CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (E.O.I)

SELECTION OF A MUSEUM CONSULTANCY FIRM FOR THE PREPARATION OF A DPR FOR SETTING UP MUSEUMS UNDER THE MUZIRIS PROJECTS LTD



MPL/510/26/EOI/ MUSEUM DESIGN AND EXECUTION **Date:**02**-11-2026**

Last Date of Application: 18th November 2026

CONTENTS

1. **INTRODUCTION**
2. **MISSION AND VISION OF MUZIRIS HERITAGE PROJECTS**
3. **PROJECT RATIONALE**
4. **OBJECTIVES OF THE EOI**
5. **SCOP OF EOI**
6. **HOW TO APPLY**
7. **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**
8. **RIGHT OF ADMISSION**
9. **SELECTION PROCESS**
10. **APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

1. INTRODUCTION

The 'Expression of Interest' invites for the selection of a museum consultancy firm for the preparation of a DPR for setting up museums (design and execution) under the Muziris Projects Ltd.

The Muziris Heritage Project is one of the most ambitious cultural conservation initiatives in India, spearheaded by the Government of Kerala to uncover, preserve, and celebrate the rich historical legacy of the ancient port city of Muziris. This region, stretching from North Paravur in Ernakulam district to Mathilakam in Thrissur district, was once a vibrant hub of maritime trade, cultural exchange, and religious coexistence. Historical evidence indicates that Muziris was a major trading center as early as the 1st century BCE, attracting merchants from Rome, Greece, the Middle East, China, and Africa, and serving as a melting pot of cultures, languages, and traditions.

The region's cultural and commercial history is both vast and unique. Muziris served not only as a gateway for spices, pearls, semi-precious stones, and textiles but also as a conduit for the exchange of ideas, art, and beliefs. Communities such as Jews, Arabs, Chinese, Romans, and later Europeans settled in or traded with this region, leaving behind distinct architectural, linguistic, and religious imprints. This complex and layered past is reflected in the diversity of monuments and sites that dot the Muziris landscape including ancient markets, synagogues, mosques, temples, churches, ports, and traditional settlements.

As part of the Muziris Heritage Project, many of these historic monuments, traditional structures, and heritage zones are being carefully conserved and adaptively reused as museums and interpretation centres. The objective is not only to restore and protect these structures using scientifically sound conservation practices but also to reimagine them as public spaces that educate, engage, and inspire. Buildings that once served as palaces, warehouses, places of worship, or residences are being thoughtfully transformed into narrative-driven museums, highlighting aspects such as Kerala's maritime history, multicultural society, traditional craftsmanship, and religious pluralism.

The project's conservation strategy is deeply rooted in community involvement, sustainable development, and cultural sensitivity. Local artisans, historians, and cultural practitioners are integral to the planning and storytelling processes. Additionally, the project envisions a long-term strategy to revitalize the region's economy through cultural tourism, creative industries, and heritage-linked enterprises. Planned initiatives such as the development of a Jewish Street experience, a floating food market, handicraft hubs, and waterfront tourism facilities are designed to foster both cultural preservation and economic growth, making heritage a living, evolving, and economically viable resource.

In this way, the Muziris Heritage Project stands not only as a model of heritage conservation but also as a visionary experiment in cultural regeneration, where history is preserved not just in stone, but in the living memory and active participation of communities.

2. MISSION AND VISION OF MUZIRIS HERITAGE PROJECTS:

Mission: To preserve, interpret, and showcase the unique multicultural legacy of the ancient Muziris region through sustainable tourism, community involvement, and heritage education.

Vision: To establish Muziris as a globally significant heritage destination, where local communities thrive by participating in the conservation and promotion of their cultural assets, and visitors engage meaningfully with Kerala's layered historical narratives.

3. PROJECT RATIONALE:

The Muziris Heritage Project is a transformative initiative aimed at restoring and interpreting the rich multicultural legacy of the ancient Muziris region through the conservation and adaptive reuse of heritage sites. As the project evolves, it is increasingly focused on converting historically significant monuments into immersive museums and interpretation centres that can educate the public, attract cultural tourism, and foster community pride. This requires a unique blend of historical knowledge, curatorial skill, design expertise, and technological innovation. The approach should ensures timely implementation, consistency in quality, and alignment with international best practices in museology and heritage interpretation. It also helps preserve the authenticity of the museums, enhance storytelling, and advance the larger mission of positioning Muziris as a globally relevant heritage centre.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE EOI:

The objective of this Expression of Interest (EOI) is to prepare a Detailed Project Report (DPR) encompassing museum planning, exhibition design, curation, heritage interpretation, and visitor experience development for the Christian Lifestyle Museum at St Michael's Cathedral, Kottappuram and Jewish Festival Museum at Mala Synagogue all of which have completed their conservation and restoration phases under the Muziris Heritage Project. The project aims to develop these museums by integrating modern technologies, community engagement models, and educational programs within the DPR. The museums developed through this process should uphold high standards of authenticity, innovation, sustainability, and public participation in the presentation of history.

