

# John Ellerman Foundation

**Request for Proposal (RFP)**  
**Issued: 11 August 2021**

## **Researcher for John Ellerman Foundation History Project**

### **1. Introduction to John Ellerman Foundation**

John Ellerman Foundation is an independent grantmaking foundation that supports UK-registered charities with a turnover of between £100k and £10m delivering nationally significant work in the arts, social action and environment. Our aim is to advance the wellbeing of people, society and the natural world, and our grantmaking is focussed on the UK, with some funding for environmental work in the UK Overseas Territories. Our values are that we are a responsive funder; we are discerning; we have a personal touch; we work in a connected way; and we show flexibility.

The Foundation was created from a combination of the wealth and generosity of a father and son. Both were publicity-shy and very little is known about them. The first Sir John Ellerman (1862-1933) had built up from scratch an empire of shipping and other businesses in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. At the age of 23, his son, also called John (1909-1973), inherited his father's baronetcy and very considerable fortune. Although in charge of the family firm, the second Sir John's interests lay elsewhere. He became a distinguished zoologist and world expert in the study of rodents. He also divided much of his time between the UK and South Africa. In 1971, two years before his death, he donated the funds from the Ellerman Lines business to form the original Foundation. The current Foundation is governed by a Scheme, approved by the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales in March 2002. The previous Scheme brought together the funds originally donated in 1971, with a smaller trust fund set up under the first Sir John's will. The current Foundation is governed by a board of nine Trustees, with a staff of six.

### **2. Background**

2021 marks 50 years since our formation. As a result of this milestone, and in common with many other philanthropic foundation, we want to learn more about the origins of our endowment by exploring the history of the Ellerman family and companies. We intend to share our findings publicly.

We started with an Oral History project, which involved interviews with former employees of the Ellerman family business, acquaintances, family members, and former Foundation Trustees and Directors. All interviews have now been undertaken, and this project will be concluded shortly.

Over the last five years, we have commissioned more extensive documentary research, including initial archival analysis, into the business and philanthropic history of Sir John Ellerman II, his father, Sir John Ellerman I, and his sister Bryher (born Annie Winifred Ellerman, 1894-1983).

In late 2019, we discovered 237 letters written mainly in Afrikaans by our founder, Sir John Ellerman II. These letters were translated in 2020/21. The translations and the letters are not yet publicly available. The letters are stored at the UK Philanthropy Archive, and it is our intention that these letters, along with all or most of our current archive, will become a permanent and public, holding there.

The internal project team is comprised of Sufina Ahmad (Director) and Rian Trim (Office Manager and EA), with Board support from Trustees Peter Kyle and, as needed, Becca Bunce and Tufyal Choudhury. Our external advisers are [Dr Brian Hurwitz MD](#) (former Trustee), [Professor Peter Mandler](#) (University of Cambridge) and Beth Astridge ([UK Philanthropy Archive](#)).

Our [website](#) offers more information about our history, our current grantmaking and our investment activities.

### **3. The brief**

#### **a) Aim and objectives**

The aim of this commission is to bring together the data and information already collected and conduct further research to analyse the Ellerman family's business history, as much as their philanthropic one, in order to understand the origins of the Foundation's wealth and respond to this accordingly.

The researcher will need to propose a design for the scope of this commission. In terms of business history, this should include an analysis of the business related activities undertaken by Sir John Ellerman I and Sir John Ellerman II, such as acquisitions; investments; partnerships; and holdings, as it was the wealth generated from these activities which was subsequently used by Sir John Ellerman II to set up John Ellerman Foundation.

The research will result in the production of a publication that explains our origins, together with other digital/social media outputs. We are also seeking advice on the management of our archival holdings.

#### **b) Research questions**

Comprehensively and authoritatively, we would like to discover the following on the Ellermans:

- Family history, including spouses and offspring
- Education, training and personal interests
- Business interests and investments
- Business strategy and how they conducted their business activities and ethics e.g. human/worker rights, environmental awareness
- Geographical areas of business activity
- Evidence of early philanthropic activity and areas of interest
- Systems in place for managing wealth in life and death
- Business advisers and confidantes.
- The establishment of the foundations and its grantmaking

We are open to working with a researcher to refine the research questions further. We also recognise that it will be important to work with the researcher to determine how to prioritise the research questions in a way that meets the needs, including logistical/travel-related needs, of the researcher.

