

Request for Proposal



Request for Proposal (RFP) on behalf of The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

Subject UK SBS OJEU-CR150057BIS International Comparative Performance of the UK Research Base (2015-16)

Sourcing reference number UK SBS OJEU-CR150057BIS

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

Registered in England and Wales as a limited company. Company Number 6330639.
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UKSBS
Shared Business Services

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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 customers improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

It is our vision to become the leading provider for our customers 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 customers. This allows our customers 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 its customers, 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 Innovation and Skills (BIS) 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 Customers.

Our Customers who have access to our services and Contracts are detailed [here](#).

Section 2 – About Our Customer

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)

The Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) is the department for economic growth. The department invests in skills and education to promote trade, boost innovation and help people to start and grow a business. BIS also protects consumers and reduces the impact of regulation.

BIS is a ministerial department, supported by 48 agencies and public bodies.

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills achievements include:

- Funding 457,000 apprenticeship starts in 2010-11 Academic Year
- Committing £75 million to support innovation in technology-based SMEs
- Helping 25,000 UK businesses (mainly SMEs), employing over 13 million people, to make the most of opportunities for growth in overseas markets; Growth Accelerator is a new Department for Business funded-service to help up to 26,000 small and medium enterprises (SMEs) grow as much as they can over three years. Working with an experienced coach, businesses will receive a personalised growth plan, training and workshops, networking and peer to peer support. SMEs can also learn how to develop their leadership and management capability.
- With the Cabinet Office, leading the review of 1,200 regulations across Government as part of the Red Tape Challenge, more than half of which will be scrapped or improved.

<http://www.bis.gov.uk>

Section 3 – Working with UK Shared Business Services Ltd.

Section 3 – Contact details		
3.1	Customer Name and address	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 1 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET
3.2	Buyer	Alistair Staunton-Lambert (UK SBS)
3.3	Buyer contact details	01793 867812 ☐
3.4	Estimated value of the Opportunity	£150,000 to £200,000
3.5	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	<p>All correspondence shall be submitted within the Emptoris e-sourcing tool. Guidance Notes to support the use of Emptoris is available here.</p> <p>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.</p>

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6	Date of posting of Contract advert to OJEU.	19/10/2015
3.7	Date RFP available to Bidders	22/10/2015
3.8	Bidder conference (if relevant)	n/a
3.9	Latest date / time RFP clarifications should be sent be received through Emptoris	16/11/2015 11.00
3.10	Latest date / time RFP clarification answers should be sent to all potential Bidders through Emptoris	17/11/2015 14.00
3.11	Closing date and time for Bidder to request RFP documents	26/11/2015 14.00
3.12	Closing date and time for Bidder to submit their response ('the	27/11/2015

	deadline’).	14.00hrs
3.13	Clarifications (if required)	30/11/2015 to 04/12/2015
3.14	Notification of proposed Contract award to unsuccessful bidders	Approximately week commencing 07/12/2015
3.15	Anticipated Contract Award Date	Approximately week commencing 21/12/2015 (following the completion of the 10 days standstill period)
3.16	Commencement of Contract	Approximately during week commencing 21/12/2015
3.17	Bid Validity Period	90 Days

Section 4 – Specification and about this procurement

Context and Purpose

In recent years, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has stressed the importance of research performance, with an emphasis on ensuring that investment in science and research is focussed on excellence. The Science and Innovation Strategy, published jointly by BIS and HM Treasury in December 2014, continued these themes, noting that £5.9 billion was being committed for capital to support research excellence from 2016 to 2021, with around half of this being allocated towards meeting grand challenges. Some of this was already committed (e.g. new Polar Research Ship, Square Kilometre Array, Alan Turing Institute). Following the science capital consultation exercise in 2014, a further wave of investment was announced, including an advanced materials centre in Manchester, a high performance computer collaboration with IBM at Hartree and a lead role for the UK in the next European Rover mission to Mars.

The Strategy also highlighted: expansion of the Catapult centres network; continued importance of the Research Councils (currently subject to a review being led by Sir Paul Nurse, to build on their foundations, due to report in Summer 2015); continued promotion of the Newton Fund; and the importance of place (where people and organisations benefit from mutual proximity).

