



## **Invitation to Tender – Facilitation of Birmingham Economic Justice Action Network**

### **Background**

Barrow Cadbury Trust is an endowed foundation, committed to bringing about socially just change. While it uses its grant-making capacity to support other organisations, it is not primarily a grant-maker, but a change-maker using all its resources – its endowment, staff, investment portfolio, experience and reputation – to create change through partnership with others.

The Trust has recently undertaken a strategic review, with Trustees deciding that their Economic Justice programme should be focussed on Birmingham, where the Trust has historic roots and where it is already undertaking place-based activity. Trustees further agreed that the programme should be co-created with local partners and for the past six months its staff team and local advisory group<sup>1</sup> have been developing ideas for the programme. We are currently working up a number of streams of work, including an Economic Justice Action Network (the subject of this invitation to tender) and a support programme for people facing economic injustice wishing to participate in and lead work to change Birmingham's economy.

Other ideas are at an early stage of discussion, with the intention being to create a broad network of people from across Birmingham who wish to work together or in smaller groups to influence how Birmingham's economy is structured and managed to increase economic justice. The work is being supported and coordinated by the advisory group. The various workstreams, and the relationships, between them are illustrated in the Annex.

We have a clear vision for the Action Network and are seeking an expert facilitator to help realise that vision. We see the network as being a place for alliance-building, learning, developing ideas for change, and action.

### **What do we mean by Economic Justice?**

When we talk about economic justice we are talking about fairness, equality and people having enough money to live to a decent standard. It's about everyone benefitting from local economic activity, not just those who are in positions of power. It's stopping the trend we've seen over the past few decades of a growing gap between rich and poor. It's changing our social and economic structure so that people aren't disadvantaged by their gender or ethnicity. It's about clean air, good public services and more equal life chances.

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<sup>1</sup> B:rap, Birmingham Race Impact Group, Birmingham Settlement, Economy, i-SE, the Centre for Local Economic Studies, The Equality Trust and Thrive Together Birmingham.

The way Birmingham's economy is structured does not deliver economic justice. There are areas of persistent poverty, wide disparities between the most and least affluent sections of the population and, as in other areas, structural racism, sexism and other –isms prevents many people attaining a decent standard of living and others being ill-rewarded for the work they do.

Statutory agencies recognise the long-standing problems of economic exclusion and their strategies<sup>2</sup> reflect a desire for change. However, things are not moving far or fast enough, and new solutions are needed.

We think economic justice means:

- Everyone in Birmingham has sufficient material resources to have a fulfilling, sustainable life free from concerns about meeting basic needs (some people call this economic wellbeing):
- Structural barriers resulting from an individual's ethnicity, disability, gender, other protected characteristics and socio-economic status are removed;
- People at risk of or experiencing economic injustice are able to influence decisions about the local economy.

We will be evaluating our Economic Justice programme and, as part of that programme, the Action Network, against these three outcomes.

### **Our vision for the Action Network**

We know that a lot of individuals and organisations in Birmingham want to reduce the number of people living in poverty. They include individuals and charities campaigning for change; social enterprises providing opportunities for people underserved by traditional labour markets; people in the statutory sector that see they could do things differently and better; private businesses that want to use their knowledge and experience. We might have different perspectives or work on different issues, but we share a common view that change is possible and the need is urgent. We recognise that no single sector – the public sector, private business or civil society – can change things alone, but that we need to work together, harnessing the ideas, experience and energy of individuals and organisations to make Birmingham a city that works for everyone. The Action Network will open to anyone with an interest in making our economy work better for local people. What they'll have in common is ideas about how the local economy could be changed and a willingness to work with others to make a difference. We have prepared a thumbnail sketch of the type of person we hope will join the Action Network:

- Long-term commitment to Birmingham and its people
- Desire to see a more economically just Birmingham, with ideas for how this could be achieved

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<sup>2</sup> For example <https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/3izov5z2/inclusive-growth-decision-making-toolkit.pdf>, <https://www.wmca.org.uk/assets/newsroom/5282/growing-the-social-economy-in-the-wmca-area-report-1.pdf>, [https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/21159/birminghams\\_levelling\\_up\\_strategy](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/21159/birminghams_levelling_up_strategy).

