

Expression of Interest: Opportunity to operate the historic Compressor House in the Royal Docks

Frequently Asked Questions Supplement

This should be read in conjunction with the Expression of Interest (EOI) Brochure

1. **Question:** What are the stages of the process?
Answer: This is a two-stage process with an EOI stage and a second stage for shortlisted operators, a full application to the [Royal Docks Good Growth Fund](#) (RD GGF). The EOI process is just over four weeks. It is likely that three or four interested organisation's will be invited to submit more detailed proposals via the RD GGF process.
2. **Question:** Are business rates payable?
Answer: Yes. The current rateable value of Compressor House is £74,000. Under the standard rate of 54.6p would result in estimated business rates of £40,404 (deductions may be available). This calculation is illustrative and potential operators are encouraged to discuss business rate issues with the local authority. Should, as planned, part of the building be let as ancillary offices, this would reduce business rate exposure.
3. **Question:** Are service charges payable?
Answer: Yes, there are two service charges payable – Royal Business Park Service Charge amounting to approximately £2k per annum and the Royal Docks Management Authority [Royal Docks Management Authority \(RoDMA\)](#) service charge, which vary from year to year. Service charges are currently estimated to be in the region of £5,000 per annum.
4. **Question:** What condition will the kitchen and bar area be in?
Answer: The kitchen and bar area will be taken to first fix. It will be the responsibility of a future operator to complete and fund further stages to meet their requirements.
5. **Question:** Will there be funding and /or furniture in the event area?
Answer: No. The visuals are for illustrative purposes only.
6. **Question:** Would an operator be responsible for all utilities including water, electricity and broadband?
Answer: Yes.
7. **Question:** Are there opportunities to develop partnerships with local businesses and anchor institutions?

Answer: Yes. The Royal Docks is home to a range of high-profile organisations across commercial, academic and community sectors, providing opportunities for impactful partnerships and collaborations.

8. **Question.** Are there examples of projects that might be useful inspiration?
9. **Answer.** While potential partners will clearly bring their own vision and inspiration some useful examples (not exhaustive) are :-
- [Docking Station Medway](#) – as an historic building being restored as a future-facing, regional hub for the digital creative industries.
 - [Watershed, Bristol](#) & [FACT Liverpool](#) - as social spaces that incubate forward-thinking, creative technology while engaging with communities and providing ongoing cultural programmes with a range of audiences.
 - [The Albany, Deptford](#) – as a place where high quality creative experiences and community use are intertwined.
 - [Outernet](#) - as a multi-purpose venue that brings together a range of cultural experiences, using cutting-edge technology, featuring grassroots work, and being highly accessible to the public.
10. **Question.** Has the specification for the digital installations (£250,000) been developed?
- Answer.** No. Potential operators are encouraged to consider what the digital installation may look like to achieve the community, commercial and digital aspirations of the space.
11. **Question:** Will the event space have digital cabling installed and power?
- Answer:** Yes. The plan includes installing part of the necessary infrastructure, such as data and power points, to support the future digital installations.
12. **Question:** Can part of the budget for the digital installation be allocated against other items?
- Answer:** If the other items are directly related to the digital installation, they can be considered.
13. **Question:** How much matched funding is expected from a proposed operator?
- Answer:** There is no set figure or value. The matched fund is to be produced by the interested organisation/s to support achieving the building's outcomes and ambitions.
14. **Question:** What is the area like?
- Answer:** Compressor House is located within the Royal Docks. With £5 billion of planned investment over 20 years, the Royal Docks is one of London's largest regeneration projects, featuring a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial developments across 175 hectares of public land.

The Mayor of London is determined to restore the Royal Docks it to its former glory as part of an ambition to build more than 36,000 new homes and create 55,000 new jobs across this historic part of East London.

As London's only Enterprise Zone, the Royal Docks has benefited from over £44 million in funding since 2018, delivering 9,000 new homes, more than 2,500 jobs to date, alongside substantial public realm improvements. For more information, see the [Royal Docks Delivery Plan](#).