One of the ways BIS (and its predecessor departments) have assessed the overall impact of its science and research investments and the performance of the UK research base, has been via regular reports on the international competitiveness of the UK research base. Initially produced annually, in mid-2010 the Minister for Universities and Science agreed to move this report onto a biennial basis on the understanding that the evidence base did not differ significantly year to year. The last such report was produced in 2013 and BIS now wishes to up-date the analysis.¹

Research Requirement

BIS envisages the study would (as a minimum) calculate and report indicators measuring the following aspects of research performance:

- Inputs to the research base, covering investments and human capital inputs, where possible, distinguishing their type and quality, for example, whether public or private sector, more or less prolific, more or less mobile.

¹ Given the timing, we recognise this next report will not strictly follow the biennial cycle. The last report was published in December 2013, and included data up to 2011 and 2012, depending on the specific data. We would expect the next report to cover data mostly up to 2014 (and possibly even 2015 for some elements). It would be useful if tenders could made clear what the latest data will be for the various elements analysed.

- Bibliometric outputs, as measured by publications and citations to those publications;
- Performance in particular disciplines with the full range of metrics available at a discipline level;
- Appropriate bibliometric indicators, such as Field-Weighted Citation Indices or shares of citation percentiles (e.g. share of top 1% cited articles);
- Patterns of the UK's international collaboration and co-authorship with relevant partners, to include as a minimum: OECD Members, EU member states, and the 15 Newton Fund partner countries²; also to cover comparative performance of these interactions;
- In terms of the Newton Fund partner countries, it is also important to capture their interactions and collaborations with other key comparator countries (eg. G7/G8, China);
- Comparison between the performance of the four constituent countries of the United Kingdom (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland);
- Patterns of international researcher mobility;
- Newly trained people outputs, including number of new PhDs as well as retention;
- Indicators of research applicability, such as patents or spin-outs;
- Indicators of knowledge transfer between academic and non-academic sectors;
- Research output productivity, relating outputs to measures of research inputs;
- Ability of countries to attract non-governmental funding for research and the extent of knowledge transfer activities;
- Analysis and metrics on open access to research, and the comparative position across countries.

The above are the key outputs for the research, in terms of maintaining the time series and getting up-dates for the headline indicators (as in the previous survey). However, there is also interest in exploring the feasibility of some further related aspects and indicators. These include:

- UK research performance at regional and/or local levels, based on the indicators discussed above, with relevant data visualisation, such as mapping.
- Publications and citations performance measures for the HE sector, for the four UK countries – for the sector overall and by individual HEI.
- Exploration of alternative measures of research outputs (eg. altmetrics), with discussion taking into account robustness and time lags.
- Performance of research by different types of funding source based on the indicators discussed above, where identified in publications.
- Analysis of the research performance based on relevant agreed key industrial sectors of the UK; sectoral themes of interest may include some of the Industrial Strategies (e.g. Life Sciences) and of the Eight Great Technologies (e.g. Robotics).
- Bespoke analysis into multidisciplinary research, to assess how effectively the UK supports such research.
- Examination of the UK's leadership in research.
- A finer-grained subject/disciplinary breakdown for some of the key indicators, as far as is possible (ie. more detailed than that provided in previous reports).

In terms of any additional analysis proposed – such as the further aspects of analysis outlined above, depending on feasibility – tenderers should indicate separate costings as far as is possible, such that BIS can make a judgement as to which elements it wishes to pursue

² China, India, Brazil, Turkey, South Africa, Mexico, Malaysia, Thailand, Chile, Egypt, Indonesia, Colombia, Vietnam, Philippines, Kazakhstan.

in this study.

Aims, Objectives & Outputs

Project Aim:

To assess the relative international performance of the UK Research Base in terms of its inputs and outputs which include (but are not limited to): research publications, citations and trained people, taking into account the quality of these outputs, and how inputs and outputs combine to demonstrate efficiency.

Trend data on research inputs is sought, not just to assess productivity, but also to enable the tracking of spending changes occurring now that could potentially impact on the future relative international rankings of science and research performance.

Project Objectives:

Drawing on the above indicators, provide a flowing written assessment of the UK's international performance, with reference to the quantity and quality of inputs and outputs, and the efficiency of science and research production. The final report should contain:

- A coherent narrative structure, accessible to non-specialists, developed throughout the document based upon the evidence. This assessment of the UK research performance should go beyond purely describing trends by considering possible reasons for the UK position in relation to the behaviour of the measured inputs and outputs.
- Where data characteristics or limitations may be important determinants of the observed trends, these characteristics or limitations should be clearly stated and any corrective steps undertaken should be explicit.
- Any recommendations for future research in this area.

