



# **Creating an evidence base for a National Centre for Ceramic Education & Research at Staffordshire University**

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Consultant's Brief

September 2015

## Document control

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## 1.0 Introduction

We are seeking to commission a consultant to create an evidence base to support the development of a National Centre for Ceramic Education at Staffordshire University. The evidence base will be used to support the development of a business case and an ERDF application for the new centre.

## 2.0 Background and context

The ceramics sector represents Stoke-on-Trent's past, present and future – it is an inextricable part of the city's DNA. The majority of the UK's ceramics industry is located within a seven mile radius of the city. Home to over 350 ceramics companies from global brands to independent artists and designers, no other city in the UK comes close to Stoke-on-Trent in terms of ceramics heritage, pedigree and know-how.

The sector is currently enjoying something of a resurgence with a number of leading companies reporting record sales, major capital investment and expansion plans. Employment has risen consistently in recent years from a low point of 2,000 and currently employs around 7,000 people in the city, providing one quarter of all ceramics-based jobs in the UK. 32% of all UK ceramics employers and 60% of ceramics sector employees are based in North Staffordshire.

The ceramics sector is worth £430m to the UK economy, a rise of 20% over the 4 years to 2012. UK trade figures show that ceramics exports to non-EU countries have reversed a multiyear decline, bottoming out at £79.7m in 2009 and rising back to over £100m in 2013. Stoke-on-Trent is also a key destination for pottery and ceramics tourists with an estimated 4.1 million tourism visits per year generating around £207m annually for the Stoke-on-Trent economy.

The ceramics sector operates as a complex ecology in the city region, with the majority of ceramics companies outsourcing elements of their design and production process, creating an intricate and interconnected system of networks operating across the city and beyond. This unitised system is increasingly stretched and its capacity to innovate and evolve in a fast-moving and globalised world is limited. In order to be competitive in the 21st Century, the ceramics industry needs to continuously invest in new skills and innovate in new technologies, new techniques and new processes and expand into new markets.

The distributed nature of the city's ceramics assets (industrial, educational, cultural and creative, heritage and tourism) means that the sector lacks a central focal point not only for people involved in the sector in Stoke-on-Trent, but also for visitors and investors coming to the city.

### 3.0 The National Centre for Ceramic Education & Research at Staffordshire University

The National Centre for Ceramic Education & Research at Staffordshire University will create a new space to showcase the city and its ceramics sector on the global stage, providing a platform to encourage international students, researchers, professional practitioners and ceramic industry experts to come and study, work, collaborate and innovate in the city.

The National Centre for Ceramic Education & Research at Staffordshire University will be located in a new purpose-built facility in a prominent position on our College Road campus next to Stoke-on-Trent train station, providing a highly visible 'front door' for ceramics in the city.

Inspired by the National Glass Centre at the University of Sunderland, the National Centre for Ceramic Education & Research at Staffordshire University will provide a new educational and cultural destination in the city of Stoke-on-Trent and will be home to The Clay Foundation, which delivers the British Ceramics Biennial. The Centre will combine the following critical components:

- **Exhibition space:** showcasing the best of British ceramics, from fine art and design practice to the future of advanced ceramics in high-tech applications to business and cultural tourists, local industry and residents and professional practitioners and providing access to world class handling collections, such as the University's Thornhill Collection
- **Visitor centre:** providing information/signposting to the city's wide range of ceramics assets, including café and retail facilities that will enable local artists, designers and students to sell their ceramic products.
- **Learning and teaching:** a national centre of excellence for ceramics education and technical skills development providing state-of-the-art teaching facilities, ceramics workshops and studios and working with industry partners and ceramics professionals to co-design curriculum and develop new technical pathways to higher education.

- **Events programme:** including public lectures, seminars, and workshops as well as hosting international standard ceramics exhibitions and conferences.
- **In-reach programme:** The Centre will actively encourage the participation of school and college students, introducing them to, and engaging them in, creative learning through ceramics, raising educational aspirations in the city and beyond.
- **Research and development:** a multi-disciplinary centre for creative ceramics research and collaborative R&D, significantly enhancing the innovation infrastructure in the city and region and providing a destination for international researchers, ceramic artists and designers.
- **Collision space:** a new space where academics, industry partners, artists, designers and professional practitioners can come together to network, engage in dialogue, share experiences, find new ground, collaborate and innovate.

The Centre will support the ambition of Stoke-on-Trent to become a core city; promote economic growth and attract inward investment and tourism by providing a platform for international collaborations; and will support the city's destination marketing, cementing Stoke-on-Trent's position as the 'World Capital of Ceramics'.

Our ambition is to have the National Centre for Ceramic Education & Research at Staffordshire University open for the start of the 2017 academic year. Over the coming weeks and months we will be seeking to engage with, and gain support from, a wide range of local partners and stakeholders in order to develop detailed proposals and designs for this new and exciting chapter in city's ceramics story.

#### 4.0 Scope of works

We are now seeking a consultant who can create an evidence base to support the development of our business case for the National Centre for Ceramic Education & Research at Staffordshire University. We require an evidence base that will include the following elements:

- 1) **Market research and sector analysis:** a quantitative and qualitative market analysis of the ceramics sector including market size and

segmentation, key market trends, sector SWOT analysis and identification of key areas of market failure.

- 2) **Stakeholder engagement and consultation:** the successful consultant will be expected to identify and lead engagement with key public, private and third sector stakeholders who are likely to engage with and benefit from the National Centre for Ceramic Education & Research at Staffordshire University. Please note that we expect the successful consultant to lead on the design of a stakeholder engagement framework (including design of questionnaire/ interview questions), the co-ordination of University staff to undertake the actual stakeholder engagement/consultations and undertake an analysis of the results of the stakeholder exercise.
- 3) **The Opportunity:** a description of the key market opportunity (or opportunities) that the creation of a National Centre for Ceramic Education & Research at Staffordshire University will address.
- 4) **Project description:** an ideation and description of the overall concept for, and key component elements within, the National Centre for Ceramic Education & Research at Staffordshire University.
- 5) **Income & expenditure projections:** the identification of potential income streams and operating costs and recommendations for potential operating models (based on benchmarking of similar centres)
- 6) **Benchmarking and competitor/comparator analysis:** a review of the existing landscape of similar centres/projects catering to the ceramics sector both locally, nationally and internationally and the development of a competitor/comparator analysis.

## 5.0 Deliverables

The key deliverables for this engagement will be:

- A stakeholder engagement framework
- A written report (presented as draft and final reports) in MS Word and PDF format (no hard copies will be required)
- A dataset of key quantitative data utilised in the study presented in Excel Spreadsheet format
- A presentation to the National Centre for Ceramic Education & Research at Staffordshire University Working Group

## 6.0 Timescales and budget

We expect this engagement to commence in early October and to be completed by the week commencing 07 December 2015 (a total project time of 10 weeks).

Our budget for this engagement is **£15,000** inclusive of VAT and disbursements.

## 7.0 Submission requirements

Proposals should be submitted by email in electronic format (MS Word or PDF) and should cover the following:

- Method statement – setting out how you will meet the requirements of the brief
- Track record of similar engagements
- Experience of the consultant or team working on the engagement
- A breakdown of fees by team member/task, including VAT and disbursements.

Submissions should be returned to:

John Adlen  
Head of Research, Business & Employability Services  
Email: [j.adlen@staffs.ac.uk](mailto:j.adlen@staffs.ac.uk)

Deadline for submissions is **5:00pm Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2015.**