15. Question: What about the area immediately surrounding Compressor House?

Answer: The area around Compressor House is set for major growth. Currently characterised by the Royal Albert Dock at its front elevation, directly opposite London City Airport (a 22-minute walk), a thriving hotel quarter, the London borough of Newham's main offices, and a 628-bed student block set to open in Sep 2026. Additionally, the University of East London's Docklands Campus lies to the east and Excel to the west. The [site](#) around Compressor House (12ha, 20 ac) offers up to 400,000m² of development potential, and an exercise to secure a development partner is expected to be launched in 2025. Beckton and Custom House are the closest residential neighbourhoods. While the hotel quarter and LB Newham generate footfall, the area's full potential is yet to be realised. Developing an attractive offer for Compressor House is crucial to achieving this ambition.

16. Question: We are interested, however one of the requirements would be difficult for us to achieve independently. Can a partnership application be submitted?

Answer. Yes, partnerships and consortia applications are encouraged. Please clearly outline roles and responsibilities and indicate the lead organisation. A lease will be offered to the lead organisation only.

17. Question: We are interested; however, we currently do not have a partner to deliver element/s of the outcomes required – is there an opportunity for match making during the process?

Answer: Yes. Where possible, potential matches will be identified, and if all parties agree to share their information with other interested partners, the team can facilitate the process. Please contact us at an early stage and will do our utmost to assist.

18. Question: Will be there an opportunity to find out more information on the requirements before I decide to submit an EOI?

Answer: Yes, an online information session (where participation is defaulted to anonymous) have been set up – see the EOI Brochure for more information. Please hold your questions to one (or more) of these sessions as we will be unable to respond to individual question prior to the second session. Question will initially be addressed at the online information

sessions. we will not be able to respond to individual questions prior to these sessions.

19. **Question.** Will there be an opportunity to visit Compressor House in person?

Answer: Compressor House is currently a building site and therefore access is restricted to site personal only. However, interested organisations are encouraged to visit the location/local area – it is adjacent to Royal Albert DLR station.

20. **Question:** Can I provide plans for the landscaped area in front of the building and is there a budget for this?

Answer: Plans to activate the landscaped area in front of the building are very much encouraged. This could be used as a seating area subject to appropriate consents. Replanting options can also be considered. There is currently no budget allocated against this work, however while there are no guarantees, there may be an opportunity to source funds dependant on the scheme.

21. **Question:** I am interested in advancing a proposal for the meanwhile activation of the lawns area in front of Compressor House, as mentioned in the EOI Prospectus. Who do I talk to about this?

Answer: While not forming part of this exercise there may be the opportunity for meanwhile activation of the lawned area in front of Compressor House (the landscaped area in front of the building forms part of the demise of the building). If interested in this potential opportunity, please advise in your EOI submission.

22. **Question:** Will responses to all questions from interested parties about the opportunity be published?

Answer: Yes, questions and responses will be regularly updated and published in this FAQ following the planned online information sessions. See the EOI main brochure for more information.

23. **Question:** When will I find out the result of my EOI?

Answer: Assessment of the EOI process should complete by 31 March 2025. If there is a delay, you will be advised.

24. **Question:** If I am unsuccessful in my EOI submission can I ask for feedback?

Answer: Yes

25. **Question** What are the proposed lease arrangements?

Answer: A ten-year lease with a 5-year break clause will be offered. A profit share arrangement and/or rent-free period will likely form part of the lease negotiations.

26. **Question:** Can draft Heads of Terms be shared?

Answer: Draft heads of terms will be discussed at the planned online meetings.

27. **Question:** Who do I contact if I have any questions?

Answer: Due to the expected level of interest initial questions should be asked at the planned online information sessions. Individual questions will not be responded to prior to these sessions.

28. **Question:** We are interested - when do I need to submit the EOI?

Answer: The EOI must be submitted by 10:00 AM on Monday 24th March 2025. EOIs submitted after this time and date will not be considered.

**Please submit the EOI form to Daniel.Paulino-Arroyo@london.gov.uk
by 10:00 on Monday 24th March 2025. EOIs returned after the time
will not be considered.**