This initiative is part of the Muziris Heritage Project's broader efforts to transform heritage assets into vibrant, engaging, and educational museum spaces that reflect the historical, cultural, and social narratives of the Muziris region.

5. SCOPE OF THE EOI:

The scope of this Expression of Interest (EOI) is the preparation of a Detailed Project Report (DPR) covering the planning, design, implementation, and management of the Christian Lifestyle Museum at Kottappuram Church and Jewish Festival Museum at Mala Synagogue. The project aims to develop a DPR that includes museum space conceptualization, content development, curatorial planning, exhibition design and installation, conservation consultancy, integration of digital technologies, community engagement, educational programming, and visitor experience enhancement. Along with this, the proposed museums

should offer high-quality, culturally authentic, and locally rooted experiences to visitors, within the framework of sustainable heritage tourism. Details of proposed Museums are given below.

5.1. Festival Museum at Mala Synagogue:

The Mala Synagogue, situated in Mala town in Thrissur district, Kerala, is an important monument representing the historical presence and cultural legacy of the Malabari Jewish community in the Muziris region. Historical accounts and community traditions associate the settlement of Jews in Mala with migration from ancient Kodungallur (Muziris), with references to their presence dating back to around the first millennium CE. Although the exact date of the synagogue's original construction remains uncertain, traditions suggest that the ruler of Kodungallur provided land and timber for its establishment. The building underwent several phases of reconstruction and renovation, including major refurbishment in the early twentieth century. Following the migration of most Jewish families from Mala to Israel in the 1950s, the synagogue and the adjoining Jewish cemetery were entrusted to the local Panchayat in 1955 for preservation. Today, the synagogue stands as a significant testament to Kerala's Jewish heritage, maritime trade connections, cultural diversity and long tradition of religious coexistence.

The Mala Synagogue exemplifies the distinctive architectural tradition of Kerala's Jewish religious buildings, combining indigenous building techniques with elements associated with Jewish synagogue design. Its traditional features include an entrance anteroom (Azara), a spacious double-height prayer hall, a central platform traditionally known as the Tebah or Bimah, and a sacred ark (Hekel) that housed the Torah scrolls. The building also features wooden balconies, traditional windows, a second-floor gallery and a separate seating area for women, reflecting the spatial organization of traditional Jewish worship. Its timber elements, traditional proportions and adaptation to Kerala's climate and architectural vocabulary make it an important resource for the study of the region's multicultural built heritage. The proposed development of the synagogue as a Jewish Festival Museum should therefore prioritize architectural conservation and interpretation of the original spatial arrangement, using carefully researched displays, replicas, archival photographs, multimedia presentations and immersive interpretation to communicate the building's former religious and communal functions.

The cultural heritage associated with Mala's Jewish community encompasses religious observances, lifecycle ceremonies, festivals, oral traditions and a distinctive repertoire of Hebrew and Malayalam songs. Important Jewish festivals include Passover (Pesach), Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Hanukkah, Purim and Shavuot, each reflecting different aspects of Jewish religious belief, historical memory and community life. The Jews of Kerala also developed distinctive cultural expressions through the interaction of Jewish traditions with local customs. Their musical heritage includes Hebrew prayers sung in traditional Kerala-influenced melodies, Judeo-Malayalam devotional songs, wedding songs, Thaali songs and women's folk songs known as *Penpaattukal*. Traditional collections of Jewish

songs, including those associated with the Mala community, preserve memories of settlement, synagogue construction, religious observances, marriage customs and relationships with the wider society. The proposed Jewish Festival Museum can bring this intangible heritage to life through recorded oral histories, authentic song recordings, audiovisual presentations of festival traditions, interpretive displays on Jewish wedding customs and the Jewish calendar, and educational programs developed in consultation with Jewish heritage scholars and community representatives. Such an approach would preserve the memory of Mala's Jewish community while creating an engaging cultural destination within the Muziris Heritage Project.