### **c) Approach**

To begin with, we believe that the researcher will need to review the Foundation's current archival holdings and materials from previous work that we have commissioned in relation to our history. On the latter, this includes three documents produced in March 2020 outlining what archival material is held within mainly UK-based archives in relation to Sir John Ellerman I, his son, Sir John Ellerman II, and his daughter Bryher.

The researcher will be expected to visit archives and other holdings where information about our founder and the business holdings from which our wealth is derived is held, both in-person and digitally. They will need to supplement this with desk-based research and interviews. This research will then result in the production of public-facing outputs.

The researcher will be supported to discuss, define and refine the project scope and research findings with the Foundation's internal project team, with Board support as needed. A Project Advisory Group will also be available to support this research. The researcher will be responsible for coordinating the activities of the Project Advisory Group and devising its Terms of Reference. However, the researcher will be supported to achieve this in partnership with the Project Advisory Group members, which will consist of external advisers, and representatives of the Foundation Board and staff team. The Project Advisory Group will meet periodically, and together with the researcher resolve research issues and opportunities.

John Ellerman Foundation will have ultimate ownership of the work produced. This includes the source research material gathered and any consequent outputs. The Foundation will agree with the researcher how they will approach and deliver the research, as well as any subsequent, suggested changes.

### **d) Audience, outputs and timetable**

The research audience comprises the following:

- The Foundation's current and former staff and Trustees
- The independent grantmaking sector
- Former, current and future grantees and applicants
- The wider charity sector
- The wider public.

We would like to be in a position to share a digital/in paper publication that explains our origins, together with other digital/social media output, by the end of 2022. We welcome your expertise and suggestions for how the findings could be presented in more creative and accessible formats, in order to make the research more engaging to multiple audiences within different contexts.

We are offering funding to support this work for 12-months. If more time is needed, then this will be agreed by the Foundation, in partnership with the researcher and the Project Advisory Group.

## **4. Researcher's skills, knowledge and values**

The researcher will have:

- Demonstrable academic qualifications, skills and experience in business and/or modern history
- Skills in relevant research methodologies, including working with archives, with experience of completing or working on similar research projects previously

- Experience in working with key stakeholders e.g. Trustees, archives, business holdings
- Strong analytical and organisational skills
- Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to build trust and rapport quickly
- Strong communication skills, including listening and questioning, and the ability to communicate information to a non-technical audience, both verbally and in writing
- Strong skills in project and risk management
- Creativity and flexibility to respond to issues quickly and adjust the approach to or style of delivery
- Commitment to the Foundation's aim, values and operations, and taking an ethical and values based approach to research.

Full details of your skills, knowledge and experience of relevant work must be included in your submission.

We are open to proposals from consortia of organisations or individual researchers, where there are appropriate measures in place to ensure clear lines of management and communication. Payment arrangements will be via a single organisation or individual, usually with the bid leader.

If you are based outside the UK or have another relationship with John Ellerman Foundation (e.g. hold a current grant) please contact us before preparing your proposal.

## **5. Budget**

We are not expecting proposals to request more than £60k and anticipate that one full time equivalent researcher will be required for a 12-month period. In addition to paying their salary, we will support other expenses incurred within agreed budgets, including supervision; travel; reasonable investment in infrastructure and resources to aid the project. The Foundation's archive and meeting room will be accessible subject to agreement. In addition, we intend to offer payment for travel and meeting preparation for members of the Project Advisory Group.

The budget offered should include a detailed breakdown of all costs and timescales for the duration, up to the end of 2022. The Foundation does not anticipate the inclusion of indirect overhead costs in the proposed budget breakdown. An appropriate allowance for expenses and management time should be included. In presenting your budget, please indicate VAT where this applies.

The costs for preparing the external-facing publication will be met separately by the Foundation and does not need to be included in your budget. If you have any suggestions for an alternative format output, please include any information about cost estimates separately to your overall budget.

## **6. Data protection, confidentiality and ownership**

The contractor must comply with all of the requirements of General Data Protection Regulation 2018 and shall ensure appropriate research consents for any data collection.

