 10 Days (Budget £2,800)
- April 2021 – March 2022 – 6 Days (Budget £1,680)
- April 2022 – March 2023 – 6 Days (Budget £1,680)

A test project is currently underway, and is being run by the Volunteer Coordinator and Archivist. The first batch of digitised records for the main project will be ready in October (2020) and we need to be ready to upload the first batch to Zooniverse at this time.

New record sets will be digitised throughout the next three years and separate workflows will need to be devised to suit each set, and to take account of variations within the record sets and the data produced.

## Award Criteria

Proposals submitted will be assessed by Coram against the following questions:

1. *To what extent does the proposal demonstrate an understanding of the issues related to the brief?*
2. *To what extent are the methodology and methods appropriate to the requirements set out in this brief?*

3. *How well has the applicant structured their proposal in order to successfully manage the contract and deliver the required work to the budget and timetable required?*

## **Deadlines and Contract Management**

**Proposals to be emailed to [amy.cotterill@coram.org.uk](mailto:amy.cotterill@coram.org.uk) by the return deadline of 9am on 5th October.**

We expect the commissioned project to begin in October 2020 and be completed by March 2023. The project will be managed on a day to day basis for Coram by the Programme Manager: The Story Centre, Amy Cotterill

## **Coram Team**

### **Key Contacts**

- Amy Cotterill, *Voices Through Time* Programme Manager
- Brigid Robinson, Managing Director, Coram Voice – programme director
- Carol Homden, CEO – programme sponsor/sign off
- Jo Blyghton – *Voices Through Time* Archivist
- Molly O’Doherty – *Voices Through Time* Volunteer Coordinator
- Saravanan Natarajan – Coram IT Solutions Architect