**Invitation to Quote**



**Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)**

**Subject: DDaT20129 - Future Sectors Business Intelligence**

**Sourcing Reference Number: DDaT20129**

**Table of Contents**

**Section Content**

1 [About UK Shared Business Services Ltd.](#Section_1_About_UK_SBS)

2 [About the Contracting Authority](#Section_2_About_our_Customer)

3 [Working with the Contracting Authority.](#Section_3_working_with_UK_SBS)

4 [Specification](#Section_4_Specification)

5 [Evaluation model](#Section_5_Evaluation_of_bids)

6 [Evaluation questionnaire](#Section_6_evaluation_questionnaire)

7 [General Information](#Section_7_general_information)

**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](http://www.uksbs.co.uk/services/procure/contracts/Pages/default.aspx).

**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>

**Privacy Notice**

This notice sets out how the Contracting Authority will use your personal data, and your rights. It is made under Articles 13 and/or 14 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

**YOUR DATA**

The Contracting Authority will process the following personal data:

Names and contact details of employees involved in preparing and submitting the bid; Names and contact details of employees proposed to be involved in delivery of the contract;

Names, contact details, age, qualifications and experience of employees whose CVs are submitted as part of the bid.

*Purpose*

The Contracting Authority are processing your personal data for the purposes of the tender exercise, or in the event of legal challenge to such tender exercise.

*Legal basis of processing*

The legal basis for processing your personal data is processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the data controller, such as the exercise of a function of the Crown, a Minister of the Crown, or a government department; the exercise of a function conferred on a person by an enactment; the exercise of a function of either House of Parliament; or the administration of justice.

*Recipients*

Your personal data will be shared by us with other Government Departments or public authorities where necessary as part of the tender exercise. The Contracting Authority may share your data if required to do so by law, for example by court order or to prevent fraud or other crime.

*Retention*

All submissions in connection with this tender exercise will be retained for a period of (7) years from the date of contract expiry, unless the contract is entered into as a deed in which case it will be kept for a period of (12) years from the date of contract expiry.

*Your Rights*

You have the right to request information about how your personal data are processed, and to request a copy of that personal data.

You have the right to request that any inaccuracies in your personal data are rectified without delay.

You have the right to request that any incomplete personal data are completed, including by means of a supplementary statement.

You have the right to request that your personal data are erased if there is no longer a justification for them to be processed.

You have the right in certain circumstances (for example, where accuracy is contested) to request that the processing of your personal data is restricted.

You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data where it is processed for direct marketing purposes.

You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data.

***International Transfers***

Your personal data will not be processed outside the European Union

***Complaints***

If you consider that your personal data has been misused or mishandled, you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner, who is an independent regulator. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF

0303 123 1113

casework@ico.org.uk

Any complaint to the Information Commissioner is without prejudice to your right to seek redress through the courts.

**Contact details**

The data controller for your personal data is:

The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

You can contact the Data Protection Officer at:

BEIS Data Protection Officer, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 151 Buckingham Palace Road, Victoria, London, SW1W 9SZ. Email: [dataprotection@beis.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@beis.gov.uk).

**Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority**

**Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)**

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy brings together responsibilities for business, industrial strategy, science, innovation, energy, and climate change, merging the functions of the former BIS and DECC.

BEIS is responsible for:

• developing and delivering a comprehensive industrial strategy and leading the government’s relationship with business

• ensuring that the country has secure energy supplies that are reliable, affordable and clean

• ensuring the UK remains at the leading edge of science, research and innovation

• tackling climate change

BEIS is a ministerial department, supported by 47 agencies and public bodies.

**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** | | | |
|  | Contracting Authority Name and address | Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy 1 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET |
|  | Buyer name | Kallista Thomas |
|  | Buyer contact details | DDaTProcurment@uksbs.co.uk |
|  | Estimated value of the Opportunity | The maximum budget for this requirement is £80,000.00 excluding VAT for two years.  The maximum budget for year one is £40,000.00 excluding VAT.  The maximum budget for the optional year two is £40,000.00 excluding VAT.  Any bids received that exceed this value will not be evaluated. |
|  | 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**](http://www.uksbs.co.uk/services/procure/Pages/supplier.aspx)**.**  **Please note submission of a Bid to any email address including the Buyer will result in the Bid not being considered.** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Section 3 - Timescales** | | |
|  | Date of Issue of Contract Advert on Contracts Finder | Wednesday, 06 May 2020  Contracts Finder |
|  | Latest date / time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Delta eSourcing messaging system | Tuesday, 12 May 2020  14.00 |
|  | Latest date / time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Delta eSourcing Portal | Monday, 18 May 2020  14.00 |
|  | Latest date and time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Delta eSourcing | Wednesday, 20 May 2020  14.00 |
|  | Date/time Bidders should be available if clarifications are required | Tuesday, 26 May 2020  14.00 |
|  | Anticipated notification date of successful and unsuccessful Bids | Friday, 29 May 2020  14.00 |
|  | Anticipated Contract Award date | Monday, 08 June 2020 |
|  | Anticipated Contract Start date | Monday, 08 June 2020 |
|  | Anticipated Contract End date | Monday, 07 June 2021 |
|  | Bid Validity Period | 60 Days |