The contractor must obtain any required research ethics approval from their institution.

The contractor must maintain confidentiality about their dealings with John Ellerman Foundation.

John Ellerman Foundation will have ultimate ownership of the work produced. This includes the source research material gathered and any consequent outputs. It is possible that with the Foundation's prior written permission, the research findings can be used in future publications produced by the contracted researcher.

## 7. Safeguarding

If you have a safeguarding policy please attach this to your submission, along with answering the questions raised in Appendix A. If you do not have a safeguarding policy, please explain why this is the case.

## 8. Submission format

The proposal return should include:

- Name of organisation and/or individual(s)
- Contact name and details for all correspondence, including address, email and telephone
- Names, roles and brief CVs of individual(s) that will be involved
- An outline of your skills, suitability and relevant experience to deliver the project
- Details of the proposal
- Constraints, challenges and risks associated with the work and how you would mitigate them
- A brief example of how you have undertaken a comparable piece of work, together with example(s) of written, published output is essential, and links to your social media presence / output is desirable. Please include weblink(s) or append a full example.
- Budget outline
- Name and contact details of two referees (these will only be contacted for shortlisted proposals and we will inform you in advance).

The total maximum length of submission should not exceed **six** A4 pages. You may append the following outside of the page limit, if relevant:

- a full example of a previous project, and if applicable social media handle(s);
- full CV(s);
- answers to the safeguarding questions at Appendix A and your safeguarding policy.

Please return your submission to John Ellerman Foundation by email to [recruitment@ellerman.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@ellerman.org.uk). Your submission should be in electronic format. Please include the subject line "RFP: Researcher for History Project: name of individual(s) / name of organisation" and address your correspondence to Sufina Ahmad (Director).

The deadline for submission of proposal responses is **5pm on 13 September 2021**.

Proposal returns will be assessed against the criteria specified under section 4; the appropriateness and quality of the proposal to address the aim and approach; and value for money.

References may be requested from shortlisted applicants.

A summary of the archival holdings is available upon request.

## 9. Commissioning timescale

- *Date of issue of RFP:* 11 August 2021
- *Date for submission of responses:* 5pm on 13 September 2021
- *Invitation for interviews by:* 24 September 2021
- *Interviews* Week beginning 4 October 2021
- *Appointment* Week beginning 1 November 2021

Respondents are asked to indicate their availability for an interview during week beginning 4 October 2021 either via Zoom or at the Foundation office, and at what time(s).

## 10. Contacts

For queries on this RFP please contact Rian Trim, Office Manager and EA at [recruitment@ellerman.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@ellerman.org.uk) or call +44(0)20 7451 1470

Registered address: Aria House, 23 Craven Street, London WC2N 5NS

Registered Charity Number: 263207

[Website](#)

## Appendix A

<b>Question</b>	<b>Assessment criteria</b>
<p>Do you have a safeguarding policy for children and vulnerable adults?</p> <p>If yes, please attach to your proposal</p>	<p><i>Any contractor working with children and vulnerable adults must have a written policy</i></p> <p><i>The policy should be in line with current statutory guidance</i></p> <p><i>The policy should be dated</i></p> <p><i>Does the policy name the safeguarding lead?</i></p> <p><i>The policy should have a specified review date within a reasonable timescale (not exceeding 2 years)</i></p> <p><i>The policy should reference that DBS checks will be undertaken for those working directly with children and vulnerable adults</i></p>
<p>When was the last time your safeguarding policy was formally reviewed?</p>	<p><i>The policy should have been reviewed within the last 2 years</i></p>
<p>What safeguarding training is undertaken by you / your employees and others working with your organisation (e.g. Board, volunteers)?</p>	<p><i>Individuals / organisations working with children and vulnerable adults should provide training of an appropriate level to all those who are involved in the organisation's work relating to children and vulnerable adults. This may include employees, Board and volunteers.</i></p>
<p>How do you ensure that any partners, contractors or freelance employees involved in your work with children or vulnerable adults have appropriate levels of safeguarding awareness / training?</p>	<p><i>It is the responsibility of the primary contractor to ensure that any third party, such as a partner organisation or a freelance employee has adequate safeguarding awareness and training and to assure John Ellerman Foundation of this.</i></p>