

Expressions of Interest to Manage and Deliver the Bournemouth Air Festival 2025 onwards

Partnership Opportunity

Introduction

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (BCP Council) seek Expressions of Interest from suitable operators for the full management and delivery of the Bournemouth Air Festival from 2025 onwards.

Bournemouth Air Festival was developed in 2008 as a free to enter event that has made a significant contribution to the local tourism economy, currently attracting over ½ million visitors with day and evening air displays, entertainment and attractions that creates an iconic Festival atmosphere for a broad family audience of all ages.

The event has historically taken place on the Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday after the August bank holiday weekend when potential visitors are still looking for events and locations to prolong their summer holiday and the weather is good. These dates are also established as an acknowledged timeslot for booking major military air display assets and do not currently clash with any other UK air shows.

The Air Festival site is currently spread over one and a half miles of coastline between two piers on two levels taking place on public open space on a busy seafront location.

The Operator will be required to financially underwrite the cost of the event and all associated risks organising the event through the development of a comprehensive and detailed Event Management Plan (EMP) alongside associated land, sea and air risk assessments. The operator will also be required to work closely with the Council's Commercial Operations management team to ensure the operation is integrated into other seafront activities taken place during the Festival.

The successful operator has the opportunity to evolve and develop the event, incorporating more diverse cultural content, potentially evolving into a 'Festival of the Air' that could take place over a longer period.

BCP Council require a partner with demonstrable experience of running and financing a similar free-to-access event who will take on the Air Festival brand and develop the Festival from 2025 onwards.

Expressions of Interest:

Interested parties must express an interest in the opportunity through the Council's eTendering website; www.supplyingthesouthwest.org.uk (ProContract).

The Council is intending to hold virtual market engagement meetings with suitable operators from March 2024.

Interested parties who would like to be considered for virtual meetings, should express their interest in this opportunity and then send a message through the Message feature of ProContract with a statement detailing their experience of demonstrating similar, free to access events, with details of the financial backing to underwrite the festival.

A maximum of 2 attendees from each organisation is permissible and attendee names and email addresses must be provided within the message that is sent through ProContract.

The Council will be using Microsoft Teams for the virtual market engagement meetings, which suppliers will be able to download as guests.

The Deadline for submitting Expressions of Interest is 2pm on Friday 01 March 2024.

Additional Information:

This Preliminary Market Engagement notice is not a call for competition and no contract(s) will be awarded at this stage.

The purpose of this market engagement exercise is to commence discussions with potential partners, and then through a series of engagement meetings, negotiate and award the licence for the management and delivery of the Bournemouth Air Festival to the most suitable operator.

Interested parties should note that they are responsible for their own costs in participating in this market engagement exercise and the Council shall in no event, be responsible for any costs of any party.

All requests to participate in meetings will be reviewed, and the Council reserves the right to decline requests of any suppliers that are received.

Please note that all communication regarding this opportunity must be via ProContract. Please do not make contact with any employee, member or advisors to the Council outside of the ProContract system.