Past reports give a guide to the performance indicators that have been used, though contractors are encouraged to suggest improvements to past versions and to propose alternative indicators if there is a strong case for them. The most recent two reports (2011 and 2013) are available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/32489/11-p123-international-comparative-performance-uk-research-base-2011.pdf
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/263729/bis-13-1297-international-comparative-performance-of-the-UK-research-base-2013.pdf

Project Outputs:

- A single report assessing the relative international performance of the UK Research Base in terms of its inputs and outputs with additional material such as technical, methodological considerations being included as annexes.
- An interim set of key indicators comprising of key metrics of interest³, dependent on

³ Likely to include all/some of: UK investment; researcher numbers; numbers and share of publications and citations (overall and highly cited); field-weighted citation impact (overall and by broad discipline); numbers of publications/citations per researcher and per £ investment.

feasibility, after around 2 months (to be agreed)

- A data portal allowing use of underlying performance data for further analysis by policymakers.

Proposed Methodology

As an outline of a potential methodology, the project would require:

- Gathering all relevant data and information to enable an up to date bibliometric study of the position of the UK in the international research landscape as well as patterns of researcher mobility and research collaboration.
- Additional data sources, other than bibliometrics, may be required to consider measures of research productivity.
- Where timing issues related to data availability and frequency have been identified these should be communicated to BIS.
- Calculate and report indicators measuring the aspects of performance outlined above.
- Drawing on these indicators, provide a flowing written assessment of the UK's international performance, with reference to the quantity and quality of inputs and outputs, and the efficiency of science and research production.
- Analysis should factor in evidence of time lags relating to research inputs and outputs.

Timing and Outputs

An interim series of key indicators should be made available as soon as possible. This would be expected to include key outputs such as: Inputs data – showing UK investment and researcher numbers; Outputs data – Numbers and share of publications and citations (overall and highly cited), and field-weighted citation impact by discipline; numbers of publications/citations per researcher and per £ of investment

A draft final report will be required by 15th March 2016 with an agreed final report by 15th April 2016. Tenderers are required to indicate in their bids any known risks or issues that might prevent or delay the delivery of the required outputs, and make clear how these risks will be managed. This includes, but is not limited to, accessing data or other sources of information.

The required outputs for dissemination purposes are:

- The full text of the draft and final reports in electronic format;
- The final report to include an executive summary
- Where final report contains tables, an excel file with data required to reproduce these tables, and the data sources
- A presentation of findings to the Steering Group and other colleagues from BIS.

The following deliverables are required:

- A brief progress report after c. 2 months, with some initial findings, some key indicators (as outlined above under 'project outputs' – footnote 2), and an outline

- of progress to date and next steps (to be agreed).
- A draft final report, on which the steering group will submit comments
- A final agreed report on international comparisons including the following:
 - An executive summary;
 - An assessment of the recent trends in the UK's international performance;
 - A descriptive analysis of the indicators with the use of graphs and commentary;
 - Analysis of trends in research inputs;
 - A coherent explanation of what the portrayed evidence tells us about the comparative international performance of the UK research base.
 - Definitions, methodological notes and sources of data, including difficulties or limitations of the data and particular indicators (with more technical material annexed as appropriate).
- A database, organising the underlying data and key indicators in a user-friendly way, enabling BIS and others to undertake their own analysis; consideration should be given to making this database available to the public.
- An excel file with the data for charts in the report to upload in data.gov.uk <http://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/international-comparative-performance-uk-research-base>.

The Department is committed to ensuring that BIS publications are accessible to everyone. The Final Report should be presented using the BIS Report Template provided by the project manager, and it should meet accessibility requirements. Further guidance is available in Annex B.

Project Management

The project will be managed on a day-to-day basis by a BIS representative. It will be overseen by a steering group made up of representatives from BIS (analysts and policy), other key stakeholders (likely to be HEFCE and RCUK), and the contractor. The contractor will be expected to attend all of these Steering Group meetings and take on board comments and steers offered through them.

It is envisaged there will be 3 or 4 steering group meetings during the project including an inception meeting and one after the draft final report has been received. The expectation is that all the meetings will be held at BIS offices in 1 Victoria Street (although other venues may be considered for some of the meetings depending on schedules of SG members).

DEPENDENCIES

The tenderer should indicate if you are reliant on any third party with any information, data or undertaking any of the work specified.

MONITORING TECHNIQUES

The tenderer should indicate how they will monitor the project to ensure it is delivered in terms of quality, timeliness and cost.

PEER REVIEW

The outputs from this project will also be subject to peer review by an external peer reviewer. The successful contractor will be expected to consider the comments made in the peer review. In cases where the contractor disagrees with the peer reviewer's recommendations, the contractors will be given an opportunity to respond formally. Contractors should plan for their work to be subject to this peer review process, and allow enough time for the peer reviewer to review a final draft of the report, along with full and comprehensive technical annexes.

