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Planning

Design Excellence Panel - Preliminary Market Engagement Notice

West Midlands Combined Authority

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

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Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-055b19

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Scope

Reference

PRT-TFWM-WPG-2025-0007

Description

Introduction/Background

It has been identified by WMCA that greater focus on design excellence is required within Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) to ensure that projects are designed and delivered to the highest standard and to promote TfWM's mission to embed equality, accessibility, diversity, inclusion, disability, safety and sustainability across its network. At its core, design excellence is the amalgamation of functionality, aesthetic, and innovation, which will enhance customer experience and increase patronage through the pursuit of positive design.

To ensure this mission is fulfilled, WMCA are seeking to create a Design Excellence Panel, made up of a number of specialists across various sectors to inform decision making and assist with quality assurance within TfWM. The panel will act as a critical friend to project development and act accountably through positive interactions.

Scope and programme

Initially, the panel will be formed for 1 year, with reviews and evaluations happening regularly to ensure the panel remains relevant and forward thinking. Workshops with panel members will occur every other month but may increase based on need and demand. Site visits, where required, will occur on agreed dates.

WMCA are looking initially to build a group of around 20 people from diverse professional backgrounds to assist with our vision, with the view of potential growth over time to allow focus on regions within the West Midlands.

These individuals will be:

- Architects
- Inclusive Design Specialists
- Place Curators and Artists
- Access Consultants
- Urban Planners
- Landscape Architects
- Heritage and Conservation Experts
- Sustainability Consultants
- Public Health Experts
- Civil Engineers
- Structural Engineers
- Charitable organisations
- Community Groups

The panel will also assist with the creation of and have an interest in the creation of 'design guides' that are focused on specific areas of transport/infrastructure and public realm design.

Members must either live within the West Midlands or have worked within the West Midlands for a significant period and demonstrate a good working knowledge of the region and its demographic. The rationale here is that they are a group of people who understand the needs of the West Midlands and will be best placed to provide support to ensure that our work is as reliable, joined up and fit for purpose.

The panel will be made up of around 20 members. Each workshop will be made up of 5 to 8 panel members, the project manager or sponsor, the designers and any other party with vested interest.

Organisations will be compensated £300 for a half-day (3 hours) workshop and £600 for a full day's (6 hours) workshop for each panel member that attends. Panel members will be selected by WMCA to attend a workshop. There will be no guarantee on the number of workshops that a panel member is selected to attend.

The Panel will:

- Develop and implement design principles aligned with TfWM's local transport plan.
- Champion health, safety and environment.
- Provide expert design advice and assurance at key project milestones.
- Foster cross-disciplinary collaboration between architects, engineers, planners, public health and stakeholders.
- Champion innovative design solutions to support behaviour change, inclusivity, disability and sustainability.
- Use evidence-based practice within its recommendations.
- Monitor and evaluate design outcomes to ensure continuous improvement.
- Implement a Placemaking policy and act as an enabler for future development and regeneration.
- Harness industry standards and champion the development of the region through learning and development from within.
- Be accountable for their comments and how they shape project development.

The panel will not:

- Review or comment on technical standards of track design (Metro or Rail)
- Detract from Mandatory design standards created by statutory bodies
- Ignore statutory requirements and standards that cannot be amended (e.g. Building Regulations)
- Comment or review anything that may not be agreed within the panels scope at the start of a project.
- Make final decisions on project budgets or procurement routes. The final decision will rest with project team and WMCA governance routes.
- Enforce its comments on projects.

Total value (estimated)

- £72,000 including VAT

Below the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026
- Possible extension to 31 August 2028
- 3 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 71220000 - Architectural design services
- 71240000 - Architectural, engineering and planning services
- 71313000 - Environmental engineering consultancy services
- 71320000 - Engineering design services
- 71400000 - Urban planning and landscape architectural services
- 92312000 - Artistic services

Contract locations

- UKG - West Midlands (England)

Engagement

Engagement deadline

24 July 2025

Engagement process description

If there are any individuals within your organisation who would be suitable to become a Design Excellence Panel member, please ensure you are registered on Bravo Solution, WMCA's e-tendering portal, and monitor Bravo for the release of any bid documents.

The link to register on bravo is <https://wmca.bravosolution.co.uk/esop/quest/login.do>.

Participation

Particular suitability

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)
- Voluntary, community and social enterprises (VCSE)

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

25 July 2025

Contracting authority

West Midlands Combined Authority

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PGMD-1353-PZVX

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Organisation type: Public authority - sub-central government