5.2. Christian Lifestyle Museum at Kottappuram Church:

Christianity has a long history in Kerala, traditionally associated with the arrival of St. Thomas the Apostle at Kodungallur in 52 CE. The ancient Christian communities, known as St. Thomas Christians or Nasranis, developed through maritime trade and cultural connections with West Asia, later influenced by Portuguese and other European encounters. Over the centuries, diverse Christian denominations emerged, contributing significantly to Kerala's cultural heritage. The architecture of traditional churches reflects a blend of indigenous Kerala building traditions and West Asian and European influences, featuring sloping tiled roofs, timber elements, laterite walls, bell towers, crosses and ornate altars. Religious practices include the Holy Qurbana or Mass, baptism, marriage and funeral rites, family prayers, devotional hymns and distinctive customs such as Pesaha observances, including the preparation of Pesaha appam and paal among certain St. Thomas Christian communities.

Christian festivals in Kerala combine religious devotion with distinctive regional customs, music, food and community celebrations. Christmas and Easter are the principal celebrations, accompanied by carols, nativity scenes, Holy Week observances and special church services. These celebrations often feature solemn liturgies, colourful processions, ceremonial umbrellas, traditional percussion, decorated churches and community feasts, sometimes attracting people from different religious backgrounds. The proposed Christian Lifestyle Museum at Kottappuram Church can interpret this rich heritage through historical photographs, liturgical objects, traditional costumes, festival artefacts, devotional music, oral histories and audiovisual displays, presenting the evolution of Christian life, worship, customs and festivals within the historical landscape of Muziris.

6. HOW TO APPLY:

Muziris Projects Ltd invites EOI from Museum Consultants for Design and Execution of different kinds of Museums as part of the Muziris Heritage Project. Interested parties may apply by submitting the required documents to our office.

Documents Required:

Please Submit the following documents along with your application:

1. A brief profile of your organization or individual background
2. Valid ID proof

3. Documents proving financial and operational capacity to invest in and manage the proposed project

Note: Only credible and experienced applicants will be considered. Incomplete submissions will not be evaluated.

All applications must be submitted in a sealed envelope titled: **"MUSEUM CONSULTANTS FOR DESIGN AND EXECUTION"** in the name of Managing Director, Muziris Projects Ltd, Pullut P O, Kodungallur, Thrissur District, Kerala – 680663.

7. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To ensure the selection of highly qualified and capable museum consultants for the Muziris Heritage Project, the criteria should align with the project's emphasis on historical authenticity, design innovation, community engagement, and sustainable development. Below are suitable criteria for selection of Curators or Agencies through the EOI.

To encourage innovation and broaden participation, the Muziris Heritage Project (MPL) welcomes proposals from emerging professionals or startups, subject to the following minimum criteria.

- Relevant experience in museum planning, curation, exhibition design, heritage interpretation, or visitor experience development.
- Ability to convert heritage structures into vibrant, engaging museum spaces that reflect the cultural, religious, and historical narratives of Muziris.
- A solid track record of previous museum or art and heritage-related works/ exhibitions, especially involving adaptive reuse of heritage buildings or community-centric heritage storytelling.
- Should possess expertise in Curatorial Design & Storytelling.
- Must provide documentation or a portfolio of completed exhibition, museum or heritage-related projects.
- Should possess expertise in Exhibit Design & Fabrication.
- Ability to work in culturally diverse and historically sensitive environments.
- Should possess expertise in Educational and Community Engagement Programming.
- Must be a legally registered entity (e.g., Pvt. Ltd., LLP, Partnership Firm, Trust, Society, etc.) in India or abroad in the case of Firm.
- Must submit financial statements or documents demonstrating financial capacity to handle large-scale museum projects.
- Should have sufficient operational capacity and staffing to undertake multidisciplinary assignments.
- Should have at least 3 years of independent or institutional experience in museum-related projects for individual applicant.

- Must demonstrate capacity to independently deliver museum-related outputs or collaborate with design/execution teams.
- Should not be blacklisted or barred from participating in government tenders/projects.

8. RIGHT OF ADMISSION:

The Managing Director of Muziris Projects Limited reserves the right to accept or reject any application at his sole discretion.

9. SELECTION PROCESS:

- EOIs will be evaluated based on experience, concept quality alignment with MPL goals.
- Shortlisted applicants may be invited for presentations in front of Project Oversight Committee.
- The appointed Project Oversight Committee will select applicants based on the eligibility criteria as well as on the basis of the presentations they deliver.

Further details including minimum qualifications, requisite documentation and application forms may be downloaded from www.muzirisheritage.org.

10. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

- **Application Fee: ₹ 300 + GST** (non-refundable)
- **Application Requirements:**

Applications submitted without the completed application form and the required EMD will be summarily rejected. Applicants who fail to submit the necessary documents for pre-qualification will also be disqualified.

EMD Payment Details:

Account Name: Muziris Projects Ltd.

