



# Invitation to tender

## Development of Life Story Book Box for existing 1:1 Dementia Shared Reading programme

### Summary

Scottish Book Trust wishes to expand the reach and impact of the Reading is Caring programme. To support this, we are seeking a consultant to create a co-designed toolkit and guidance to develop and implement our existing “Life Story Book Box” tool.

The new model should support people living with dementia to create their own “Life Story Book Box” during the earlier stages of their dementia journey, and explore how this tool can be used by carers to support person-centred practice. The consultant will co-design an actionable, practical guide for the creation and use of this resource by people living with dementia. This builds upon and complements the training currently provided to carers of people living with dementia to co-design “Life Story Book Boxes” in later stages of the dementia experience by giving the individual greater ownership and agency.

This resource will supplement the existing Reading is Caring shared reading approach.

Reading is Caring - Dementia Support - Scottish Book Trust - Scottish Book Trust

This project will run from **September 2026 – February 2027**.

The budget available for this evaluation, including VAT and expenses, is no more than £9k. Applicants should provide details of their approach against this budget.

The deadline for tenders is **9<sup>th</sup> August 2026**.

Interested parties can contact [readingiscaring@scottishbooktrust.com](mailto:readingiscaring@scottishbooktrust.com) with any questions about the project or tender process and/or register to receive answers to any questions submitted. All questions and/or registrations should be submitted by 9am on 27th July. Responses to all questions submitted will be circulated to those who register by 5pm on 29th July.

### Scottish Book Trust

Scottish Book Trust is a national charity that believes books, reading and writing have the power to change lives.



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A love of reading inspires creativity, improves employment opportunities, mental health and wellbeing, and is one of the most effective ways to help break the poverty cycle.

Reading together and sharing personal stories is a powerful mechanism to connect people, support relationships and provide activities which prioritise authentic, equal participation from each partner.

More information about Scottish Book Trust can be found at the link below, along with a copy of the Annual Review.

<http://scottishbooktrust.com/about/what-we-do>

## Context

We launched our Reading is Caring programme in 2019 to develop confidence and provide structure for person-centred shared reading for people living with dementia.

Through rigorous evaluation and co-design with people living with dementia, family care partners and professional care partners, Reading is Caring has been shown to provide meaningful connection during the dementia journey, reduce instances of distress and facilitate engagement with medical and personal care. To enhance the personalised impacts of Reading is Caring, we intend to develop a Life Story Book Box model, with particular emphasis on early stage/post diagnosis interventions to act as a companion during the dementia journey.

## Project scope

This project will:

- Develop guidance on how to create a “Life Story Book Box” as a personalised resource for people living with dementia and their carers [both family care partners and professional care partners]. This will significantly enhance the existing “Life Story Book Box” guidance for the Reading is Caring programme, and will require co-design, piloting and evaluation. The Life Story Book Box will contain curated items and reading materials that remind the person living with dementia of key memories through sensory objects, photographs, books, postcards, letters etc as appropriate. It will be something that they can take with them through their experience of dementia, to be used as a resource for regular shared reading with carers and families.
- Provide guidance on the curation of personalised reading material that is inclusive, culturally appropriate and meets the varied needs of people living with dementia and the people who care for them from a person-centred approach.

# Invitation to tender

- Give particular attention to the role of the Life Story Book Box in early stages of dementia diagnosis, and working with person-centred principles to ensure dignity and autonomy for people living with dementia.
- Consider dementia friendly design principles when co-developing the Life Story Book Box model and guide.
- Align with the existing Reading is Caring strategy to provide person-centred, shared reading experiences to mitigate distress, strengthen connection, and maintain cognitive health.
- Engage people living with dementia and their carers in design workshops [we anticipate two workshops involving ten participants representing people living with dementia and their carers].
- Develop an accessible but commercially sustainable model for Life Story Book Boxes, including any findings around potential Life Story Book box commercial opportunities.

## By:

- Co-designing a guide and/or toolkit for creating and using a meaningful Life Story Book Box for people living with dementia
- Testing the materials with an audience of people living with dementia, family care partners and professional care partners in multiple settings and at different stages of the dementia journey, and revising based upon learnings.
- Ensuring that all participant engagement, data collection, storage and transfer activities comply with UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 requirements, with appropriate consent, confidentiality and data security measures in place.