- Ideas for how economic injustice can be tackled or systems changed to support people better
- Energy to engage in change-making activities (influencing, alliance-building etc)
- Open to ideas, listens to others and keen to learn and collaborate for change
- Willing to work with others beyond own personal interests or professional sphere to achieve greater economic justice
- Committed to anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practice
- Belief in the equity of different types of knowledge whether lived, learned or gained through practical experience

The vision for the Action Network is that it will build links between people and help catalyse system change, with time for informal exchange and more formal input. We see the Network as being a place for learning, developing ideas for change, and action. Ideas for content include:

- Learning:
  - Finding out more about how the economy works, why we have the patterns of inequality we see and how we can create change.
  - Learning from each other – about what Action Network members are doing to reduce economic inequalities in the city, and about what’s been done in the past that was successful;
  - Learning from what people and organisations from other parts of the country (and perhaps other parts of the world) are doing;
  - Developing new skills– for example about campaigning, building movements for change, or how to get your message across on radio or television.
- Sharing information about what’s already happening and how we can grow and spread good ideas;
- Identifying issues or actions that some or all members of the group can work on together. Those could range from aligning interests between two or three members to increase impact, to agreeing a common campaign or preparing a manifesto for transforming the economic system in Birmingham.

It is very important to us that the Action Network provides a welcoming, supportive, positive, egalitarian environment in which individuals, including those currently experiencing economic injustice, feel free to participate. To this end we are seeking a consultant(s) who can work with a diverse group to achieve positive outcomes. It is worth noting that the Trust will be able to meet attendance costs for those who would otherwise be excluded from participation and we have plans to resource and support a small group of individuals to participate in the Action Network and/or advisory group.

### **The task**

In the first instance we wish the facilitator to lead the delivery of a series over the course of a year, with an option to extend if the Action Network is assessed as successful – we hope the Action Network will continue for at least as long as the Trust’s current strategic period (which runs until the end of March 2027). At this stage, we expect the Action Network to

meet meeting every two months for up to half a day, face to face (unless members have a strong preference for virtual meetings), in Birmingham. This can be reviewed if the membership wants a different meeting pattern. The advisory group already has ideas about the content of the programme, but we expect this to be further shaped in discussion with the consultant. Once overall content is agreed, the consultant will be responsible for proposing structure and for delivery; the advisory group and Trust can help with brokering introductions if needed but the facilitator is expected to have ideas about what could be included in the series. It is anticipated that the advisory group and consultant will meet regularly to plan and review the programme and that there will be a constructive two-way exchange with the consultant offering feedback and suggestions to help achieve programme aims.

The advisory group will be responsible for recruitment to the Action Network. Our plan is to start with those we know who fit the “person specification”, with personal invitations to join, and build out from there, snowball fashion. We therefore anticipate that there will be an early phase (perhaps the first three meetings) of growth before the membership settles down. It is difficult to estimate how many will want to join but we hope for a committed membership 25-40 people. Members will not be expected to attend every meeting, but to agree to a set of principles and ground rules that will be decided early on.

We anticipate that the programme will launch with an introductory session, intended to explain the vision and inspire the audience to sign up to membership of the Action Network. We expect that from the start our determination to centre anti-racist and other forms of equity practice will be demonstrated.

### **Measures of success**

We will review progress of the Alliance after 8 months (four meetings) and make a decision about whether or not to extend the contract, and for what period, at that point. We welcome suggestions for success measures from the consultant and will develop the definitive list in consultation with them, but expect the criteria to include:

- Creation of an inclusive, open and creative culture within the Action Network;
- Delivery of a series of interesting, engaging and participative meetings that are well attended by Action Network members;
- Positive feedback from members with evidence of relationships built across traditional power and sector divides;
- Emergence of ideas and actions to collectively reduce economic injustice in Birmingham.