Bank: HDFC Bank, Lokamaleswaram Branch, North Nada, Kodungallur

Account Number: 50100237100074

IFSC Code: HDFC0001545

For more information, please contact:

Dr. Midhun C Sekhar

Museum Manager, Muziris Projects Ltd

✉ Email: muziris.tsm@kerala.gov.in

📞 Phone: +91 9746760810

🌐 Website (for application form): www.keralatourism.org/muziris/tenders

Application Form Download:

The application form is available on our website at the same link. It must be submitted along with the pre-qualification documents and details of the specific EOI being applied for.

- *Note: A separate application form must be filled and submitted for each EOI, along with proof of application fee payment*.

APPLICATION FORM FOR SELECTION OF MUSEUM CONSULTANT

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Name :

2. Date of Birth :

3. Address for correspondence :

4. Telephone number :

a. Landline :

b. Fax :

c. Mobile :

5. Email Id :

6. PAN/TIN Number :

Qualifications and Experience

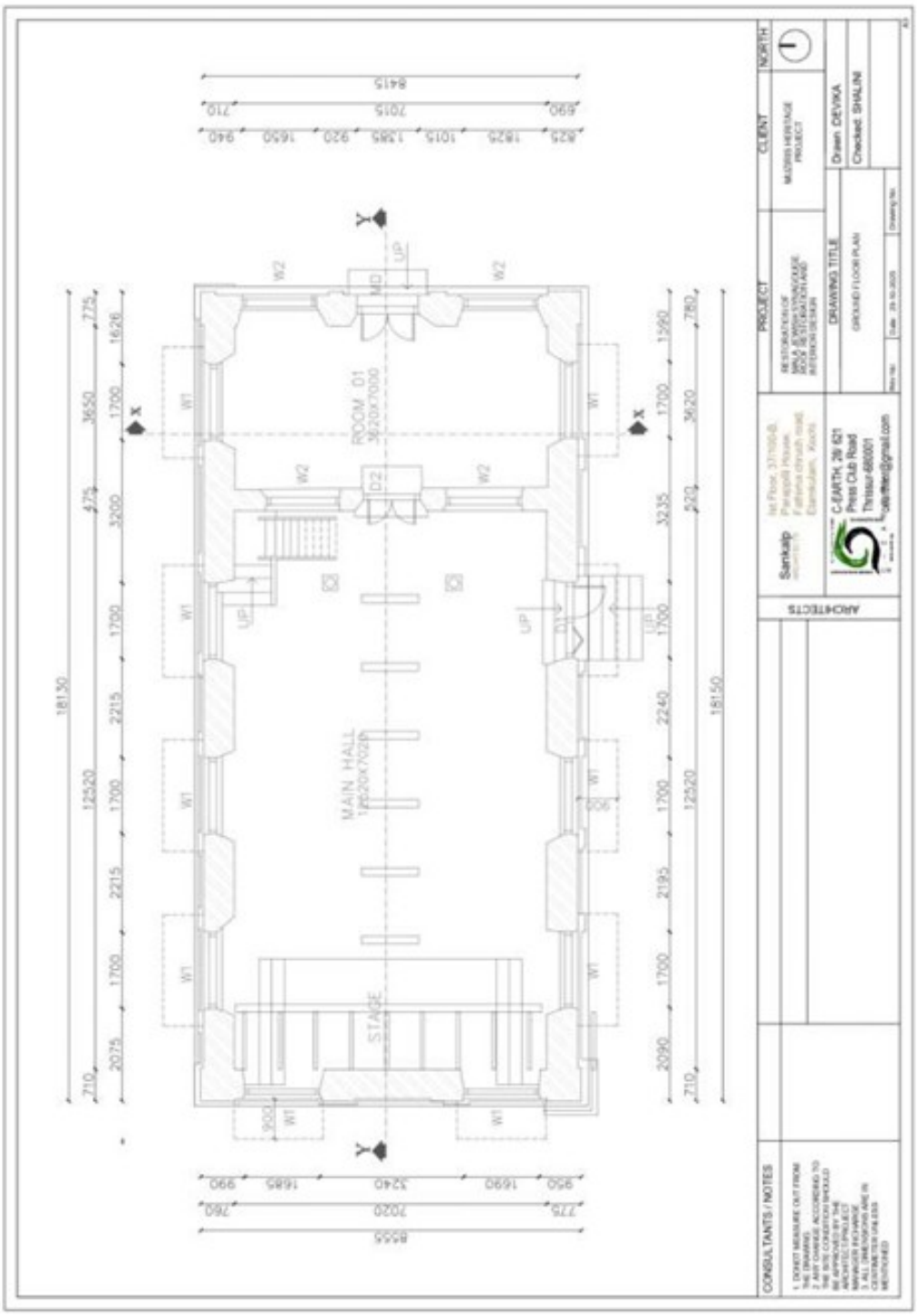
1. Documentation Certificates - Please attach separate sheets; enclose copies of relevant certificates.
2. Experience - Please attach separate sheets; enclose copies of relevant certificates for completed projects
3. Awards, testimonials, achievements:

