

## Cairngorms Capercaillie Project **INVITATION TO TENDER**

Analysing the genetic diversity of the capercaillie  
population in the Cairngorms National Park



Tender reference: CCP - Delivery Phase - 003



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## 1. Specification of services required including technical requirements

### **Project vision and background**

The Cairngorms Capercaillie Project, funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, is the coming together of a wider range of people in the Cairngorms National Park, including local residents and visitors, to help secure the long-term survival of capercaillie in the UK.

The UK capercaillie population is in serious decline. It's possible that there are now less than 1,000 capercaillie left and almost all of them live in the Cairngorms National Park. Action in the Park is therefore critical to prevent extinction in the UK.

Saving a species on the brink of extinction will always be complex, and there is no one single solution, the project's work therefore involves the following five areas of action which will be delivered across the Cairngorms National Park from 2020 to 2023.

1. Helping communities to create and deliver their own community-led actions for capercaillie.
2. Raising awareness of the plight of capercaillie and how people can help.
3. Researching the genetic diversity of capercaillie in the National Park to help inform action.
4. Improving and creating more habitat for capercaillie.
5. Strengthening current capercaillie monitoring to enable more informed decisions.

### **Researching the genetic diversity of capercaillie in the National Park to help inform action**

In 2019 over 1,200 capercaillie feathers were collected by the project from across the Cairngorms National Park. The project commissioned the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland's (RZSS) WildGenes laboratory to attempt to extract DNA from the feathers; assess the quality of DNA obtained; identify the species associated with each feather; identify the sex of samples identified as capercaillie; and identify the highest quality samples to analyse.

This work has now been completed and has provided DNA suitable for further genetic analysis. In total DNA extraction was attempted from 911 feathers and 1 capercaillie tissue sample. The quality and quantity of DNA is highly variable between samples but there are samples that provide DNA of sufficient quality to develop tools to guide future conservation action, especially if combined with DNA target enrichment techniques.

The full report detailing the outcomes of the work conducted by the WildGenes laboratory is available at [cairngormscapercaillie.scot/capercaillie-conservation](https://cairngormscapercaillie.scot/capercaillie-conservation)

The project is now seeking a contractor to analyse the DNA extracted by the WildGenes laboratory in order to help identify the genetic diversity of the capercaillie population in the Cairngorms National Park.

Once the analysis is complete the project will host a workshop for all interested organisations and individuals to collectively review the analysis and develop a coordinated action plan in response. Where possible, actions will be integrated into the project and delivered from 2022 to 2023. Other actions considered outside the scope of the project will be pursued through the wider capercaillie conservation community.



## Services required

We are seeking a contractor who can help us learn from the genetic material that the project has gathered to date. This material includes 383 capercaillie feather samples which could perform well in a microsatellite analysis; 663 samples which could be tested with hybrid-capture analysis; and 41 samples that could be used for reduced representation genome sequencing, such as ddRAD. We are seeking a contractor that is highly experienced in genetic and genomic analysis; competent and confident in employing a range of analysis techniques, including those outlined; and interpreting genetic research to effectively inform conservation action. As this work is focused on a threatened native species, we are keen to work with a contractor that is familiar with conducting genetic research on threatened taxa. The project is also made up of a diverse range of partners and is working to engage a wider range of people with capercaillie conservation. We are therefore seeking a contractor who will be able to help us effectively communicate the genetic research to a wide range of audiences.

### The specific services and outputs we require are as follows:

1. Prepare a genomic library using a subset of 45 high-quality samples from those collected.
2. Extract DNA from 4 additional tissue samples collected for inclusion in the genomic library. *The genomic library would then include 49 high-quality samples.*
3. Sequence and prepare a library report.
4. Deposit the sequence data in a public repository in order to create a library of reference data and provide a public resource for others to use.
5. Analyse 619 low-quality samples (DNA extracted from feathers), potentially using a targeted enrichment approach.
6. Provide genetic individual-level identification for each feather sample.
7. Report on the DNA analysis, including recommendations to inform the project's work.
8. If possible, source reference material from capercaillie populations outside the UK and draw comparisons in the final report to aid a broader understanding of the Cairngorms capercaillie population.
9. Reference, as far as possible, previous DNA research involving the Scottish capercaillie population to aid a historical understanding of the Cairngorms capercaillie population.
10. Work with the project to help develop and deliver a programme of communication activities that will enable a wider range of people to access and learn about the research.
11. Present the research results and recommendations at a workshop hosted by the project for all organisations and individuals interested in developing an action plan in response.