DATA COLLECTION

Researchers will be expected to clear any data collection tools with the Department before engaging in field work and ensure that in all cases the respondent documentation and/or interviewer briefing notes clearly state that the data is being collected for and on behalf of the Department and that no reference is made, implied or otherwise, to the data being used solely by or available only to the Contractor.

The respondent documentation and/or interviewer shall ensure that the respondent clearly understands (before they give their consent to be interviewed) the purpose of the interview, that the information they provide will only be used for research purposes and, in the case of interviews (telephone or face-to-face), that they have the right to withdraw from the interview at any time.

The Department seeks to minimise the burdens on schools and Local Authorities (LAs) taking part in surveys. It is therefore important that tenders should set out how the proposed methodology will minimise the burden on schools and/or LAs and a justification for the proposed sample size.

When assessing the relative merits of data collection methods the following issues should be considered:

- only data essential to the project shall be collected;
- data should be collected electronically where appropriate and where schools and/or LAs prefer this;
- questionnaires should be pre-populated wherever possible and appropriate;
- schools must be given at least four working weeks to respond to the exercise from the date they receive the request;
- LAs should receive at least two weeks, unless they need to approach schools in which case they too should receive 4 weeks to respond; and
- the Contractor shall clear any data collection tools with the Department before engaging in field work.

Researchers shall check with the Department whether any of the information that they are requesting from schools can be provided centrally from information already held.

THE USE OF INCENTIVES

With some important exceptions, the Department believes that the routine use of respondent incentives in surveys is, in general, not justified as they are rarely cost effective in either

increasing participation or reducing non-response biases. If you are proposing the use of respondent incentives in your tender proposal you must set out why you feel they are necessary, why it is not possible to achieve the required sample sizes or response rates without the use of incentives, how and to what extent they will raise the overall response rate, how you will mitigate any specific biases that could be introduced, and provide a cost comparison with non-incentive methods. Your arguments should be supported by empirical evidence from past use. The exceptions are payment for participation in group discussions or in-depth qualitative interviews, payment to cover respondent expenses e.g. travel and childcare costs, and compensation for excessive demand on respondents, e.g. taking basic skills tests, diary keeping, panel maintenance and compensating schools for the respondent's time. If you wish to use a prize draw incentive then you must also set out in your tender how you will comply with all relevant legislation and codes of practice (e.g. the British Code of Advertising and Sales Promotion), state that you shall be solely liable for any breach of these and that you shall indemnify the Department against any claims that may be made under them.

DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998

If the project will involve the collection of personal data please state how you will ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

The Contract duration shall be until the agreed final report has been delivered on April 15th 2016.

Section 5 – Evaluation model

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The evaluation process will be conducted to ensure that Bids are evaluated fairly to ascertain the bidders who can demonstrate the required skills qualities, technical ability and capacity, commercial stability and experience to ensure successful performance of the Contract.
- 5.1.2 The evaluation team may comprise staff from UK SBS, the Customer and any specific external stakeholders UK SBS deem required

5.2 Evaluation of Bids

- 5.2.1 Evaluation of Bids shall be based on a Selection questionnaire defined in the e-sourcing tool.

