



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Dublin Bay
Biosphere Reserve since 2015
Man and the Biosphere Programme



BITHSFÉIR

Chuan Bhaile Átha Cliath

Dublin Bay

BIOSPHERE

Dublin Bay Biosphere Partnership is seeking Expressions of Interest from boat operators to facilitate guided Biosphere Discovery Tours of Dublin Bay Biosphere from 2017 to 2019.

In 2015, Dublin Bay was awarded Biosphere status by UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. This accolade provides international recognition of the importance of the natural and cultural heritage of Dublin Bay. UNESCO Biospheres are actively managed to promote a balanced relationship between people and nature. Their function is to promote the conservation of biodiversity and cultural diversity, education, research and sustainable development. Biospheres include not just areas of ecological value but also the areas around them and the communities that live and work within them. Dublin Bay Biosphere covers the bay in its entirety and extends from the Baldoyle Estuary to the Dalkey Islands.

Dublin Bay Biosphere Partnership was established to facilitate the functions of the Biosphere designation. It comprises Dublin City Council, Dublin Port Company, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, Fingal County Council, the National Parks & Wildlife Service of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs and Fáilte Ireland. It works with community groups, NGOs, local businesses, universities and schools.

A key aspect of the work of the Partnership is education of the public about the ecology and heritage of Dublin Bay and to raise awareness of its status as a UNESCO Biosphere. As part of the work programme of the Partnership it has been agreed that marine-based tours of the Biosphere would provide an important avenue for promotion and education.

To assist in these aims, in 2016 there was a pilot ecotourism project, Biosphere Discovery Tours, which took place four days per week between the 24th of June and the 12th of September. Following on from the success of this pilot project it has been decided to seek expressions of interest from suitable marine transport providers to facilitate the Partnership's guides to provide boat-based guided tours.

In the period April 24th to June 18th, we require a boat service one day per week on either Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday (preferably Wednesday). In the period June 26th to September 3rd, we require a boat service four days per week, Friday to Monday.

To deliver Biosphere Discovery Tours as described above, the Partnership will provide the operator with trained guides with Biosphere-branded clothing, educational materials, an independent audio system if necessary, advertising, and promotion to conference and school tour groups.

The Partnership requires the service provider to:

- facilitate the Partnership's guides in their delivery of guided tours.
- operate within each of the Partnership's operational areas – namely Dublin Port, Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council.
- comply with the Partnership's branding requirements.
- assist in the promotion of Biosphere Discovery Tours.
- have their staff attend a briefing session to familiarise them with the Biosphere concept.
- administer all bookings and ticket sales.
- liaise with the Dublin Bay Biosphere Co-ordinator or other designated person.
- maintain onboard facilities to a high standard.
- provide information on passenger numbers and facilitate passenger satisfaction surveys.

The provider must not play audio recordings, apart from safety or boat information notices, while the guides are on board.

The selected operator will be the one that provides the best coverage of the Biosphere area and the best exposure of the guides to the public.

Companies wishing to be considered for this expression of interest must submit:

- a business plan for their operations including the proposed boat timetable and routes, advertising strategy, the type of craft, the size in terms of maximum capacity and the onboard amenities, including audio system
- public liability insurance details
- a record of operations over last 3 years in the provision of marine tourism
- a safety statement
- confirmation that the company, vessels and staff are all compliant with relevant legislation and the requirements of the Department of Transport Marine Survey Office
- confirmation that the company meets the requirements of and is licensed to operate by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Expressions of Interest will be assessed under the following heading with the associated scores (Maximum number of Marks 100):

- Previous record of provision of marine tourism – maximum of 50 marks
- Business plan, including the proposed boat timetable and routes, advertising strategy, the type of craft, the size in terms of maximum capacity and the onboard amenities, including audio system – maximum of 50 marks

Expressions of Interest (two hard copies) must be submitted no later than 5.00 pm on Monday 27th February 2017 to:

Dublin Bay Biosphere Partnership, c/o Dublin City Council, Parks and Landscape Services Division, Culture, Recreation and Economic Services Department, Civic Offices, Block 4, Ground Floor, Wood Quay, Dublin 8, D08 RF3F.