

Catalyst

Specification

Appointment for the development of a narrative for NI to promote the regions R&D capability



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1. Introduction

Thank you for your interest in Catalyst.

This pack has been prepared to provide further information about our organisation and its role. Catalyst, which is the trading name of the Northern Ireland Science Park group of companies, arose from a package of economic initiatives which were part of the Good Friday Agreement. Today, it is one of Northern Ireland's major economic success stories.

Catalyst is headquartered on a 25 acre site in Titanic Quarter, Belfast. We have facilities at our North West Regional Science Park, Derry/Londonderry, which is also the hub of a cross border economic initiative with Letterkenny Institute of Technology. We also have facilities at the ECOS centre in Ballymena.

In total we have 2,700 entrepreneurs, engineers, researchers, and executives working across our locations. In total, Catalyst's programmes support the development and scaling of a wide group of 900 high tech entrepreneurs throughout Northern Ireland.

With the accelerating growth of new companies, we have ambitious plans to expand our physical infrastructure. Working with our partners, our objective is to build a strong innovation community focusing on clusters in the sectors where our region can have global competitive advantage.

We are on the threshold of an exciting future and together we aim to drive this momentum and work to deliver our shared vision of Northern Ireland leading

Group Structure

Northern Ireland Science Park Foundation Limited is a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. It is the parent company of its wholly owned subsidiary Northern Ireland Science Park Holdings Ltd which in turn has three wholly owned subsidiaries:

- Northern Ireland Science Park Property Ltd,
- North West Regional Science Park Ltd,
- Northern Ireland Science Park Trading Ltd.

Copies of the latest full set of audited financial statements for each company are available on Companies House.

The Foundation's memorandum and articles are constructed so as to conform to the UK Science Park Association's definition of a science park, re business

support and technology transfer. The Foundation is not structured to undertake trading or other business activities. Any profits accruing to the Foundation will be reinvested to promote its objectives.

Holdings operates with general commercial objectives and has shareholdings in subsidiaries companies, each of which will undertake specific business activities within the Foundation's remit. The property company owns the Belfast site and manages the Catalyst estate and its tenants and a trading company which is currently dormant.

Background

Catalyst is the trading name of the Northern Ireland Science Park Foundation Ltd group of companies.

Supplemented by both financial and pro-bono support from the private sector and sponsors, our proven model invests the surpluses generated from our agile connected workspace and facilities. This provides the underwriting, necessary for the community-led development of our entrepreneurial innovation ecosystem that supports over 900 entrepreneurs per year.

An ambitious new strategy was approved by the Catalyst Board in 2019, targeting significant growth in Northern Ireland's Knowledge Economy and extending Catalyst's impact in new areas of value for our community. Following strong progress and extensive stakeholder analysis, the organisation is now focused on three pillars of growth:

1. Strong Innovation Community

Delivering a community experience, to our on-campus members and off-campus partners that adds significant value to their work and their employees' well-being.

2. Amazing Workspace

We set the standard for innovation workspace and on-campus amenities, working with partners to build an Innovation District.

3. Clusters

We focus on incubating and growing key industry clusters to over 500 companies through strategic partnerships with key institutions.

Values

We are a force for good, bold in our approach, with integrity at our core and passionate in everything we do.

Staffing

Catalyst currently operates with a staffing complement comprising 35 full-time employees. Executives report to the Group Boards of Directors, which currently comprise 11 Non-Executive Directors with a rich blend of skills and experience.

Meetings

The Audit & Risk Committee, which meets approximately 4 times per year, endeavors to ensure that appropriate Corporate Governance provisions, relevant to an organisation of Catalyst's nature and scale, are applied.

The successful audit provider will be required to liaise with the Director of Finance and Administration at Catalyst.

2. Assignments

- Develop a narrative to coordinate NI messaging, promote the regions extensive RDI capability and therefore stimulate increased cluster focused collaborations.
- To support the ambition of Innovation City Belfast in relation to positioning and messaging.

The Northern Ireland research, development and innovation landscape has transformed considerably over the past decade. Therefore, NI now exhibits considerable academic excellence in disciplines such as advanced manufacturing, cyber security and artificial intelligence coupled with industrial excellence in software systems, financial services, and creative industries. This is not an exhaustive list with the region undergoing further development through the Belfast and Derry / Strabane City and growth deals (over 1BN). The City and Growth deal projects include transformative investments in advanced manufacturing, virtual production, MedTech, AI and data and skills.

Subsequently, NI consortia have successfully secured UKRI Strength in Places Funding led by Seagate Technology (£63.9M) to develop next generation digital photonics devices and an Artemis led project (£33M) to develop future net zero emission marine transport. It is undeniable that these investments provide a considerable opportunity for NI to take an innovation leadership position. However, it has also led to complexity in terms of how these initiatives fit together, collectively how they position NI research and innovation excellence and the opportunities arising for regional, national and international markets.

Individual projects have developed strong communications and alignment with partner projects, it is unclear to outside audiences how or why they would invest in such a complex ecosystem.

This has the potential to be is a missed opportunity.

Additional bids for national centres have also been recently developed for digital twin (MSDT) and a national UK centre for secure, intelligent regulatory technologies (G-SIRT) further enhance the need for explanation of the strategic relationships between the investments and the economic benefit that will be generated for industry from their synergies.

The ambitious Department for the Economy “10X Economy” vision has attracted significant attention and requires clear, coherent, and concise messaging to answer the question “Why NI?”

The successful bidder will provide a document, visualisations, and narrative to provide targeted NI messaging to key stakeholders including:

UK Government – UKRI, BEIS, NIO, DLUHC, DIT, City of London Corporation, Regulatory Bodies

Republic Of Ireland – DFA, Science Foundation Ireland

International Support Network – INI International Offices, NI Bureau

Local Government – DfE, Executive Office, HOCS, Local Councils

Catalyst will be able to provide further background briefing for potential bidders. This may be through separate meetings.

1. Evaluation Criteria

Qualification criteria

1. Copy of Professional Indemnity insurance cover and
2. Confirmation of the office in Northern Ireland from which the service will be provided.

The evaluation criteria that will then be used in the award of this contract are: -

1. Previous knowledge or relevant experience of working on similar/other assignments in the past.

2. Proposal for service delivery, understanding of the business, the requirements & methodology, timetable and
3. Total cost to include a fixed fee in relation to the information detailed under the assignment section.

2. Format of Response

Details must be provided of partner/manager who will be assigned to carry out the assignments to include: -

- i. Relevant Experience (45%)
- ii. Details should also be provided of how the service will be delivered and the methodology to be used taking into account the understanding of our requirements (35%)
- iii. Cost (20%)

3. Award of Contract

The contract will be awarded to the quotation that best meets the criteria identified and offers best value for money in respect of the evaluation criteria listed above.

4. Completions and Submission of Proposals

The proposal and accompanying documents must be completed and returned by **12 noon on Wednesday 23rd March 2022** to

Adrian.Johnston@wearecatalyst.org

5. Formal Contact

Firms seeking to clarify any points of doubt or difficulty relating to this documentation before submitting proposals should contact: -

Adrian.Johnston@wearecatalyst.org before **12 noon on Monday 22nd March 2022**