5.3. SELECTION questionnaire

5.3.1 The Selection questionnaire shall be marked against the following Selection pass / fail and scoring criteria.

5.3.2 The selection questionnaire shall be marked against the following Mandatory or discretionary pass / fail criteria.

Selection Pass/fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Selection Part B	SEL2.2	Conviction for conspiracy
Selection Part B	SEL2.3	Conviction for corruption
Selection Part B	SEL2.4	Conviction for bribery
Selection Part B	SEL2.5	Conviction for fraud
Selection Part B	SEL2.6	Conviction for Terrorism/ Serious Crime
Selection Part B	SEL2.7	Conviction for Money Laundering
Selection Part B	SEL 2.8	Conviction for proceeds of crime
Selection Part B	SEL 2.9	Conviction for other offences
Selection Part B	SEL 2.10	Tax and social security breaches
Selection Part B	SEL 2.12	Cyber Essentials
Selection Part C	SEL3.2	Compliance with applicable obligations in the fields of environmental, social and labour law.
Selection Part C	SEL3.3	Bankruptcy, Insolvency or Winding up
Selection Part C	SEL3.4	Grave Professional misconduct
Selection Part C	SEL3.5	Agreements with other economic operators that create a Distortion of Competition
Selection Part C	SEL3.6	Conflict of interest within meaning of regulation 24
Selection Part C	SEL3.7	Distortion of competition within the meaning of regulation 41
Selection Part C	SEL3.8	Deficiencies in performance of prior public contract
Selection Part C	SEL3.9	Serious Misrepresentation
Selection Part C	SEL3.10	Tax Returns
Selection Part D	SEL4.1	Economic and Financial standing assessment
Selection Part D	SEL4.2	Minimum financial threshold
Selection Part D	SEL4.3	Guarantee
Selection Part D	SEL4.4	Insurance
Selection Part E	SEL5.1	References
Selection Part E	SEL5.2	Health and Safety Policy
Selection Part E	SEL5.3	Remedial Orders relating to Health and Safety Executive (or equivalent)
Selection Part E	SEL5.4	Conviction of breaching environmental Legislation
Selection Part E	SEL5.5	Sub-contractors infringement of environmental Legislation
Selection Part E	SEL5.6	Unlawful Discrimination
Selection Part E	SEL5.7	Sub-contractor checks for unlawful discrimination
Selection Part E	FOI1.1	Freedom of information

	In the event of a Bidder failing to meet the requirements of a Mandatory pass / fail criteria, UK SBS reserves the right to disqualify the Bidder and not consider evaluation of the any of the selection stage scoring methodology, nor the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria.
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5.3.3 Each Mandatory pass / fail question includes a clear definition of the requirements of a successful response to the question.

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

5.3.5 Questions marked 'for information only' do not contribute to the scoring model.

5.3.5 During the evaluation stage, the intention is that only Bidders who pass all the Mandatory and Discretionary requirements of the RFP will be considered for award stage evaluation.

5.4. AWARD questionnaire

5.4.1 The award questionnaire shall be marked against the following Mandatory or discretionary pass / fail criteria. Each Mandatory pass / fail question includes a clear definition of the requirements of a successful response to the question.

Award Pass/fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.2	Bid validity period
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of bona fide Bid
Commercial	AW4.1	Compliance to the Contract Terms
Commercial	AW4.2	Changes to the Contract Terms
Commercial	AW5.5	E Invoice
Commercial	AW5.6	E Invoice implementation
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Price	PROJ1.5	Please confirm your bid is not greater than £200,000 GBP excluding VAT. Bids that exceed this value will not be considered.
-	-	Request for Quotation response – received on time within the e-sourcing tool
		In the event of a Bidder failing to meet the requirements of a Mandatory pass / fail criteria, UK SBS reserves the right to disqualify the Bidder and not consider evaluation of the any of the selection stage scoring methodology, nor the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria.

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5.4.2 The Award questionnaire shall be marked against the following Award scoring criteria.

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

5.4.4 Questions marked 'for information only' do not contribute to the scoring model.

Award Scoring criteria			
Evaluation Justification Statement			
In consideration of this particular requirement UK SBS has decided to evaluate Potential Providers by adopting the weightings/scoring mechanism detailed within this RFP. UK SBS 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	Understanding The Requirements. Please demonstrate that you have an understanding of the requirements of this specification and how you will deliver the objectives the customer seeks to achieve. Your response should be no more than 3 sides of A4 – any information provided beyond that will not be evaluated.	20%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Staff and Capability to deliver Please outline the key members of your project team and demonstrate their skills and expertise essential to the delivery of this project. Your response should be no more than 3 sides of A4 – any information provided beyond that will not be evaluated.	20%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Project Plan and Timescales Please outline your proposed project plan and timescales, ensuring the key deadlines outlined in the specification are met. Your response should be no more than 2 sides of A4 – any information provided beyond that will not be	10%

		evaluated.	
Quality	PROJ1.4	<p>Method</p> <p>Please clearly explain and give reasoning for your proposed methodology and approach to achieving the objectives and delivering the outputs highlighted in the specification and as below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A brief progress report after c. 2 months, with some initial findings, some key indicators ▪ A draft final report ▪ A final agreed report ▪ A database, organising the underlying data and key indicators in a user-friendly way. ▪ An excel file with the data for charts in the report to upload in data.gov.uk http://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/international-comparative-performance-uk-research-base. <p>Your response should be no more than 4 sides of A4 - – any information provided beyond that will not be evaluated.</p>	30%

Award 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/Total Points available multiplied by 20 (60/100 x 20 = 12)

Where an evaluation criterion is worth 10% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 10.

