



Invitation to Quote

Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of UK Research and Innovation

Subject: Entrepreneurial-university eco-system: scoping: sector characteristics – Fashion

Sourcing Reference Number: CR20025

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS)
www.uksbs.co.uk

Registered in England and Wales as a limited company. Company Number 6330639.
Registered Office Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 1FF
VAT registration GB618 3673 25
Copyright (c) UK Shared Business Services Ltd. 2014

Version 2.0

UKSBS
Shared Business Services

Table of Contents

Section	Content
1	<u>About UK Shared Business Services Ltd.</u>
2	<u>About the Contracting Authority</u>
3	<u>Working with the Contracting Authority.</u>
4	<u>Specification</u>
5	<u>Evaluation model</u>
6	<u>Evaluation questionnaire</u>
7	<u>General Information</u>

Section 1 – About UK Shared Business Services

Putting the business into shared services

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS) brings a commercial attitude to the public sector; helping our Contracting Authorities improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

It is our vision to become the leading service provider for the Contracting Authorities of shared business services in the UK public sector, continuously reducing cost and improving quality of business services for Government and the public sector.

Our broad range of expert services is shared by our Contracting Authorities. This allows Contracting Authorities the freedom to focus resources on core activities; innovating and transforming their own organisations.

Core services include Procurement, Finance, Grants Admissions, Human Resources, Payroll, ISS, and Property Asset Management all underpinned by our Service Delivery and Contact Centre teams.

UK SBS is a people rather than task focused business. It's what makes us different to the traditional transactional shared services centre. What is more, being a not-for-profit organisation owned by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), UK SBS' goals are aligned with the public sector and delivering best value for the UK taxpayer.

UK Shared Business Services Ltd changed its name from RCUK Shared Services Centre Ltd in March 2013.

Our Customers

Growing from a foundation of supporting the Research Councils, 2012/13 saw Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) transition their procurement to UK SBS and Crown Commercial Services (CCS – previously Government Procurement Service) agree a Memorandum of Understanding with UK SBS to deliver two major procurement categories (construction and research) across Government.

UK SBS currently manages £700m expenditure for its Contracting Authorities. Our Contracting Authorities who have access to our services and Contracts are detailed [here](#).

Privacy Statement

At UK Shared Business Services (UK SBS) we recognise and understand that your privacy is extremely important, and we want you to know exactly what kind of information we collect about you and how we use it.

This privacy notice link below details what you can expect from UK SBS when we collect your personal information.

- We will keep your data safe and private.
- We will not sell your data to anyone.

- We will only share your data with those you give us permission to share with and only for legitimate service delivery reasons.

<https://www.uksbs.co.uk/use/pages/privacy.aspx>

For details on how the Contracting Authority protect and process your personal data please follow the link below:

<https://www.ukri.org/privacy-notice/>

Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority

UK Research and Innovation

Operating across the whole of the UK and with a combined budget of more than £6 billion, UK Research and Innovation represents the largest reform of the research and innovation funding landscape in the last 50 years.

As an independent non-departmental public body UK Research and Innovation brings together the seven Research Councils (AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, STFC) plus Innovate UK and a new organisation, Research England.

UK Research and Innovation ensures the UK maintains its world-leading position in research and innovation. This is done by creating the best environment for research and innovation to flourish.

For more information, please visit: www.ukri.org

Research England

Research England is a new council within UK Research and Innovation, operating from April 2018. As a key component of the research funding system, Research England will oversee UK Research and Innovation's England-only functions in relation to university research and knowledge exchange. This includes providing grant funding to English universities for research and knowledge exchange activities; developing and implementing the Research Excellence Framework in partnership with the UK Higher Education funding bodies; overseeing the sustainability of the Higher Education research base in England; overseeing the £900 million UK Research Partnership Investment Fund; and the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF).

<https://re.ukri.org>

Section 3 - Working with the Contracting Authority.

In this section you will find details of your Procurement contact point and the timescales relating to this opportunity.

