

BBC RADIO 4 INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION TENDER BRIEF

Programme type: GARDENERS' QUESTION TIME

Reference number: 47110

**Eligibility: All independent companies which meet the production criteria
Not open to BBC departments**

Tender sponsor: Denis Nowlan

Slot: FRIDAY 1502 (rpt SUNDAY 1402)

Duration: 43'

Estimated number: 156

Transmission: August 2012 to July 2015

Price range: £8,300 - £9,300

EDITORIAL GUIDE

This tender is in line with our policy of offering independent suppliers opportunities to tender for long running business. We are looking for a single company to supply this high profile weekly strand. Our objective is to offer a three year contract for the successful tender.

The brief

Gardeners' Question Time (GQT) has been one of Radio 4's most popular programmes since its first broadcast in 1947. It attracts a weekly audience, including the repeat edition, of c.1.4 million.

The show currently originates on Friday afternoon and repeats on Sunday. The essential format is simple: a panel of experts answers questions (of which they do not have prior notice) posed by members of the audience. It also includes brief features. GQT is chaired by Eric Robson and we look forward to continuing to work with Eric over the course of the tender period. The programme is recorded as an OB at a different venue each week. The audience is often composed of members of gardening clubs but not exclusively so.

We are interested to know how applicants would plan to develop the programme editorially over the course of the tender period, while remaining true to its core values.

Applications will be assessed against the following criteria. Production criteria and editorial criteria are all equally weighted.

Production criteria

This tender is open to all independent companies who can demonstrate the following:

- excellent record in factual radio production at Producer and Executive Producer levels
- ability to manage compliance from within the company's core team
- high level of business competency
- resilient capacity to deliver weekly programmes throughout the year
- extensive experience of outside broadcasting with audiences
- continuing access to reliable and up to date OB facilities
- knowledge of relevant Health & Safety legislation and comprehensive Health & Safety policy

Editorial criteria

- informed passion for the subject
- understanding of the place of GQT in the media landscape
- understanding of the audience and its changing needs, particularly in light of the BBC Trust Service Licence Review published in February 2011: http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/our_work/service_reviews/service_licences/reviews_radio_347.shtml
- fresh approaches to a familiar format and ideas of how to widen and deepen its relationship to the audience, while remaining true to its core values
- in light of the constraints on the licence fee, we wish to see a choice of editorial propositions from each bidder, at different price points in the range quoted above, with a detailed budget for each treatment
- ideas about the role of digital media, within the available budget
- detailed understanding of BBC Editorial Guidelines and commercial policy and how they would impinge on management of the strand

Commercial criterion

We are interested in ideas for commercial exploitation of the programme brand, which we may take into account if they are particularly attractive and do not compromise the public service value of the programme. In our assessment of bids, this criterion will be less heavily weighted than those above.

PROCESS

We will not run pre-offers meetings or be able to offer any editorial consultation in the preparation of bids. Denis Nowlan will be happy to take calls on questions of process.

Key dates

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • 9 November 2011 | Tender document published |
| • 8 December, 1200 noon | Deadline for submissions in Proteus |
| • 20 December | Results of shortlisting communicated |
| • 2nd week of January 2012 | Interviews with shortlisted bidders |
| • 31 January | Final decision |

Submissions should be entered in Proteus under

- Network Radio 4
- Year 20122013
- Round 7
- Brief 47110 Gardeners' Question Time

We will only consider submissions in Proteus. Do not submit glossy documents or any other hard copy. If you wish to submit examples of audio, this should be sent via an online file sharing system to Léa Lauvray. lea.lauvray@bbc.co.uk

Shortlisting will be done by Denis Nowlan (Network Manager) and Michael Davis (Finance Manager).

Shortlisted applicants will be invited for a 60' interview in January with Gwyneth Williams (Controller), Denis Nowlan, Michael Davis and Leigh Aspin (Interactive Editor).

BBC Audio & Music Business Affairs will issue a contract to the successful applicant.

We will not give feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

Eric Robson is happy to take a call from bidders. Contact Léa Lauvray for his details.

For a pack of audience data, contact Léa.

Please bear in mind that the current suppliers are under no obligation to provide information or to provide copies of archive programmes.

Denis Nowlan
Network Manager, BBC Radio 4

020 7765 4615
denis.nowlan@bbc.co.uk