### **Values, skills and knowledge**

We expect individuals/organisations submitting tenders to demonstrate that they share our values, in particular that they:

- Work in a way that is empowering of others;

- Are committed to anti-racist, anti-sexist and anti-ableist practice and have experience of delivering activities that reflect this;
- Demonstrate adaptability, flexibility and responsiveness;
- Are respectful of both lived and learned experience, recognising the contribution each has to creating change.

We are looking for an expert facilitator, able to work with diverse groups to build on consensus, deal constructively with interpersonal tension and create a sense of common purpose.

We welcome approaches from individuals, organisations or partnerships. Our facilitator must be based in Birmingham and have a good understanding of its people and organisations. A detailed knowledge the economy and economics is not needed, process skills are more important than content knowledge, but an understanding of how people can work together to create change is essential.

### **Application process**

Submissions should be sent to [d.pippard@barrowcadbury.org.uk](mailto:d.pippard@barrowcadbury.org.uk) no later and should include:

- Your understanding of the role and what it will entail;
- Your experience of undertaking similar briefs, demonstrating your skills in creating inclusive, welcoming and purposeful events;
- The approach you would take to delivering this brief, including how you anticipate relating to the Trust, advisory group and programme participants.
- Evidence of your commitment to anti-racist, anti-ableist and anti-sexist ways of working as demonstrated by the approaches you have taken to previous commissions and your organisation's or your personal wider DEI practice.
- Any ethical or confidentiality issues you anticipate in delivering the brief.
- Short cvs and day rates/salary scales for each member of the project team.
- A note of the key risks you anticipate with the project and how you will mitigate these, including your approach to safeguarding
- A 12 month budget, broken down so we can clearly see allocations to different budget headings and including VAT if payable.

### **Timeline**

24/2/23	Advertisement
24/3/23	Deadline for submission of tenders
w/c 27/3/23	Shortlisting
20/4/23	Interviews
TBC	Meeting with advisory group to shape programme
June 2023	Anticipated launch of network

Contact Debbie Pippard, Director of Programmes, Barrow Cadbury Trust [d.pippard@barrowcadbury.org.uk](mailto:d.pippard@barrowcadbury.org.uk) with any questions.

## **Appendix - Relationship between different elements (so far) of the Trust's Economic Justice programme**

As mentioned above, through our Economic Justice programme we will have a number of different strands, intended to support people to create change from different points within the city and system. We are viewing the “universal set” of everyone engaged in the programme as our Economic Justice Alliance – a movement of people committed to and engaged in systems change. Though we recognise that different people will engage to different extents, it is important that everyone understands the different groupings and how each element fits together to make a whole. The programme elements under discussion at present are shown in the following diagram. Different elements are at different stages of development – each one is briefly described below.

Action Network: the subject of this tender. A network of individuals with ideas and energy to create change.

Grassroots influencers: proposal in development, will provide support for people facing economic injustice to participate in and lead work to change Birmingham's economy.

Organisers: a prospective partner is currently working up a proposal for providing a deep dive into organising for activists in Birmingham. The course would be provided in autumn 2023.

Policy makers: at an early stage – we are exploring how to work with the power-broker side of the equation to create conditions and open-mindedness to change. The cohort we are looking at will be drawn from manager/senior manager level in local statutory agenda. We hope some will be inspired to join the Action Network.

Community workers: at the idea stage at present, the proposal is to integrate thinking about social and economic justice, and how to achieve it, into training for people working in the voluntary sector.

We expect other elements to be incorporated as the programme proceeds and gaps/opportunities emerge.

It is important to us that the Action Network is inclusive. We anticipate that most of its members will be people with ideas already working for change, but we want it to be open and welcoming to all. We consider that relationships between people with differing experience are paramount in creating change, hence view diversity of experience among Action Network members as a strength.

Birmingham Economic Justice Alliance – groupings and relationships

The Alliance