Example if a Bidder scores 60 from the available 100 points this will equate to 6% by using the following calculation: Score/Total Points available multiplied by 10 (60/100 x 10 = 6)

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.
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20	Extremely poor response – they have completely missed the point of the question.
40	Very poor response and not acceptable. Requires major revision to the proposal to make it acceptable. Only partially answers the requirement, with major deficiencies and little relevant detail proposed.
60	Poor response with deficiencies apparent. Some useful evidence provided but response falls well short of expectations. Low probability of success, sufficient obstacles but correctable
80	Response is acceptable but remains basic and could have been expanded upon. Response is sufficient but does not inspire. Good probability of success, weaknesses can be readily corrected.
100	Response demonstrates they can meet a high performance level. High probability of success, no significant weaknesses noted. The response is compelling in its description of techniques and measurements to be employed.

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 40

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 80

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 60

Your final score will $(60+40+80+60) \div 4 = 60$

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 $(80/100 \times 50 = 40)$

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

5.5. Evaluation process

5.5.1 The evaluation process will feature some, if not all, the following phases

Stage	Summary of activity
Receipt and Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFP logged upon opening in alignment with UK SBS's procurement procedures. • Any RFP Bid received after the closing date will be rejected unless circumstances attributed to UK SBS or the e-sourcing tool beyond the bidder control are responsible for late submission.
Compliance check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check all Mandatory requirements are acceptable to UK SBS. • Unacceptable Bids maybe subject to clarification by UK SBS or rejection of the Bid.
Scoring of the Bid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation team will independently score the Bid and provide a commentary of their scoring justification against the Selection criteria.
Clarifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Evaluation team may require written clarification to Bids
Re - scoring of the Bid and Clarifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following Clarification responses, the Evaluation team reserve the right to independently re-score the Bid and Clarifications and provide a commentary of their re-scoring justification against the Selection criteria.
Shortlisting of Bidders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UK SBS will shortlist the Bidders based on the Responses received and the Evaluation Model detailed in Section 5 of the RFP.
Validation of unsuccessful Bidders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To confirm contents of the letters to provide details of scoring and relative feedback on the unsuccessful Bidders Bid in comparison with the successful Bidders Bid.

Section 6 – Selection and award questionnaires

Section 6 – Selection questionnaire

6.1 Introduction

The Selection questionnaires are located in the within the e-sourcing tool.

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

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 6 – Award questionnaire

6.2 The Award questionnaires are located within the e-sourcing tool.

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

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 7 – General information

7.1. Introduction

- 7.1.1 UK SBS wishes to establish a Contract for the provision of Analysis of Citation Data. UK SBS is managing this procurement process in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as may be amended from time to time) (the “Regulations”). This is a services Contract being procured under the OJEU Open Procedure
- 7.1.2 UK SBS is procuring the Contract for The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills for its exclusive use.
- 7.1.3 UK SBS logo, trademarks and other identifying marks are proprietary and may not be incorporated in the Companies response without UK SBS’s written permission.
- 7.1.4 The Bidder shall indemnify and keep indemnified UK SBS against all actions, claims, demands, proceedings, damages, costs, losses, charges and expenses whatsoever in respect of any breach by the Bidder of this document.
- 7.1.5 If there is any doubt with regard to the ambiguity of any question or content contained in this questionnaire then PLEASE ASK a clarification question, but please ensure that your question is via the formal clarification process in writing to the UK SBS representative nominated. No approach of any kind in connection with this opportunity should be made to any other person within, or associated with UK SBS. All information secured outside of this named contact shall have no legal standing or worth and should not be relied upon.
- 7.1.6 It remains the responsibility of the Bidder to keep UK SBS informed of any matter that may affect continued qualification
- 7.1.7 Prior to commencing formal evaluation, Submitted Responses will be checked to ensure they are fully compliant with the Pass / Fail criteria within the Evaluation model. Non-compliant Submitted Responses may be rejected by UK SBS. Submitted Responses which are deemed by UK SBS to be fully compliant will proceed to evaluation. These will be evaluated using the criteria and scores detailed in the matrix set out in [Section 5](#).
- 7.1.8 Following evaluation of the submitted Responses and approval of the outcome UK SBS intends to select a short list of Bidders to proceed to Award stage of this Procurement.
- 7.1.9 Whilst it is UK SBS’s intention to purchase the majority of its services under this Contract Arrangement from the Supplier(s) appointed this does not confer any exclusivity on the appointed Suppliers. UK SBS and any relevant Other Public Bodies reserve the right to purchase any services and services (including those similar to the services covered by this procurement) from any Supplier outside of this Contract..
- 7.1.10 UK SBS reserves the right not to conclude a Contract as a result of the current procurement process. Bidders should review the contents of Section 7 paragraph 7.8.1 when considering submitting their Response.