Section 3 – Contact details		
3.1.	Contracting Authority Name and address	UK Research and Innovation- Research England of, Nicholson House, Lime Kiln Close, Stoke Gifford, Bristol, BS34 8SR
3.2.	Buyer name	Alexandra Richards
3.3.	Buyer contact details	Research@uksbs.co.uk
3.4.	Maximum value of the Opportunity	£30,000.00 Excluding VAT
3.5.	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	All correspondence shall be submitted within the Messaging Centre of the e-sourcing. Guidance Notes to support the use of Delta eSourcing is available here. Please note submission of a Bid to any email address including the Buyer <u>will</u> result in the Bid <u>not</u> being considered.

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6.	Date of Issue of Contract Advert on Contracts Finder	Friday, 28 th February 2020
3.7.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Delta eSourcing messaging system	Monday, 9 th March 2020 11:00
3.8.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Delta eSourcing Portal	Wednesday, 11 th March 2020
3.9.	Latest date and time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Delta eSourcing	Tuesday, 17 th March 2020 11:00
3.10.	Clarifications (if required)	Friday, 20 th March 2020
3.11.	Anticipated notification date of successful and unsuccessful Bids	Wednesday, 25 th March 2020
3.12.	Anticipated Contract Award date	Wednesday, 25 th March 2020
3.13.	Anticipated Contract Start date	Monday, 30 th March 2020
3.14.	Anticipated Contract End date	Wednesday, 30 th September 2020
3.15.	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

Section 4 – Specification

1. Introduction

Research England is a new council within UK Research and Innovation. We oversee UK Research and Innovation's England-only functions in relation to university research and knowledge exchange. This includes providing grant funding to English universities for research and knowledge exchange activities; developing and implementing the Research Excellence Framework in partnership with the UK Higher Education funding bodies; overseeing the sustainability of the Higher Education research base in England; managing the £900 million UK Research Partnership Investment Fund; and administering the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF).

Research England is the contractor for this work but the successful tenderer will work with Professor Andrew Jones of City, University of London as chair of a joint Research England/universities project group.

2. Aims

1. The main aim of the work is to support the work of a RE/universities expert group convened:

Stage 1

- To appraise critically the concept of the “entrepreneurial eco-system”.
- To develop a model of its intended outcomes (related to new technology/knowledge-based firm formation), key components (ingredients to entrepreneurship) and key policies and processes (eg enablers, linkages) – what it is, how it works, what it achieves, how it developed and how it can be improved.

Stage 2

- To test the model in a likely well developed eco-system: greater London.

Stage 3

- To advise Research England on the applicability of the model beyond London.
- To identify further steps that might be taken collaboratively across the London university sector and its eco-system to achieve better outcomes. Longer term impacts may include increased R&D intensity in the UK economy, improved international comparative advantage in knowledge/technology intensive start up and scale up, growth and productivity.

The stage 1 report of the group together with a literature review and initial technical note produced by SQW consultants in support of the group's work have been published at <https://www.ncub.co.uk/what-we-do/ecosystem-builders>. In stage 2, the group has agreed to undertake several scoping studies, prior to commissioning a large scale deep dive on the London ecosystem which will complete stage 2 and inform stage 3 work.

This study is focussed on one aspect of this scoping work – testing applicability of the ecosystem model so far for a specific sector, and drawing conclusions on the appropriate

approaches and methodologies that should be used in a deep dive to ensure that this sector is characterised accurately.

This study is focussed on the Fashion sector, and there are two other sector studies - on fintech and pharma – being commissioned separately. The three sector studies are intended to be based upon deep experience and insight of the specific sector being examined. The three sector studies, and a separate quantitative study on sizing the overall opportunity in the deep dive being commissioned separately, will all inform next steps. Work in this stage takes account of the SQW technical note, which suggested the likely scale and wide range needed in a deep dive, and hence the need to consider carefully scope and methodology.

