



Call out for Expressions of Interest

Architectural Services to support Hackney Empire during the Development Phase of our National Lottery Heritage Fund Development Grant.

Overview

Hackney Empire is a Grade II* listed theatre and landmark cultural institution based in East London. We provide a year-round programme of theatre, music, comedy and community engagement. More information can be found at www.hackneyempire.co.uk.

Hackney Empire is about to embark on the Development Phase of a project, The Heart of Hackney, made possible by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, thanks to National Lottery players. The Development Phase runs from Nov 2025 to Oct 2026, with key submission deadlines in Q2 2026.

We are seeking to appoint an architect to support us through this Development Phase and support the preparation of a Delivery Phase application to the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

This appointment is for the initial Development Phase but is subject to a potential extension into the Delivery Phase from Apr 2027-Mar 2029. Any such extension will be subject to funding and to a break clause between the end of the Development Phase and the potential Delivery Phase. Hackney Empire reserves the right to re-advertise for services for the Delivery Phase.

This project aims to address critical conservation and environmental upgrade needs identified through condition surveys. The appointed architect will work with the client team and design consultants to develop detailed proposals and briefs for the application and potential Delivery Phase, the key areas of which are:

- Specialist restoration of significant heritage features.
- Replacement of elements reaching the end of their natural life.
- Environmental upgrades to ensure the heritage building can continue to operate more sustainably.

This commission will include the identification and coordination of further specialist surveys, cost planning support and listed building consent submissions, where required.

The proposed cost of capital works for the Delivery Phase is £800,000 exclusive of fees including:

1. The conservation of and repairs to the heritage features which require specialist attention because of their historical nature, or because access is currently preventing regular maintenance.

These include:

- Decorative plasterworks restoration at high levels.
 - Terracotta panels protection and specialist cleaning.
 - Heritage light fittings which will have to be specifically commissioned.
 - Dress circle and upper circle tier fronts/soffit which have been damaged by condensation.
 - Upper-level windows, brickwork and cills which have deteriorated and causing water ingress
 - Stained glass repairs.
 - External, historic canopy and its external lighting, suffering from corrosion and leaks.
 - Foyer floor mosaics repair
 - Foyer plasterworks repair the blistering and water ingress.
 - Seat ground fixings.
2. Environmental upgrades
 - Repairs to the roof where it is at the end of its life and showing delamination.
 - Thermal insulation to reduce air leakage to improve efficiency.
 - Upgrading the Building Management System and adding thermostatic controls to the original heritage radiators.
 - Doors and shutters.
 - LED lighting replacement.

Methodology

We welcome a proposed methodology from bidders. However, we anticipate the following core principles will be central to delivery:

- Collaboration with Hackney Empire's internal team and external stakeholders
- Compliance with National Lottery Heritage Fund guidance and standards
- Prioritisation of heritage-led design principles
- Environmentally sustainable approaches
- Inclusion and accessibility
- Engagement with specialist consultants for heritage fabric and systems.

Hackney Empire is committed to National Lottery Heritage Fund's investment principles and expects all consultants to reflect these in their work, especially in terms of sustainability, local economic benefit, and diversity and inclusion.

Outputs/Deliverables

Key deliverables for this commission include:

1. Specifications and design documentation for all proposed works to at least RIBA Stage 3 where required including:

- External Canopy
- Windows
- Tier fronts/soffits
- Roof repair with insulation
- Updated Building Management System
- Thermostatic control upgrades
- Lighting upgrades (LED and external)
- Conservation of internal architectural features

2. Condition assessment coordination, and survey analysis.

3. Liaison with the Conservation Officer and planning submissions (where applicable).

4. Input into National Lottery Heritage Fund Delivery Phase application including risk register, cost plan, timetable, Conservation Plan, risk assessments and sustainability plan.

5. Attendance at project meetings and presentation to project board and funders, as required.

Contract Management

We expect the Development Phase contract to commence from Jan/Feb 2026 and conclude by Oct 2026. The contract will be managed by the Chief Executive at Hackney Empire, with day-to-day liaison via the Capital Project Associate.

Payment Schedule:

- 20% on contract initiation
- 30% on submission of RIBA Stage 2
- 30% on submission of RIBA Stage 3
- 20% on submission of NLHF Delivery Phase Application documentation.

Award Criteria

Submissions must include details of:

- Methodology and understanding of the brief
- Project lead and team structure
- Relevant experience on comparable heritage and theatre projects
- Proposed timeline
- Cost breakdown including day rates, number of days, VAT and expenses.

Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Weighting
Understanding of the brief	20%
Relevant heritage experience and team credentials	30%
Proposed methodology and workplan	25%
Value for money and fee proposal	25%

Timetable

Issued: 10 Dec 2025

Site visits can be arranged during Dec 2025/Jan 2026.

Deadline for Expressions of interest submissions: 16 Jan 2026

Interviews: w/b 19 and 26 Jan 2026

Contract start: We expect the contract to commence as soon as possible from Feb 2026.

Please submit your proposal to:

David Ferrier, Director of Buildings and Operations

Email: development@hackneyempire.co.uk

Subject line: Architectural Services EOI Submission – Hackney Empire