- 7.1.11 The services covered by this procurement exercise have NOT been sub-divided into Lots. The justifications for this decision are:
- 1) That the requirement is for a report on international competitiveness of the UK research base which must be consistent in structure, approach and content. Consistency of service would not be guaranteed with multiple providers.
 - 2) A key deliverable of this contract is a final overview report and database to cover the relative international performance of the UK Research Base in terms of its inputs and outputs. This could only be completed by a contractor who has been involved in the entire process.
- 7.1.12 UK SBS shall utilise the Crown Commercial Service (CCS – previously Government Procurement Service) Emptoris e-sourcing tool url <https://gpsesourcing.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ssso/jsp/login.jsp> to conduct this procurement. There will be no electronic auction following the conclusion of the evaluation of the Request for Proposal (RFP) responses. Bidders will be specifically advised where attachments are permissible to support a question response within the e-sourcing tool. All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool may be submitted to Crown Commercial Service, Telephone 0345 010 3503.
- 7.1.13 Please utilise the messaging system within the e-sourcing tool located at <https://gpsesourcing.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/ssso/jsp/login.jsp> within the timescales detailed in Section 3. if you have any doubt as to what is required or will have difficulty in providing the information requested. Bidders should note that any requests for clarifications may not be considered by UK SBS if they are not articulated by the Bidder within the discussion forum within the e-sourcing tool.
- 7.1.14 Bidders should read this document, RFx attachments, messages and the evaluation questionnaires carefully before completing the Response submission. Failure to comply with any of these instructions for completion and submission of the Submitted Response may result in the rejection of the Response. Bidders are advised therefore to acquaint themselves fully with the extent and nature of the goods/services/goods and services and contractual obligations. These instructions constitute the Conditions of Response. Participation in the RFP process automatically signals that the Bidder accepts these Conditions.
- 7.1.15 All material issued in connection with this RFP shall remain the property of UK SBS and/or as applicable relevant OPB and shall be used only for the purpose of this procurement. All Due Diligence Information shall be either returned to UK SBS or securely destroyed by the Bidder (at UK SBS's option) at the conclusion of the procurement
- 7.1.16 The Bidder shall ensure that each and every sub-contractor, consortium member and adviser abides by the terms of these instructions and the Conditions of Response.
- 7.1.17 The Bidder shall not make contact with any other employee, agent or consultant of UK SBS or any relevant OPB or Customer who are in any way connected with this procurement during the period of this procurement, unless instructed otherwise by UK SBS.
- 7.1.18 UK SBS shall not be committed to any course of action as a result of:
- 7.1.18.1 issuing this RFP or any invitation to participate in this procurement ;

- 7.1.18.2 an invitation to submit any Response in respect of this procurement;
 - 7.1.18.3 communicating with a Bidder or a Bidder's representatives or agents in respect of this procurement; or
 - 7.1.18.4 any other communication between UK SBS and/or any relevant OPB (whether directly or by its agents or representatives) and any other party.
- 7.1.19 Bidders shall accept and acknowledge that by issuing this RFP UK SBS shall not be bound to accept any Response and reserves the right not to conclude a Contract for some or all of the services for which Responses are invited.
- 7.1.20 UK SBS reserves the right to amend, add to or withdraw all or any part of this RFP at any time during the procurement.
- 7.1.21 Bidders should not include in the Response any extraneous information which has not been specifically requested in the RFP including, for example, any sales literature, standard terms of trading etc. Any such information not requested but provided by the Bidder shall not be considered by UK SBS.
- 7.1.22 If the Bidder is a consortium, the following information must be provided: full details of the consortium; and the information sought in this RFP in respect of each of the consortium's constituent members as part of a single composite response. Potential Providers should provide details of the actual or proposed percentage shareholding of the constituent members within the consortium as indicated in the relevant section of the selection questionnaire SEL1.9 specifically refers. If a consortium is not proposing to form a corporate entity, full details of alternative proposed arrangements should be provided as indicated in the relevant section of the RFP. However, please note UK SBS reserves the right to require a successful consortium to form a single legal entity in accordance with regulation 19(6) of the Regulations. UK SBS recognises that arrangements in relation to consortia may (within limits) be subject to future change. Potential Providers should therefore respond in the light of the arrangements as currently envisaged. Potential Providers are reminded that any future proposed change in relation to consortia must be notified to UK SBS so that it can make a further assessment by applying the selection criteria to the new information provided and consider rejection of the Response if UK SBS reasonably consider the change to have a material impact of the delivery of the viability of the Response.