2. This tender is to secure appropriate experts to undertake a scoping study:

- Describing the London Fashion entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- Testing the applicability of model(s) developed to date for the project (see Stage 1 report) for the Fashion sector, particularly focussed on identifying elements to the model that are distinctive in Fashion. There is particular interest in soft system elements eg characteristics of networks, interlinkages between the 'nodes' of the models, the character of the culture of entrepreneurship of the sector and the nature and specifics of leadership, both generally and specifically in London.
- Enriching understanding of the specific characteristics of the London entrepreneurial ecosystem in the Fashion sector, including international comparisons, particularly focussing on the role of universities in the ecosystem, and the interplay between universities and the wider ecosystem. This study is focussed on universities and hence characteristics of the ecosystem that are not at all related to universities are not of interest. Suggesting overseas examples of cities/places/universities that have leading edge Fashion ecosystem characteristics would be of particular interest. (The group is currently exploring broader ecosystem comparisons with New York.)
- Drawing conclusions on challenges and opportunities of characterising the Fashion sector within a broader London ecosystem deep dive, including the extent to which the Fashion ecosystem is formed from sector specific or generic elements (for example, networks, incubators or access to finance vehicles that are specific to the Fashion sector, or alternatively examples where the Fashion sector would draw on general business support vehicles); and any significant inter-play with other industrial/technology sectors.
- Commenting if applicable on the usefulness of the ecosystem concept in the Fashion sector, and alternative concepts or narratives that are relevant.
- Commenting if applicable on the likely usefulness/transferability of model(s) beyond London, and any other geographical characteristics of the Fashion industry (for example, places to scale up or supply chains or markets).

- Making recommendations on focus areas, approaches and methodologies that should be adopted in the deep dive in order to capture accurately the Fashion sector.

3. Objectives

1. Taking into consideration the stage 1 work, deliver a methodology report setting out the framework for the study and the available data sources that can be used to deliver it. The methodology report should set out:

- The key topics/elements to the ecosystem to be studied where a specific, sectoral lens may challenge or change the conceptual model(s). This includes any gaps not addressed in the project so far.
- The data sources and evidence to be used to deliver the study. It is expected that this will include existing data and literature but also primary data collection through interviews with key London stakeholders in the Fashion enterprise system.
- Proposals on overseas or domestic comparators that will be used to benchmark the nature and success of the London ecosystem.

2. Undertake analysis

3. Provide draft and then final reports

4. Background to the Requirement

1. This work builds on the recommendation in the McMillan Review of good practice in technology transfer
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20180322111241/http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/2016/>

that further work should be done to investigate the concept of the “entrepreneurial ecosystem”. This followed the insights in the McMillan review report around the entrepreneurial characteristics of the areas around Silicon Valley and Kendall Square Boston. This topic may be of increased importance in context of the UK Government’s 2.4% R&D target. To achieve the target, it is likely that the UK will need to increase the rate and success of new company formation from universities – from academic/research or graduate entrepreneurship; and technological or knowledge based - as the source of the R&D intensive firms of the future. It may also be of increased importance in context of the Government’s increased interest in place policy and in clusters developing around universities.

2. A project is underway initiated by Research England working with Professor Andrew Jones of City, University of London and a project to develop options for implementation of the recommendations of the McMillan review on eco-systems.

3. The McMillan analysis concluded that US cases are not necessarily transferable or applicable in the UK context. The project focusses on one of the UK regions that may have the strongest conducive environment with respect to a wide range of

internal/external factors including university density, institutional capacity, entrepreneurial capabilities and access to finance: greater London. The hypothesis is that London presents a reasonably well formed eco-system, where relevant components and their beneficial inter-sections can be most easily identified. The project recognises academic and expert critique on whether generic and transferable models of ecosystems are possible. A main focus of this project then is to focus on the experience in London to identify a model that works (as example, has predictive properties) and only then to consider any wider application beyond London.

4. The selected tenderers will be responsible for delivery of expert reports to inform the work of the group. Research England, Professor Jones and the group are responsible for decisions on the next stages of the work, and of any policy conclusions and recommendations.
5. The work will be overseen by a designated RE lead responsible for:
 - a. confirmation of the work to be conducted under this contract
 - b. agreeing final report publication
 - c. overseeing support of the group

5. Scope

Included in the scope of the tender

- Methodology report
- Oral reporting to the project group chair and at the group meetings and other as required
- Draft and final report

Excluded in the scope of the tender

- Work in the deep dive and future stages of the project

Drawing conclusions and recommendations for national policy or London/institutions. The group has agreed that it will not draw conclusions or make recommendations until further evidence gathering and analysis on London is completed.