Signature

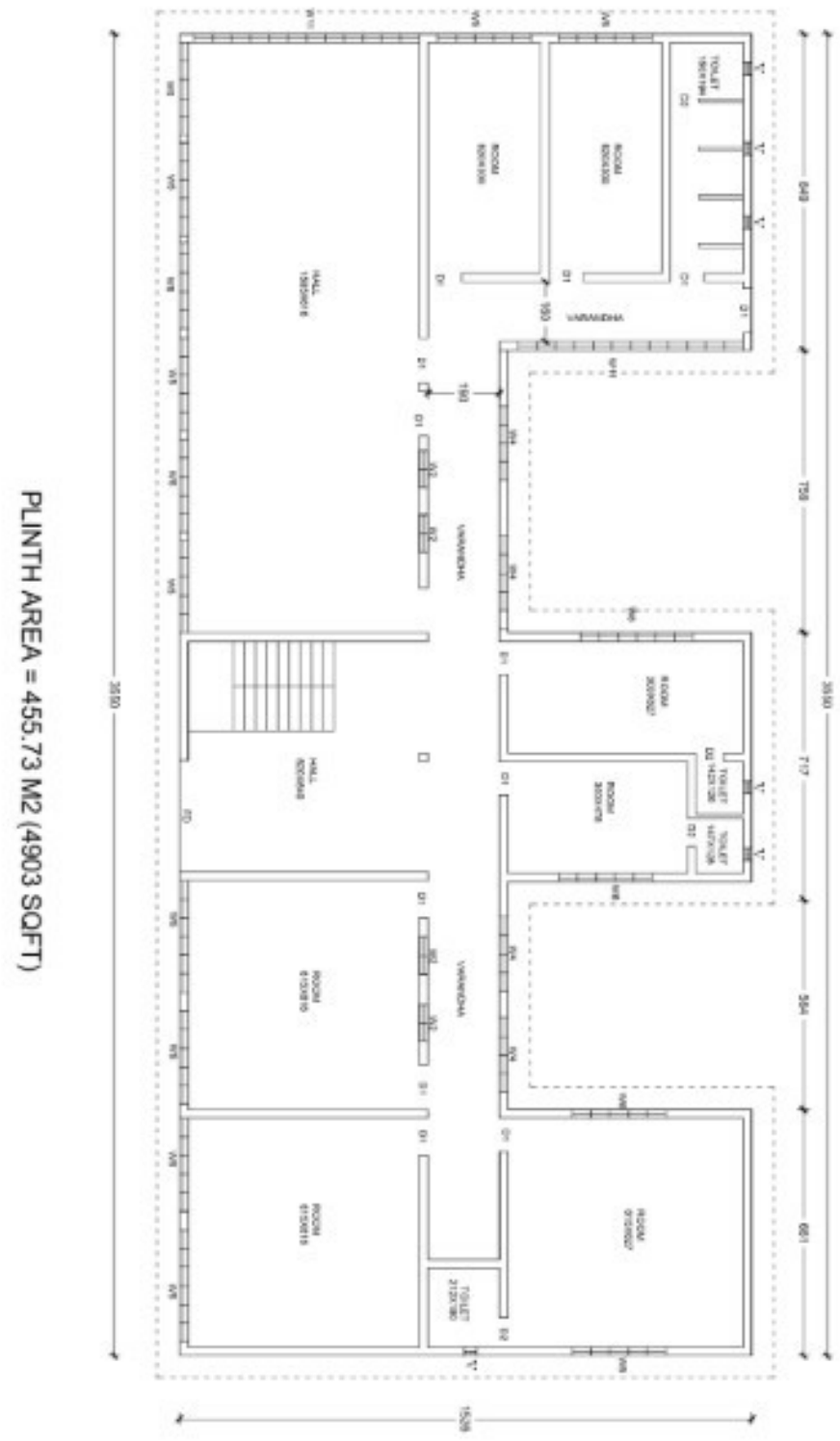
Name

Date:

PLAN / DRAWING – PROPOSED MUSEUMS



Plan - Jewish Festival Museum at Mala Synagogue



Plan - Christian Lifestyle Museum at St Michael's Cathedral, Kottappuram