**Section 4 – Specification**

|  |
| --- |
| 1. **Background**   The Industrial Strategy set an ambition to make the UK “the best understood major economy”. It also stated that “the success of our Industrial Strategy will also depend on our ability to keep up with the pace with new sectors and emerging businesses.”  The BEIS Future Sectors team leads government policy to grow the emerging sectors of the UK economy – supporting businesses in R&D intensive sectors (e.g. robotics and quantum technology), in parts of existing sectors that are transforming (e.g. LawTech or EdTech) and the wider tech sector as a whole.  As the analytical unit supporting the Future Sectors team, we have an ongoing need to identify and analyse the business base in these areas. We use a bottom-up approach to assess the number of businesses in emerging sectors as well as the nature of their activity (e.g. who their downstream customers are, what their IP is, and which specific parts of the sector the UK is strong in). As well as mapping the business ecosystem in these sectors, we also look to identify which businesses the policy team should engage with to understand the opportunities and barriers as we assess the case for government action.   1. **Aims and Objectives of the Project**   Our aim is to procure a database that can help us better describe the business landscape in emerging sectors. This will help us assess which sectors deserve further policy support, whilst giving us a deeper understanding of current areas of policy interest – such as artificial intelligence, robotics and quantum technologies.  To do this we require business data which gives detailed information on the nature of the activities carried out by individual firms (e.g. what type of technologies they are developing), what the downstream customers / applications are, and whether they have any good IP or assets that give them a strong competitive advantage, for instance. As well as information on firms’ activities, data on company locations would also enable us to identify where emerging sectors are clustered around the UK  We already have a range of datasets for this purpose (mainly focused on equity investment trends), but we still have limited overall coverage of the potential business base in these areas, as well as a lack of detailed qualitative information about the activities of these firms. In particular we are experiencing the following set of related shortcomings:   * Completeness of business coverage: either due to limited coverage, or due to limited ability to identify relevant companies using the search tools/keywords provided, we suspect we are unable to build up a complete picture of all of the businesses in an emerging sector. This is particularly evident when we compare results across datasets and find relatively little overlap between them. Our current sources also have a limited range of emerging technologies and sectors categorised within their platforms (e.g. ‘quantum technologies’). * Accuracy of results and information: current datasets can struggle to return accurate results that include or exclude the relevant companies (e.g. robotics companies, not companies that use robotics). We are also not sure how complete and accurate the information is – e.g. which robotics companies are we missing due to the text description of the firm not including “robotics” or “robotic” or “automation”? * Detail: current datasets often do not provide sufficient depth in the company activity descriptions for us to be able to use NLP techniques to process these descriptions to overcome limitations in site functionality by searching the text ourselves. * Depth: The additional data we need are on the nature of the activities carried out by the firm, what the downstream customers / applications are, whether they have any good IP or assets that give them a strong competitive advantage.   As a consequence, we want to test the market to see if there are any solutions that can help us to improve on our current resources, saving us time in having to manually process and combine several datasets in different ways to build up a more complete picture of a sector.   1. **Suggested Methodology**   We are interested in understanding contractors’ proposed methodologies.  The solution would need to have widespread coverage of the UK business base (excluding self-employed) combined with the ability to identify businesses in the areas of interest mentioned above, such as AI, robotics & quantum technologies. Suppliers could achieve this latter goal in a variety of ways – for example, either by having a very detailed set of business descriptions or by having a tool for querying and classifying data, or some combination thereof.  The database would need to have an interface or search function that allows users to create their own bespoke queries and view the outputs in summary form. You should assume in your proposal that BEIS would be able to define what it saw as in scope for a bespoke sector (e.g. we could provide a list of key words and search terms that would be congruent with the bespoke sector). In terms of firm-level information, the dataset would include basic information such as company name, sector and location, as well as information on the nature of the company’s activities (such as a detailed company description).  The data must be capable of being used in aggregated and partial form in public fora, and in disaggregated form within government between a limited number of users (e.g. Minsters, HMT, policy development staff).   1. **Deliverables**   The key project deliverable is access to a database with the requirements & features described above. Bidders should provide information on the size, dimensions and quality of the database that they would provide access to.  Bidders should specify the number of licences or any download limits for the price they supply. We only expect to require up to 4 users, thus we do not need an option for a large number of licences.  Bidders should provide information about any support services, training or consultancy days that may be provided as part of the package.  **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.  **Contract Duration**  The initial duration for this contract is 12 months, with an option to extend for a further 12 month 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÷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 | SEL2.10 | Cyber Essentials |
| Commercial | SEL2.12 | General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Act and the Data Protection Act 2018 |
| Commercial | SEL2.13 | Data Storage |
| 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 | AW5.3 | Maximum budget |
| Price | AW5.5 | E Invoicing |
| Price | AW5.6 | Implementation of E-Invoicing |
| Quality | AW6.1 | Compliance to the Specification |
| Quality | AW6.2 | Variable Bids |
|  | 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 | 20% |
| Quality | PROJ1.1 | Approach & Methodology | 30% |
| Quality | PROJ1.2 | Data coverage | 20% |
| Quality | PROJ1.3 | Product usability | 20% |
| Quality | PROJ1.4 | Capability to deliver | 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:  Score = {weighting percentage} x {bidder's score} = 20% x 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 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) ÷ 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: Score/Total Points multiplied by 50 (80/100 x 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**](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](https://online.contractsfinder.businesslink.gov.uk/)
* [Equalities Act introduction](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/advice-and-guidance/new-equality-act-guidance/equality-act-starter-kit/video-understanding-the-equality-act-2010/)
* [Bribery Act introduction](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bribery-act-2010-guidance)
* [Freedom of information Act](http://www.ico.org.uk/for_organisations/guidance_index/freedom_of_information_and_environmental_information)