6. Requirement

Overview of requirement

The work will have the following mandatory requirements:

1. Agree the methodology

The researcher will need to agree with the RE project manager the methodology for the overall work programme and the timetable, reflecting timing of the group's meetings.

2. Draft and final report

Delivery of the draft, and final report for publication

3. Support of the project chair/group

Attendance at meetings and providing expert advice

Desirable

Attendance at other meetings to discuss the conduct and approach. Discussion with researchers to other scoping studies.

Terms and Conditions

Bidders are to note that any requested modifications to the Contracting Authority Terms and Conditions on the grounds of statutory and legal matters only, shall be raised as a formal clarification during the permitted clarification period.

Section 5 – Evaluation model

The evaluation model below shall be used for this ITQ, which will be determined to two decimal places.

Where a question is 'for information only' it will not be scored.

The evaluation team may comprise staff from UK SBS and the Contracting Authority and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems required.

The evaluation and if required team may comprise staff from UK SBS and the Contracting Authority and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems required. After evaluation and if required moderation scores will be finalised by performing a calculation to identify (at question level) the mean average of all evaluators (Example – a question is scored by three evaluators and judged as scoring 5, 5 and 6. These scores will be added together and divided by the number of evaluators to produce the final score of 5.33 ($5+5+6=16 \div 3 = 5.33$))

Pass / Fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	SEL1.2	Employment breaches/ Equality
Commercial	SEL1.3	Compliance to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	AW4.1	Compliance to the Contract Terms
Commercial	AW4.2	Changes to the Contract Terms
Price	AW5.1	Maximum Budget
Price	AW5.4	E Invoicing
Price	AW5.5	Implementation of E-Invoicing
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Quality	AW6.2	Variable Bids
-	-	Invitation to Quote – received on time within e-sourcing tool
In the event of a Bidder failing to meet the requirements of a Mandatory pass / fail criteria, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to disqualify the Bidder and not consider evaluation of any of the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria.		

Scoring criteria

Evaluation Justification Statement

In consideration of this particular requirement the Contracting Authority has decided to evaluate Potential Providers by adopting the weightings/scoring mechanism detailed within this ITQ. The Contracting Authority considers these weightings to be in line with existing best practice for a requirement of this type.

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2	Price	10%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Approach/ Methodology	25%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Staff to Deliver	20%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Understanding the Project Environment	35%
Quality	PROJ1.4	Project Plan and Timescales	10%

Evaluation of criteria

Non-Price elements

Each question will be judged on a score from 0 to 100, which shall be subjected to a multiplier to reflect the percentage of the evaluation criteria allocated to that question.

Where an evaluation criterion is worth 20% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 20%.

Example if a Bidder scores 60 from the available 100 points this will equate to 12% by using the following calculation:

$$\text{Score} = \{\text{weighting percentage}\} \times \{\text{bidder's score}\} = 20\% \times 60 = 12$$

The same logic will be applied to groups of questions which equate to a single evaluation criterion.

The 0-100 score shall be based on (unless otherwise stated within the question):

0	The Question is not answered, or the response is completely unacceptable.
10	Extremely poor response – they have completely missed the point of the question.
20	Very poor response and not wholly acceptable. Requires major revision to the response to make it acceptable. Only partially answers the requirement, with major deficiencies and little relevant detail proposed.
40	Poor response only partially satisfying the selection question requirements with deficiencies apparent. Some useful evidence provided but response falls well short of expectations. Low probability of being a capable supplier.
60	Response is acceptable but remains basic and could have been expanded upon. Response is sufficient but does not inspire.
80	Good response which describes their capabilities in detail which provides high levels of assurance consistent with a quality provider. The response includes a full description of techniques and measurements currently employed.
100	Response is exceptional and clearly demonstrates they are capable of meeting the requirement. No significant weaknesses noted. The response is compelling

	in its description of techniques and measurements currently employed, providing full assurance consistent with a quality provider.
--	--

All questions will be scored based on the above mechanism. Please be aware that there may be multiple evaluators. If so, their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score as follows:

Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 40

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 40

Your final score will $(60+60+40+40) \div 4 = 50$

Price elements will be judged on the following criteria.

