

## Invitation to Tender Articulating the contribution of events to national pride

*Maximum spend £40,000 inclusive of VAT*

### Introduction

1. Spirit of 2012 is the London Olympic and Paralympic Legacy trust, established with a £47m endowment from the National Lottery Community Fund. We have funded over 200 projects across the UK, using the catalyst of events to improve wellbeing of individuals and communities. Spirit is a spend out trust, and we expect to close in January 2026. We awarded our last grant in November 2023.
2. Spirit of 2012 is seeking a partner to demonstrate the role that events play in strengthening national pride. Increased national pride and togetherness are often expected and assumed to be outcomes of events. This research will strengthen our understanding of how and why this happens, exploring how the relationship between events and national pride varies for different groups and across different parts of the UK. The findings will contribute to a stronger evidence base for event organisers to draw on when designing and delivering major events.

### Background to this research

In June, Spirit of 2012 published a report with Warwick Business School which called for the development of a national ambition for events, that celebrated their role in creating an inclusive, confident and progressive UK. It argued that major events provide the opportunity to:

- Promote excellence, ambition and pride at local and UK-wide levels.
- Connect new alliances and partnerships necessary for the successful delivery of inclusive and unifying events.
- Enable innovation and accelerate progress towards economic, social, cultural, and environmental outcomes that benefit destinations and the UK more generally.

In addition, we are interested in the power that events have to:

- Use arts and culture to reflect different aspects of nationhood and present the multi-layered and often complex picture of what nationhood means to different groups of people, whilst presenting a strong narrative of UK history and identity (for example, the London 2012 Opening Ceremony, Windrush 75 or the 14-18 Now Commemoration of WW1).
- Showcase the strength and vitality of the UK creative industries, to present a confident and creative vision of the country and its people on the world stage.
- Provide opportunities for people to come together and gain greater understanding of themselves and each other.
- Allow people the space to explore and present multiple (national) identities.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See *Seizing the Moment* (Katwala et al, 2022): “Sport has done this across the complex patchwork of national sporting identities in the UK. Great Britain competes in the Olympics and Paralympic Games, but is only occasionally the focus of sporting allegiance between those quadrennial showcases. It is England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland who compete in the Commonwealth Games, and as the representative national football teams. The Rugby Union six nations includes an all-Ireland team. Many ethnic minorities in Britain support cricket teams that reflect their Commonwealth roots, alongside home nations in the Olympics and football World Cup. Brexit will not end British participation in the European team for the Ryder Cup. National sporting teams – Team GB for the Union Jack, and the English, Scottish and Welsh football teams – currently rank as the primary public association with the national flags. This can provide a valuable counter-pressure in polarised times, as one potential antidote to efforts to narrow national symbols into reflecting allegiance to specific political projects, whether in mainstream politics or those out on the extreme fringes.”

As the government establishes its Soft Power Council (launched January 2025), there is a renewed focus on the contribution of the creative and sporting industries in showcasing the UK on the world stage.

At the same time, the extraordinary confluence of sporting, cultural and Royal events that we had in 2022 and 2023 has passed, and a combination of a challenging fiscal environment and concerns about the sustainability of current models of event delivery have contributed to a more cautious articulation of the power events can bring. The mixed success of 2022's Unboxed: Creativity in the UK has also perhaps dampened the appetite for creating home-grown events on that scale with the explicit aim of increasing national pride.

Yet we still host a wide range of international sporting events and cultural festivals each year. Euro 2028 is on the horizon, part funded through DCMS and its Arms Lengths Bodies. Privately funded events such as Glasgow 2026 and Invictus 2027 will be considering how they might incorporate cultural elements of storytelling through ceremonies and live sites to enhance the sporting offer, and organisers of high-profile commercial events, such as Glastonbury, are aware of their role in showcasing the UK internationally.

This research should capture and convey the contribution that major events, both publicly funded and commercial, can make. Its aim is to support policy makers use events as a strategic intervention to increase national pride.

### **Suggested approach**

This research should look at major events across arts and culture, sports, ceremonials and commemorations. Events often appear separately as sub-categories within these sectors, but as time-bound interventions that often involve elements of more than one of these sectors (as well related areas such as tourism) we believe there is greater value in considering them collectively.

We are open to different approaches but we expect the research should include:

- Both public polling and focus groups to help identify (a) pathways that show the relationship between events and national pride (b) similarities and differences between different groups.
- A small number of high-level stakeholder interviews.
- Engagement with secondary impact data and research on civic pride
- The identification of compelling case studies.

Major events can have a UK-wide impact, but the idea of national pride will take on different connotation in each of the four nations of the UK. The successful contractor will be expected to explore these nuances and your response to the ITT should explain how you will gather evidence in each Devolved Nation. Ideally, you will have members of your team or advisors to the project in at least 2 of the 4 nations.

National pride, with its direct links to patriotism, can be a sensitive topic to discuss. We are interested in how this affects the ability of events to create a unifying narrative that tries to transcend polarising rhetoric. We also want to explore nuances of this topic for different demographic groups and political beliefs. Please state how your methodology will achieve this.

