

Ushaw Archive Consultant Brief

Overview

Ushaw is a unique heritage site located in County Durham, which operated from 1808 until 2010 as a seminary for the training of Catholic priests. It combines a rich Catholic history with stunning Georgian and Victorian architecture, historic chapels, and beautifully curated gardens. Ushaw's Big Library, together with our archive holdings, is one of Britain's most extraordinary historic libraries. We want to offer consistent access to this amazing resource and are seeking specialist archive support to improve access to our archive collection and advise on a roadmap to a sustainable future.

<https://ushaw.org/collections/>

Objectives

The primary goals for this consultancy are to:

- Make recommendations as to how Ushaw administers and operates its archive search room
- Determine optimum approaches for collections care and conservation
- Lead on business planning, making recommendations for revenue models, with a mix of income streams. We envisage this will include licensing, curriculum-linked education activities and wider partnerships, while preserving the archive's integrity.
- Create an audience development plan for our archive offer.

Target Audiences

Key audiences for Ushaw's archive:

- Academic interest
- Family history
- Faith-based interest
- Local residents and community groups
- School and educational groups

The recommendations should explore how to tailor content and methods to the specific needs, interests, and access requirements of these groups.

Deliverables

- Search room recommendations
- Audience development plan
- Revenue-models recommendations
- Facilitated workshop with Ushaw team on recommended direction of travel

Contract management

We expect the work to take place between early 2027 and July 2027.

We are seeking a consultant who can begin work early in 2027. We can be flexible across the six-month consultancy period, but all deliverables should be completed by July 2027. We anticipate a maximum budget of £13,800. Please include costs with your tenders, inclusive of VAT and expenses. Please do not include cost for accommodation, Ushaw has accommodation onsite and can provide this free of charge.

Award criteria

The work will be awarded using the following criteria:

- Details of staff allocated to the project, together with experience of the contractor and staff members in carrying out similar projects. The lead contact should be identified.
- Timescale
- Overall cost for the work

Proposal Submission

Interested consultants should submit:

- A short proposal (max 2 pages) outlining your approach, relevant experience, and examples of past work
- CVs for key personnel
- A proposed budget and timeline
- References
- Deadline for proposals: Friday 27 November 2026
- Interviews will be conducted in December 2026

Contact

For questions please contact:

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