The lowest price for a response which meets the pass criteria shall score 100. All other bids shall be scored on a pro rata basis in relation to the lowest price. The score is then subject to a multiplier to reflect the percentage value of the price criterion.

For example - Bid 1 £100,000 scores 100.

Bid 2 £120,000 differential of £20,000 or 20% remove 20% from price scores 80

Bid 3 £150,000 differential £50,000 remove 50% from price scores 50.

Bid 4 £175,000 differential £75,000 remove 75% from price scores 25.

Bid 5 £200,000 differential £100,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.

Bid 6 £300,000 differential £200,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.

Where the scoring criterion is worth 50% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 50.

In the example if a supplier scores 80 from the available 100 points this will equate to 40% by using the following calculation: $\text{Score/Total Points} \times 50$ ($80/100 \times 50 = 40$)

The lowest score possible is 0 even if the price submitted is more than 100% greater than the lowest price.

Section 6 – Evaluation questionnaire

Bidders should note that the evaluation questionnaire is located within the **e-sourcing questionnaire**.

Guidance on completion of the questionnaire is available at
<http://www.uksbs.co.uk/services/procure/Pages/supplier.aspx>

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 7 – General Information

What makes a good bid – some simple do's 😊

DO:

- 7.1 Do comply with Procurement document instructions. Failure to do so may lead to disqualification.
- 7.2 Do provide the Bid on time, and in the required format. Remember that the date/time given for a response is the last date that it can be accepted; we are legally bound to disqualify late submissions. Responses received after the date indicated in the ITQ shall not be considered by the Contracting Authority, unless the Bidder can justify that the reason for the delay, is solely attributable to the Contracting Authority
- 7.3 Do ensure you have read all the training materials to utilise e-sourcing tool prior to responding to this Bid. If you send your Bid by email or post it will be rejected.
- 7.4 Do use Microsoft Word, PowerPoint Excel 97-03 or compatible formats, or PDF unless agreed in writing by the Buyer. If you use another file format without our written permission, we may reject your Bid.
- 7.5 Do ensure you utilise the Delta eSourcing messaging system to raise any clarifications to our ITQ. You should note that we will release the answer to the question to all Bidders and where we suspect the question contains confidential information, we may modify the content of the question to protect the anonymity of the Bidder or their proposed solution
- 7.6 Do answer the question, it is not enough simply to cross-reference to a 'policy', web page or another part of your Bid, the evaluation team have limited time to assess bids and if they can't find the answer, they can't score it.
- 7.7 Do consider who the Contracting Authority is and what they want – a generic answer does not necessarily meet every Contracting Authority's needs.
- 7.8 Do reference your documents correctly, specifically where supporting documentation is requested e.g. referencing the question/s they apply to.
- 7.9 Do provide clear, concise and ideally generic contact details; telephone numbers, e-mails and fax details.
- 7.10 Do complete all questions in the questionnaire or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.11 Do ensure that the Response and any documents accompanying it are in the English Language, the Contracting Authority reserve the right to disqualify any full or part responses that are not in English.
- 7.12 Do check and recheck your Bid before dispatch.

What makes a good bid – some simple do not's Ⓜ

DO NOT

- 7.13 Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.14 Do not attach 'glossy' brochures that have not been requested, they will not be read unless we have asked for them. Only send what has been requested and only send supplementary information if we have offered the opportunity so to do.
- 7.15 Do not share the Procurement documents, they are confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission.
- 7.16 Do not seek to influence the procurement process by requesting meetings or contacting UK SBS or the Contracting Authority to discuss your Bid. If your Bid requires clarification the Buyer will contact you. All information secured outside of formal Buyer communications shall have no Legal standing or worth and should not be relied upon.
- 7.17 Do not contact any UK SBS staff or the Contracting Authority staff without the Buyers written permission or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.18 Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will reject your Bid.
- 7.19 Do not offer UK SBS or the Contracting Authority staff any inducement or we will reject your Bid.
- 7.20 Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed.
- 7.21 Do not cross reference answers to external websites or other parts of your Bid, the cross references and website links will not be considered.
- 7.22 Do not exceed word counts, the additional words will not be considered.
- 7.23 Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.24 Do not unless explicitly requested by the Contracting Authority either in the procurement documents or via a formal clarification from the Contracting Authority send your response by any way other than via e-sourcing tool. Responses received by any other method than requested will not be considered for the opportunity.