### **Ways of working**

The commissioned organisation will work collaboratively with the Spirit team, and should build in time for a design phase and for reviewing reports in response to feedback. We want to work

flexibly, with the opportunity to revise the work plan by common agreement if some lines of inquiry prove more fruitful than others.

### Deliverables

Final deliverables can be discussed with the successful contractor but an indicative list involves:

- A short report summarising the findings aimed at policy makers. This could be a slide deck or more traditional report (max 20 pages, with 1-3-page summary version).
- Longer technical report including methodology, survey questions etc.
- A set of infographics, preferably animated.
- Short case study examples.
- Personal vignettes, potentially with accompanying video or photography.

Please indicate if your organisation can support with launching and publishing the research e.g. strength of relationship with policy makers, communications capacity etc.

### Expected Timetable

Call for tender issued	3 <sup>rd</sup> February 2025
Deadline for receipt of tenders	9am Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> March
Short-listed candidate interviews and appointments	w/c 17 <sup>th</sup> and 24 <sup>th</sup> March
Work to commence	As soon as possible
Final deliverables to be submitted	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2025

### How to tender

If you would like to be considered to undertake the research please detail your approach to addressing the following areas in no more than 3,000 words (excluding tables, references and example work):

1. Your understanding of the brief and your proposed methodology and approach to the research
2. Your ability to carry out the proposed work, including relevant skills and demonstrable thematic and technical expertise of your team.
3. A project plan with milestones, key activities and deliverables, including the specific roles of your team members, and how you will work with Spirit of 2012.
4. A budget, including a full breakdown of your proposed fees, identifying the day rate and seniority of members of staff assigned to each role. The proposed budget should not exceed £40,000 including all expenses, travel costs and VAT.
5. A minimum of two examples of related work carried out by your team.

### Assessment criteria

Our criteria for assessing the tenders includes quality and price and is set out below:

Assessment Criteria	Weighting
<b>Vision</b> <i>Understanding of the requirements for this Tender.</i>	20%

<p><i>Clear articulation of how this work would be useful, complement and build on existing work. Clear articulation of how it could be used by policymakers.</i></p> <p><i>Understanding of Spirit of 2012's role as a spend-out trust and implications of this on proposed work.</i></p> <p><i>Indicative ideas about polling and focus group questions are compelling and demonstrate both strong conceptual foundation as well as appreciation for what would be compelling for policymakers.</i></p>	
<p><b>Proposed approach and methodology</b>  <i>Clear, relevant and appropriate approach to the proposed work, demonstrating a nuanced understanding of the complex nature of national pride.</i></p> <p><i>Clear description of sampling strategy for focus groups and polling. Polling summary should detail which demographics you will be able to secure a representative sample from and focus group description should describe potential group composition with rationale.</i></p> <p><i>Clear timeline set out, with ability to meet short time span.</i></p> <p><i>Detail provided about how you will measure success of this work.</i></p>	30%
<p><b>Knowledge &amp; Expertise</b>  <i>Demonstrable thematic knowledge (national/civic pride, events, culture, sport).</i></p> <p><i>Technical knowledge and experience conducting UK-wide polling and focus groups of this nature.</i></p> <p><i>Previous examples demonstrate experience of producing work to influence policy</i>  <i>Skills and experience to meet the Tender's requirements, including skills around communication, design and qualitative research.</i></p>	30%
<p><b>Value for money</b>  <i>Day rates, number of days and balance of seniority levels in relation to proposed work.</i></p>	20%

Please send your proposal with the subject line **Submission for tender – National Pride and Events** to: amy.finch@spiritof2012.org.uk no later than **9am Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March**.

If you have any questions, or would like to discuss this tender invitation please email [amy.finch@spiritof2012.org.uk](mailto:amy.finch@spiritof2012.org.uk).

### **Background information: our previous related research**

A key theme in Spirit of 2012's recent research and funding has been around the role which events play in shaping peoples' attitudes towards the places they live. Our [Inquiry into the Power of Events](#) heard from many people about the contribution of events to pride in place. Large-scale events are historic in nature, giving people the chance to feel part of something bigger and become part of our national story. The inquiry included polling and focus groups conducted across 2022.

You can see how ordinary people speak about how events bring people together in these two short animations of focus group evidence:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ncGElioTgq8>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9AiT1Q7W8BY>

Spirit of 2012 has funded several previous pieces of work related to the themes of this tender including:

- [Seizing the Moment](#), a report by British Future as part of the inquiry explored the role of events in creating shared identities
- A [literature review](#) conducted by the Centre for Culture, Sport and Events at the University of the West of Scotland identifying the contribution of events in achieving EDI outcomes
- A deep dive by Belong into the [social cohesion outcomes of the events](#) we have funded focused in particular on community events
- An exploration of the [relationship between community and individual wellbeing](#) by the What Works Centre for Wellbeing which shows how our individual happiness is impacted by how we feel about where we live and the people who live there