



LAMBETH PALACE LIBRARY

INVITATION TO TENDER

Scoping Report for Next-Generation Collections Management System for Archives and Manuscripts at Lambeth Palace Library

KEY CONTACT

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BACKGROUND

Lambeth Palace Library, founded in 1610, is the historic library and record office of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the principal repository for the archives of the Archbishop and the National Church Institutions (NCIs). It serves as a research centre specialising in church history, with collections spanning from the ninth century to the present day, including medieval manuscripts, early printed books, modern archives, and digital records.

The Library's vision is to collect, preserve, and make accessible the memory of the Church of England. Further details are available at: www.lambethpalacelibrary.info.

'Calm ALM' is the collections management system which Lambeth Palace Library uses to manage its archival and manuscript collections. The database holds almost 1 million descriptive catalogue records, over 3,000 user records and 36,000 records of loans. We also use the system to manage accessions, authority records and conservation treatment records.

The software is provided by [Axiell](#) who host the system for the Library. Axiell is withdrawing product support and the hosted environment on 31 December 2027.

TASK SUMMARY AND DELIVERABLES

Lambeth Palace Library (LPL) would like to commission a report to investigate requirements and options for our next-generation collections management software for our archival and manuscript collections.

This work will comprise:

1. An initial meeting with key contact and colleagues.
2. Requirements gathering from stakeholders, such as teams across the Library, users from the wider NCIs, and external researchers.
3. A review of the collections management software landscape and recommendations on appropriate products, including comparison and benchmarking with comparator services.
4. Review of sample of existing metadata to determine suitable software matches.

5. Consideration of the Library's other collections software.
6. Production of a report no longer than 30 pages (excluding appendices) and including an executive summary, detailing:
 - a. Requirements of stakeholder groups.
 - b. Recommendations for suggested products to meet the above requirements, to include an evaluation of at least five commercial options, including market leaders, including indicative costs.
 - c. Indicative project plan to include timescales for implementing new software to meet the Library's deadline for software migration; resources required to implement the project plan; identification of potential risks and mitigation strategies.
7. Post-report discussion of recommendations.

Any data accessed or shared during the course of this work must be treated as confidential and used solely for the purposes of this project.

REPORT ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA

The final report should be submitted as a PDF or Word document and will be accepted if it:

1. Addresses all deliverables outlined in the tender, including executive summary, stakeholder requirements, software recommendations, and an indicative implementation plan.
2. Includes a comparative evaluation of at least five collections management systems, with clear benchmarking and indicative costs.
3. Demonstrates analysis of existing metadata and its compatibility with proposed systems.
4. Reflects stakeholder input, gathered through appropriate engagement methods.
5. Provides a realistic and actionable project plan, including timescales, resource requirements, and migration considerations.
6. Is clearly written and accessible, especially to non-specialist audiences, with well-structured findings and recommendations, and formatted to be accessible to a wide range of readers.
7. Is delivered on time, by the agreed deadline (see Milestones section below).
8. Supports post-report discussion, with the tenderer available to clarify and elaborate on findings.

INFORMATION SOURCES

In the preparation of the report the following resources may be drawn upon:

- Library [website](#)
- Existing [archives and manuscripts catalogue](#)
- Other Library catalogues ([printed books and images](#))
- Meetings with Library staff and staff of the National Church Institutions by arrangement
- Other archive and library services with comparable collections.

If you are planning to use generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools in the preparation of the report, please specify which tools and how you plan to use them.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Bids will be assessed against the following criteria. While all are important, particular weight will be given to **methodology**, **relevant experience**, and **communication with stakeholders**.

1. **Practical, first-hand experience** of library and archives management systems within an archive and manuscript environment.
2. **Technical understanding** of data management and usage, including metadata structures and system interoperability.
3. **Demonstrable effective communication** with varied stakeholder groups, including internal teams, external researchers, and non-specialist audiences.
4. **Clear delineation of proposed methodology**
Bidders should clearly outline their proposed methodology, which will be a key factor in evaluation. This should include: how stakeholder engagement will be conducted (e.g. consultation methods and inclusion of internal and external users); the approach to technical analysis of current systems and metadata; criteria for software comparison and benchmarking; and how risks and implementation challenges will be addressed. The methodology should also detail how findings will be communicated clearly to non-specialist audiences. Strong emphasis will be placed on the clarity, feasibility, and relevance of the proposed approach.
5. **Proven experience** in delivering similar scoping or evaluation work, ideally within the cultural heritage or GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, Museums) sector.
6. **Ability to present information clearly and concisely** to non-data management specialists, including in written reports and verbal discussions.

Please note that the Library is not obliged to take the lowest bid.

BIDS

Bids no longer than eight pages should be sent by email to archives@churchofengland.org no later than 27 November 2025.

They should include:

1. An estimate of the number of days expected to complete the work.
2. An account of how that time will be spent, including a breakdown of tasks to be completed and how much time will be spent on each task.
3. A summary of relevant experience.
4. A breakdown of charges (including VAT).
5. A statement confirming that there are no conflicts of interest in relation to this work.
6. A piece of **similar recent work** (reports only) and contact detail of a **client referee for each**. These examples can be additional to the eight-page limit.

MILESTONES

Deadline for submission of bid: **27 November 2025**

Notification of successful bidder: **11 December 2025**

Initiation meeting with Library staff: **at a mutually convenient date**

Deadline for submission of final report: **13 February 2026**

Post-report discussion: **at a mutually convenient date**

Project completion by 30 April 2026

PAYMENT

Payment to the successful candidate will be made in two stages. Half of the fee will be paid before work starts and the balance will be paid on acceptance of the report and following the post-report discussion.