Some additional guidance notes

- 7.25 All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool must be submitted to Delta eSourcing, Telephone 0845 270 7050
- 7.26 Bidders will be specifically advised where attachments are permissible to support a question response within the e-sourcing tool. Where they are not permissible any attachments submitted will not be considered as part of the evaluation process.
- 7.27 Question numbering is not sequential and all questions which require submission are included in the Section 6 Evaluation Questionnaire.
- 7.28 Any Contract offered may not guarantee any volume of work or any exclusivity of supply.
- 7.29 We do not guarantee to award any Contract as a result of this procurement
- 7.30 All documents issued or received in relation to this procurement shall be the property of the Contracting Authority / UKSBS.
- 7.31 We can amend any part of the procurement documents at any time prior to the latest date / time Bids shall be submitted through the Delta eSourcing Portal.
- 7.32 If you are a Consortium you must provide details of the Consortiums structure.
- 7.33 Bidders will be expected to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.34 Bidders should note the Government's transparency agenda requires your Bid and any Contract entered into to be published on a designated, publicly searchable web site. By submitting a response to this ITQ Bidders are agreeing that their Bid and Contract may be made public
- 7.35 Your bid will be valid for 60 days or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.36 Bidders may only amend the contract terms during the clarification period only, only if you can demonstrate there is a legal or statutory reason why you cannot accept them. If you request changes to the Contract terms without such grounds and the Contracting Authority fail to accept your legal or statutory reason is reasonably justified, we may reject your Bid.
- 7.37 We will let you know the outcome of your Bid evaluation and where requested will provide a written debrief of the relative strengths and weaknesses of your Bid.
- 7.38 If you fail mandatory pass / fail criteria we will reject your Bid.
- 7.39 Bidders are required to use IE8, IE9, Chrome or Firefox in order to access the functionality of the Delta eSourcing Portal.
- 7.40 Bidders should note that if they are successful with their proposal the Contracting Authority reserves the right to ask additional compliancy checks prior to the award of

any Contract. In the event of a Bidder failing to meet one of the compliancy checks the Contracting Authority may decline to proceed with the award of the Contract to the successful Bidder.

- 7.41 All timescales are set using a 24-hour clock and are based on British Summer Time or Greenwich Mean Time, depending on which applies at the point when Date and Time Bids shall be submitted through the Delta eSourcing Portal.
- 7.42 All Central Government Departments and their Executive Agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further, the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement - including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice.

For these purposes, the Contracting Authority may disclose within Government any of the Bidders documentation/information (including any that the Bidder considers to be confidential and/or commercially sensitive such as specific bid information) submitted by the Bidder to the Contracting Authority during this Procurement. The information will not be disclosed outside Government. Bidders taking part in this ITQ consent to these terms as part of the competition process.

- 7.43 The Government introduced its new Government Security Classifications (GSC) classification scheme on the 2nd April 2014 to replace the current Government Protective Marking System (GPMS). A key aspect of this is the reduction in the number of security classifications used. All Bidders are encouraged to make themselves aware of the changes and identify any potential impacts in their Bid, as the protective marking and applicable protection of any material passed to, or generated by, you during the procurement process or pursuant to any Contract awarded to you as a result of this tender process will be subject to the new GSC. The link below to the Gov.uk website provides information on the new GSC:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-security-classifications>

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft contract accompanying this ITQ to reflect any changes introduced by the GSC. In particular where this ITQ is accompanied by any instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as a result of any changes stemming from the new GSC, whether in respect of the applicable protective marking scheme, specific protective markings given, the aspects to which any protective marking applies or otherwise. This may relate to the instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as they apply to the procurement as they apply to the procurement process and/or any contracts awarded to you as a result of the procurement process.

USEFUL INFORMATION LINKS

- [Contracts Finder](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)