## Timescales

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Date</i>
Deadline for submissions	9 Nov 2020
Evaluate submissions	w/c 9 Nov 2020
Contract awarded, start-up meeting held and delivery milestones agreed	w/c 16 Nov 2020
Contract commences	w/c 16 Nov 2020
Contract ends	1 March 2022



## 2 Instructions to tenderers

### 1 Background to the Cairngorms National Park

National Parks in Scotland are set up under the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 and the relevant designation order (specific to each Park). The Act specifies four aims for National Parks (below). The Act specifies an overriding purpose, which requires the National Park Authority to ensure that the aims are collectively achieved in a coordinated way;

- to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area
- to promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area
- to promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public
- to promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities

### 2 Further information

- i. Enquiries should be made via Public Contracts Scotland. Closing date and time for queries is 12 noon on 2<sup>nd</sup> November.

### 3 Completion and submission of tender

- i. The tender must be typed and all prices specified in sterling. All tender forms can be signed electronically by an authorised signatory. Evidence of such authority may be required. Tenderers must complete a fee tender return which should include sufficient detailed information for the National Park to understand the bidder's pricing. This should be returned with the tender submission. Pricing should be inclusive of VAT.
- ii. Please upload your completed tender to Public Contracts Scotland no later than 12 noon on Monday 9 November 2020.
- iii. Any tenders received after 12 noon on Monday 9 November 2020 will not be considered. It is the responsibility of the tenderer to ensure that the tender is emailed on time.
- iv. Tender submissions should detail the following;

#### *Service management:*

- An indication of how you would meet the services required.
- Recent, relevant examples of completed work and your experience / the experience of your team.
- Your methodology for working with us to achieve the required outputs.
- Details of any matters which may have an impact on your ability to meet the requirements of this tender.
- A detailed delivery timeline.
- Your fee including a breakdown of all costs necessary to satisfactorily meet this brief and any VAT applicable.
- Last available audited accounts.
- The service and support location for this contract. Statements on equal opportunities and fair working practices.

#### *Providing a quality service:*

- How you will monitor and provide a consistently high level of service.
- Details of any quality management certification or other systems in place.



*Equal Opportunities & Fair Working Practices:*

Tenderers are asked to confirm they have policies in place to comply with all relevant statutory obligations and do not treat any groups of people less favourably than others because of their colour, race, sex, sexuality, nationality or ethnic origin. Tenderers are asked to confirm they have practices and policies in place that meet the requirements of Scottish Government's Fair Working Practices.

#### 4 Validity period

- i. Tenders must remain open for acceptance up to Monday 30 November 2020.

#### 5 Evaluation / acceptance of tender

- i. The contract shall be awarded on the basis of the tender which is economically the most advantageous having regard to price and quality ensuring also capacity to meet the CNPA's requirements in full.
- ii. The CNPA shall not be bound to accept the lowest or any tender.
- iii. The CNPA will not be responsible for any costs incurred by a bidder in making their submission.
- iv. Tenders will be evaluated on the following basis: 40% Cost and 60% Quality and Technical.
- v. The quality and technical elements are to be evaluated on the following basis:
  - Understanding of the brief 35%
  - Previous experience 55%
  - Financial viability 5%
  - Equal opportunities & fair working practices 5%

The National Park use the Scottish Government Procurement Journey scoring system for both price and quality. The quality elements will be scored on the following basis:

- **Unacceptable (0)** Nil or inadequate response. Fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement.
  - **Poor (1)** Response is partially relevant but generally poor. The response addresses some elements of the requirement but contains insufficient / limited detail or explanation to demonstrate how the requirement will be fulfilled.
  - **Acceptable (2)** Response is relevant and acceptable. The response addresses a broad understanding of the requirement but may lack details on how the requirement will be fulfilled in certain areas.
  - **Good (3)** Response is relevant and good. The response is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a good understanding and provides details on how the requirements will be fulfilled.
  - **Excellent (4)** Response is completely relevant and excellent overall. The response is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the requirement and provides details of how the requirements will be met in full.
- vi. The minimum score required that must be achieved for each of understanding of the brief and previous experience is 2. Any bidder not achieving the score of 2 for each of these elements will have been deemed to have not met our minimum requirements and the whole bid will be rejected.
  - vii. If the tenderer does not submit the required information as indicated they will score very low with that criteria and past experience shows that even though a tender submission might be the cheapest, it has failed on quality criteria because of lack of information.



