



Consultant Brief: Business Planning

Project Dates:	October 2026 – April 2027
Amount:	£20,000 excl all VAT, inc travel and expenses
Hours:	As required based on project need
Closing Date:	October 2026
Responsible to:	CEO

1. Background

The Powell-Cotton Trust is delivering a National Lottery Heritage Fund-supported project to strengthen the long-term sustainability, resilience and relevance of the Powell-Cotton Museum, Quex House and Gardens.

The project focuses on two interconnected strategic challenges:

- Improving visitor experience, engagement and audience growth.
- Enhancing organisational sustainability through strengthened infrastructure, governance, business planning, people and financial resilience.

The bespoke solutions developed through this project will inform the Trust's next five-year Business Plan (2027-2032). This Plan is a critical milestone and comes at the Trust marks the 100th anniversary of the Charity established to own, govern and manage the museum, collection, public house experience and associated gardens.

The Trust has recently undertaken significant work including a Concept Masterplan, rebrand and website redevelopment, decolonisation and redisplay programmes, board diversity initiatives, visitor data collection, and audience profiling. This consultancy will build upon these foundations, integrating findings from the Audience Development consultancy and

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Financial Advice (also part of the NLHF project) and establishing a clear framework for sustainable growth, organisational change and future investment.

The aim is to create a realistic, evidence-led and deliverable plan that identifies opportunities, addresses challenges, informs strategic decision-making, and creates a pathway towards greater financial sustainability and public impact.

2. Objectives

The consultant will:

- Develop a comprehensive and deliverable 5-Year Business Plan (2027–2032).
- Review and refresh the Trust's vision, mission, values and strategic objectives.
- Assess the viability and sustainability of the current operating model.
- Identify opportunities for income generation, audience growth and organisational resilience.
- Review governance, leadership, staffing and organisational culture requirements.
- Evaluate future operational models across the Museum, House and Gardens.
- Work with an Audience Development consultant, incorporate findings from Audience Development research and consultation activities.
- Work with a Financial Advisor to develop robust financial modelling and forecasting scenarios, taking into the consideration the Trust's investment portfolio and property assets as part of a wider sustainability strategy.
- Produce a practical implementation framework with clear priorities, targets and KPIs.
- Ensure alignment with Arts Council England priorities, future National Portfolio Organisation ambitions, Designation status aspirations and wider sector best practice.

3. Scope of Work

Strategic Review and Organisational Vision

The consultant will:

- Review current strategic documents, objectives and operational plans.
- Assess whether existing mission, vision and values remain fit for purpose.
- Facilitate organisation-wide workshops.
- Consider the implications of organisational transformation, decolonisation work and future positioning.
- Develop a revised strategic framework for 2027-2032.

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Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The consultant will undertake and facilitate consultation with:

- Board of Trustees
- Senior Management Team
- Staff
- Volunteers
- Key partners and stakeholders

Review of Existing Research and Plans

The consultant will review and integrate findings from:

- Concept Masterplan
- Audience Development research
- Visitor data and baseline research
- Previous pilot projects and events
- Governance reviews
- Decolonisation and redisplay projects
- Board Diversity Programme
- Recent brand and website performance data

Market Analysis and Benchmarking

The consultant will:

- Undertake market analysis and competitor benchmarking.
- Assess local, regional and national market opportunities.
- Review comparable heritage organisations.
- Evaluate positioning within the Kent and South East heritage, tourism and cultural sectors.
- Identify opportunities for strategic partnerships and collaboration.

Audience, Visitor and Commercial Review

The consultant will:

- Review current visitor experience and offer liaising with the Audience Development consultant.
- Review pricing structures and admission policies.
- Review opening hours and seasonal operating models.
- Evaluate commercial opportunities with the Financial Advisor, including:
 - Events
 - Retail
 - Catering
 - Venue hire
 - Fundraising

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Powell-Cotton Museum, Quex Park, Birchington, Kent, CT7 0BH. Charity No. 1167318

- Membership
- Philanthropy
- Corporate partnerships
- Develop audience-led recommendations for growth and increased engagement building on Audience Development consultancy work and Financial Advisor findings.

Organisational Structure and Culture

The consultant will:

- Review current staffing structures.
- Explore future staffing and operating models.
- Identify workforce development requirements.
- Assess organisational culture and change management needs.
- Recommend leadership and management development priorities.
- Support planning for potential restructuring and redeployment.

Risk Assessment

The consultant will:

- Review existing risks.
- Identify strategic, operational and financial risks.
- Develop mitigation strategies.
- Provide updated items for inclusion in the Risk Register.

Implementation Planning

The consultant will develop:

- A prioritised action plan and delivery timetable.
- Success measures and KPIs.
- Monitoring framework.
- Resource requirements and dependencies.
- Investment and funding priorities.

4. Proposed Milestones

Date	Task
Oct 2026	Inception meeting and project initiation
Oct-Nov 2026	Consultation workshops, strategic review, SWOT and PESTLE development
Nov-Dec 2026	Market analysis, benchmarking and integration of audience review
Jan 2027	Governance, culture and staffing review

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Jan-Feb 2027	Risk analysis, commercial assessment
Mar 2027	Draft Business Plan and implementation framework
Apr 2027	Final Business Plan presentation and approval

5. Outputs

The consultant's outputs will provide:

- Strategic Context Review
- SWOT and PESTLE Analysis
- Stakeholder Consultation Report
- Market and Benchmarking Analysis
- Commercial Review and Recommendations
- Governance and Organisational Review
- Staffing and Workforce Development Review
- Organisational Culture Recommendations
- Financial Analysis and Forecasting Model (with Financial Advisor)
- Investment Portfolio Review (with Financial Advisor)
- Risk Register and Mitigation Framework
- Implementation Plan and KPI Framework

All of this will inform and referenced in the final 5-Year Business Plan (2027-2032) with a view to the following 5-year plan and longer-term aspirations.

6. Expected Outcomes

The consultancy will deliver:

- A clear and evidenced strategic direction for 2027-2032.
- Improved organisational resilience and financial sustainability.
- Greater alignment between audiences, operations and income generation.
- A sustainable staffing and organisational structure.
- Stronger governance and leadership capacity.
- Increased understanding of audiences, markets and opportunities.
- A diversified income strategy.
- Improved investment and asset performance.
- A practical roadmap for implementation and transformational change.
- Enhanced readiness for future Arts Council England and National Lottery Heritage Fund investment opportunities.

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This Business Plan should provide the foundation for safeguarding the Trust's heritage, strengthening audience engagement, growing income, and securing the long-term future of the organisation.

7. Confidentiality and Copyright

The consultant is required to maintain confidentiality of all privileged information obtained during this project.

The Powell-Cotton Trust and the National Lottery Heritage Fund will retain copyright and all other intellectual property rights to project deliverables.

8. Quote and Project Proposal

We invite proposals from experienced business planning consultants with a track record of working in the heritage, culture, or visitor attraction sector.

Proposals should include:

- A short description of relevant experience and previous projects.
- Outline methodology and timetable for delivery.
- Proposed fee structure (excl of VAT but inc expenses).
- Confirmation of public/professional liability insurance.

To arrange a Teams call with the Powell-Cotton Trust CEO, Sarah Corn, to discuss your project proposal ahead of submission, please email sarah.corn@powell-cottontrust.org.

Please submit proposals electronically to sarah.corn@powell-cottontrust.org by **10am, Monday 12th October 2026**.

Shortlisted candidates may be invited to interview on **Thursday 15th October**.

It is hoped the successful candidate will be able to begin work on this project asap after appointment.

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