

RURAL URBAN SYNTHESIS SOCIETY

Landscape design & coordination contractor

Description of deliverables
& recruitment briefing

June 2024



Overview

The Rural Urban Synthesis Society (RUSS) is seeking to deliver on our landscape project, now that capital funding has been secured. This will support one of the final stages of our newly completed Church Grove all-affordable housing scheme in Ladywell, London SE13.

We are seeking a **freelance landscape designer and coordinator** person(s), acting as lead to complete the landscape design and planting matrix, along with procurement management of plants, landscape and play furniture, volunteer resource management, funders reporting and overall delivery of the landscape project.

RUSS is looking to mobilise this project June/July 2024 in accordance with funders timescales.

This briefing document provides information about who we are, who we are looking for and how to apply.

You can get in touch with us with any questions or for an informal chat about the roles at info@theruss.org

About RUSS

RUSS is a Community Land Trust that builds sustainable, permanently affordable and community-led housing in London. Established in 2009, it has grown from a small group of friends meeting around a dinner table to an organisation with over 1000 members, widely regarded as a pioneer in the community-led housing sector.

We empower residents to shape all stages of development, from design to construction. By learning and working together, residents form a collaborative community who take on the ongoing stewardship of completed developments.

In early 2024 we completed our 36 all-affordable homes scheme, with an 'affordability in perpetuity' model in place that means they remain genuinely affordable for future generations. The homes have a mixture of tenures, including shared ownership, affordable rent and social rent. The development includes a communal garden, a publicly accessible playground and shared facilities including laundry, office, guest flat and Community Hub. A group of future residents had co-designed the scheme, with most residents having recently either moved in or are in the final stages of fitting out and completing their own flats.

We welcome partners and contractors to work with us who share our vision and passion.

Role description: Landscape design & coordination contractor(s)

The **Landscape design & coordination contractor(s)** will finalise our outline landscape design, order plants and equipment, ensure value for money, coordinate volunteer activity on communal planting and gardening days, undertake funder reporting and deliver the landscape project. This has been split into two roles: landscape designer and landscape coordinator, ideally undertaken by one person:

Landscape designer

- Design, specify, and generate a planting matrix: 15 days
- Tender with suppliers 5 days

Sub-total 20 days @ £300/day.

Total fee £6,000

Landscape coordinator

- Obtain quotations and procure landscaping items including: play area, seating, picnic benches, vegetable planters and composter
- Source donations in kind
- Set up interview process for candidates to design play area and art wall
- Manage quotations and invoices, reporting to funders, donors & RUSS
- Coordinate all volunteer planting & landscaping days
- Develop a landscape Project programme
- Lead and provide a visible presence for the project.

Sub-total 15 days @ £300/day

Total fee £4,500

A pro-active and responsive approach, with attention to detail, costs and timescales are important to the role. In addition, a friendly manner, good communication and volunteer management skills are important in supporting the timely and successful conclusion of the landscape project.

Specifically, the successful candidate:

- Will be a good administrator and communicator, with close attention to detail.
- Be able to manage, track, communicate and resolve landscaping project queries in a clear, prompt and efficient way.
- Be supported by, and engage with, our Managing Director, other RUSS volunteers and Trustees, guided by our landscape design secured at Planning
- Be able to attend our site and administrative base in Ladywell, Lewisham, London SE13 when required, including volunteer and contractor days. They may also be required to attend adhoc Meetings with the Board, wider RUSS team and funders. Hybrid/online options can be available for those that can't make every meeting in person.

Skills and behaviour

In addition to being able to deliver on the above tasks, the ideal candidate will:

- Have strong commitment to equality and diversity.
- Be values-led, with a strong commitment to RUSS's mission and values.
- Act with integrity, openness and accountability.
- Be well-organised and able to manage competing priorities.
- Be able to work collaboratively with a diverse range of people, as well as being able to take the initiative and lead tasks.

Time commitment & remuneration

- Contract duration: June – October 2024.
- Rate: per the above Role description

How to apply

Diversity

RUSS seeks to reflect the community it operates in, and would welcome applications from people from ethnic minority groups, women, LGBTQ+ people and people with disabilities. You can see our [Equality and Diversity policy](#) on our website.

We particularly welcome applications from people with a connection to Lewisham or South London.

To apply for the role, send the following to info@theruss.org:

- Your CV
- A supporting statement (up to 1 side of A4), setting out why you are applying and the skills and experience that you will bring to the role
- The successful candidate(s) will be requested to provide references

Deadline: Friday 28th June, 12 noon.

RUSS encourages early expressions of interest and applications.

We will review applications as they are received and may close the recruitment process early if a suitable candidate is identified.

RUSS is committed to equal opportunities and is an inclusive organization. Please let us know about any adjustments that we can make or support we can give you with making your application by contacting info@theruss.org

Feel free to get in touch with any questions ahead of applying, including to arrange an informal chat about the role – contact Eleanor Margolies (Managing Director) on 07905 972744 or anurag@theruss.org

Background information about RUSS

We spread our model and support the community housing sector through the **RUSS School of Community-Led Housing** with a calendar of public events. The School delivers a rotating programme of modules, sharing the lessons from RUSS's many years of experience on how to set up and run a community-led housing project.

Our **Community Hub** in Lewisham, built by over 90 volunteers in 2019, serves as RUSS's administrative base. It is also available for hire to individuals, groups and organisations as an affordable, meeting, event or hot-desking space. The Hub has hosted events for London Open House for a number of years and teaching sessions for the Lewisham School of Muralism. RUSS volunteers have recently secured permanent Planning Consent for the Hub, so our community and future residents can benefit from the space for years to come.

More information on RUSS can be found on our website at <https://www.theruss.org>

Our volunteers and residents are the heart of our organisation and deliver on a wide range of projects and tasks.

Governance

RUSS is a registered Community Benefit Society with charitable status. As of 2023, RUSS has over 1,000 members, many of whom live and work in the Lewisham area. As an organisation, RUSS is governed by the RUSS rules, which are based on the model rules for Community Land Trusts.

RUSS is ultimately led by its members. Anyone can become a member by buying a community share for £1. Each member has one vote in key decisions, including the appointment of members of the Board of Trustees.

RUSS's Board of Trustees are collectively responsible for setting the overall strategic direction for the organisation, monitoring performance against its strategic objectives and ensuring that the organisation's resources and finances are being managed effectively. Some elements of the Board's work are carried out through sub-committees and working groups, which can be made up of trustees, staff and volunteers.

Details of our current Board of Trustees can be found on our [website](#).

The key sub-committees and working groups currently in operation are as follows:

- **Finance and Audit Committee:** Produces financial statements, management accounts and other financial reports; oversees the annual statutory audit and advises the board about the safeguarding of RUSS's assets.
- **Future Projects Working Group:** Identifies opportunities for future housing projects within London, bringing proposals to the Board of Trustees; liaises with land-holding bodies on behalf of RUSS for the purpose of securing sites when authorised by the Board of Trustees.

- **RUSS School:** Produces and delivers content for educational courses and School events.
- **RUSS Hub:** Operating and maintaining the Hub for the benefit of future residents and the local community.

Our volunteers support, and are supported by, other volunteers, our Trustees, our small team of paid staff and contractors.

Our current and former volunteers are a group of talented, knowledgeable and inspired people who have helped turn RUSS's vision into a reality.