## Project Outcomes:

The evaluation of the development of Life Story Book Boxes will explicitly assess progress against the outcomes of the project:

- People living with dementia experience better one-to-one relationships with their carers and as result, their feelings of connectedness and personhood are improved
- People living with dementia experience reflections through sharing stories, which helps them to engage in the present in a more meaningful way
- People living with dementia have long-term memories evoked, which encourages better listening and so improves their relationships in the present
- Carers for people living with dementia are better able to manage their own mental health and wellbeing using reading for pleasure.



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## Project timeline:

The anticipated timeline is as follows:

|                                |                                                      |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| w/c July 20th                  | Project tender goes live                             |
| 28 <sup>th</sup> July 9am      | Submit questions or register interest in the project |
| 29th July 5pm                  | Questions & Answers circulated                       |
| Sunday, 9 <sup>th</sup> August | Deadline for tenders                                 |
| w/c 24 <sup>th</sup> August    | Interviews with shortlisted applicants               |
| September 2026                 | Project commences                                    |
| February 2027                  | Project deadline                                     |

## Budget

The budget available for this project, including VAT and expenses, is £9,000. Within this, we expect two co-design workshops for people living with dementia and their carers. Separate provision has been made for fees to participants of the co-design workshops.

## Co-designed deliverables

All co-designed project deliverables should be provided using accessible language and formats. It is anticipated that successful completion of the project will provide the following:

- August 26: Detailed plan of approach and budget, addressing any safeguarding and ethical considerations [tender stage]
- September 26: Detailed work plan
- September 26 – February 27: fortnightly check ins and progress update with Scottish Book Trust
- September – November 26: facilitation of two co-design workshops
- November 26: Draft toolkit and/or guide for the creation of a Life Story Book Box
- January 27: Delivery of finalised toolkit and/or guide for the creation of a Life Story Book Box, incorporating Scottish Book Trust feedback.
- February 27: A report to include learnings from the co-designed process, including recommendations for further developments.



# Invitation to tender

- February 27: Case studies to be used as practice examples including impact stories for use with partners and on Scottish Book Trust platforms [web, social media, print copy].
- Source data gathered during the evaluation should be transferred to Scottish Book Trust at the end of the project

All materials, resources and outputs developed through this project will become the intellectual property of Scottish Book Trust.

The successful consultant will have access to existing Reading is Caring training materials, evaluation reports and programme staff to inform the development of the group model.

## Assessment criteria:

Submissions will be assessed by a panel from Scottish Book Trust. We are looking for a consultant who can demonstrate a strong alignment with our vision and values, and with relevant skills and experience.

Applications will be evaluated against the following criteria:

- **Fit with brief:** Demonstrated understanding of the work, our organisational ethos, and the Reading is Caring programme.
- **Training delivery:** A proven track record in designing and delivering effective toolkits and/or training guides, ideally with consideration to design principles relevant to dementia.
- **Methodology and approach:** Experience working with a variety of evaluation methods, with a strong focus on co-production and integration.
- **Audience expertise:** Experience of co-design and engagement with people living with dementia, professional and unpaid carers, older people and/or health and social care audiences
- **Safeguarding and ethics:** Evidence of robust consideration given to ensuring safeguarding and ethics are built into the project, backed by experience implementing these with relevant audiences.
- **Value for money:** Clear justification of the proposed budget relative to the number of hours and/or the overall scale of work.

## Submissions

We request that tenders are submitted by email to [readingiscaring@scottishbooktrust.com](mailto:readingiscaring@scottishbooktrust.com) by **5pm on Sunday, 9<sup>th</sup> August**. Interviews are proposed for **w/c 24<sup>th</sup> August**.



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## **Tenders should include:**

- A description of how the work will be carried out, relative to the timescale
- The applicant's proposed approach, including a detailed breakdown of how the £9k budget will be allocated.
- Details of how the applicant will cover the full scope of this brief
- Details of how the applicant will tackle the challenges of the project
- Details of how the applicant will incorporate safeguarding and ethics best practice into both their work on the project and the final toolkit and/or guide.
- Details of the applicant's skills, knowledge and experience, including relevant references and testimonials from previous clients
- A breakdown of how the work will be carried out within the timescale

Scottish Book Trust currently have two tenders open for work related to Reading is Caring. If you are interested in undertaking both pieces of work, please note this in your application and reflect this in your suggested timings and budget allocation. We are open to some flexibility on the suggested timescale.

Interested parties can contact [readingiscaring@scottishbooktrust.com](mailto:readingiscaring@scottishbooktrust.com) with any questions about the project or tender process and/or register to receive answers to any questions submitted. All questions and/or registrations should be submitted by 9am on 27th July. Responses to all questions submitted will be circulated to those who register by 5pm on 29th July.