## 6 Collusive tendering

- i. Any tenderer who:
  - a) Fixes or adjusts the amount of their tender by or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any person; or
  - b) Communicates to any person other than the CNPA the amount or approximate amount of their proposed tender (except where such disclosure is made in confidence in order to obtain quotations necessary for the preparation of the Tender or insurance or a bond); or
  - c) Enters into agreement with any other person that he shall refrain from tendering or as to the amount of any Tender to be submitted; or
  - d) Acts in any way to the general disadvantage or detriment of this tender process with the potential to limit the value of the contract to the public purse shall be disqualified without prejudice to any other civil remedies available to the CNPA and without prejudice to any criminal liability which such conduct by a tenderer may attract.

## 7 Errors & alterations

- i. Tenderers are advised that if the CNPA suspects there has been an error in the price of calculation in a tender it reserves the right to seek clarification as it considers necessary from the tenderer.
- ii. Tenders must not be qualified and tenderers must not make any changes to the tender documents.

## 8 Contract

- i. The successful tenderer will be expected to enter into a contract with the CNPA.
- ii. Following the evaluation of tenders based upon the quality/price evaluation as described earlier the CNPA will rank the contractors and award the contract to the highest ranked contractor. The CNPA will inform all tenderers who have been unsuccessful.

## 9 Sub-contracting

- i. Tenderers should outline details of any part of the proposed contract which they would envisage sub-contracting to a third party. The tenderer will have to demonstrate that any sub-contractors proposed will be at the responsibility of the tenderer and that the subcontractor meets at least all the qualities/standards of the tenderer.
- ii. If the tenderer intends to subcontract any elements of the service to be provided, any questions should be answered as if it were the tenderer who was carrying out the service.

## 10 End of contract

- i. Tenderers shall be required to maintain a high level of service during the end of contract phase.

## 11 Other suggestions

- i. Whilst every effort has been made to outline the CNPA's requirements, other suggestions will be welcomed. The CNPA is keen to form a pro-active partnership with its supplier going forward and tenders will be partially evaluated by reference to this area. If tenderers propose other services, they must provide a clear explanation of the benefits to the CNPA if the service is used. This should include any plans to introduce new products or services or amend the methodology etc.



## 12 Other charges

- i. Whilst every effort has been made to outline all the requirements of the CNPA, tenderers must ensure that their tender document covers all the services and charges that are applicable. For example, fees quoted must include travel costs and expenses. However, if there are additional charges relating to the production of reports or copying and distribution of documents these must be highlighted.

## 13 Freedom of Information

- i. The CNPA is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004. In the interests of transparency in the use of public funds and demonstrating best value for money, where any information you provide in your tender documents is the subject of a request under the aforementioned legislation the CNPA may be required to release your information into the public domain.

If there is any information which you feel is genuinely commercially sensitive and/or confidential please bring this information to our attention in your tender submission and we may be able to exempt its release under the aforementioned legislation, however this is not guaranteed.

If a request is received for information which would constitute in whole or in part information you have highlighted as commercially sensitive and/or confidential we will consult with you prior to responding to that request, and you may be required to provide evidence to support your position. If you do not highlight information to us at this stage, we will be entitled to assume that you do not consider any of the information contained within your tender submission to be commercially sensitive and/or confidential and may not consult with you in the event of a request being received. The final decision on the release of any requested information lies with the CNPA.

Any information that may be deemed to be commercially sensitive at the time of an information request is likely to lose such status over the passage of time and may not be considered commercially sensitive and/or confidential in perpetuity.

## 14 Purchase orders, billing & payment information

- i. Tenderers are required to submit a fixed price and provide a breakdown of all costs including fees and expenses and VAT for delivering the outputs detailed herein.
- ii. The CNPA will pay in arrears.
- iii. Purchase orders will be issued prior to commencement of all work.
- iv. Billing will be per hour or part thereof. Invoices should be issued with full breakdown in arrears. Electronic invoices will be accepted.
- v. The CNPA has a target of paying invoices within 10 days from receipt of an agreed invoice.

## 15 Third parties

- i. The CNPA, on behalf of the Cairngorms Capercaillie Project, will either directly employ or engage consultant advisors and co-ordinators to offer specialist advice. Tenderers should outline details of any part of the proposed contract where they would envisage contracting to a third party and or engaging specialist consultant advisors and co-ordinators. The tenderer will have to demonstrate that any proposed contractors, consultant advisors and co-ordinators meet at least all the qualities/standards of the tenderer and will be at the responsibility of the tenderer.