7.3. Confidentiality

- 7.3.1 Subject to the exceptions referred to in paragraph 7.3.2, the contents of this RFP are being made available by UK SBS on condition that:
- 7.3.1.1 Bidders shall at all times treat the contents of the RFP and any related documents (together called the 'Information') as confidential, save in so far as they are already in the public domain;
 - 7.3.1.2 Bidders shall not disclose, copy, reproduce, distribute or pass any of the Information to any other person at any time or allow any of these things to happen;
 - 7.3.1.3 Bidders shall not use any of the Information for any purpose other than for the purposes of submitting (or deciding whether to submit) a Response; and

- 7.3.1.4 Bidders shall not undertake any publicity activity within any section of the media in relation to this procurement
- 7.3.2 Bidders may disclose, distribute or pass any of the Information to the Bidder's advisers, sub-contractors or to another person provided that either:
- 7.3.2.1 This is done for the sole purpose of enabling a Response to be submitted and the person receiving the Information undertakes in writing to keep the Information confidential on the same terms as if that person were the Bidder; or
- 7.3.2.2 The disclosure is made for the sole purpose of obtaining legal advice from external lawyers in relation to the procurement or to any Contract arising from it; or
- 7.3.2.3 The Bidder is legally required to make such a disclosure
- 7.3.3 In paragraphs 7.3.1 and 7.3.2 above the term 'person' includes but is not limited to any person, firm, body or association, corporate or incorporate.
- 7.3.4 UK SBS may disclose detailed information relating to Responses to its employees, agents or advisers and UK SBS may make any of the Contract documents available for private inspection by its officers, employees, agents or advisers. UK SBS also reserves the right to disseminate information that is materially relevant to the procurement to all Bidders, even if the information has only been requested by one Bidder, subject to the duty to protect each Bidder's commercial confidentiality in relation to its Response (unless there is a requirement for disclosure as explained in paragraphs 7.4.1 to 7.4.3 below).
- 7.3.5 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, UK SBS 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 UK SBS during this Procurement. Subject to section 7.4 below, the information will not be disclosed outside Government. Bidders taking part in this RFP consent to these terms as part of the competition process.
- 7.3.6 From 2nd April 2014 the Government is introducing its new Government Security Classifications ("GSC") classification scheme 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 from 2nd April 2014. The link below to the Gov.uk website provides information on the new GSC: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-security-classifications>

7.3.7 UK SBS reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft contract accompanying this RFP to reflect any changes introduced by the GSC. In particular where this RFP 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.

7.4 Freedom of information

7.4.1 In accordance with the obligations and duties placed upon public authorities by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the 'FoIA') and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (the 'EIR') (each as amended from time to time), UK SBS may be required to disclose information submitted by the Bidder to the to UK SBS.

7.4.2 In respect of any information submitted by a Bidder that it considers to be commercially sensitive the Bidder should complete the Freedom of Information declaration question defined in the Question FOI1.2.

7.4.3 Where a Bidder identifies information as commercially sensitive, UK SBS will endeavour to maintain confidentiality. Bidders should note, however, that, even where information is identified as commercially sensitive, UK SBS may be required to disclose such information in accordance with the FoIA or the Environmental Information Regulations. In particular, UK SBS is required to form an independent judgment concerning whether the information is exempt from disclosure under the FoIA or the EIR and whether the public interest favours disclosure or not. Accordingly, UK SBS cannot guarantee that any information marked 'confidential' or "commercially sensitive" will not be disclosed.

7.4.4 Where a Bidder receives a request for information under the FoIA or the EIR during the procurement, this should be immediately passed on to UK SBS and the Bidder should not attempt to answer the request without first consulting with UK SBS.

7.4.5 Bidders are reminded that the Government's transparency agenda requires that sourcing documents, including RFP templates such as this, are published on a designated, publicly searchable web site, and, that the same applies to other sourcing documents issued by UK SBS, and any contract entered into by UK SBS with its preferred supplier once the procurement is complete. By submitting a response to this RFP Bidders are agreeing that their participation and contents of their Response may be made public.

7.5. Response Validity

7.5.1 Your Response should remain open for consideration for a period of 90 days. A Response valid for a shorter period may be rejected.

7.6. Timescales

7.6.1 [Section 3](#) of the RFP sets out the proposed procurement timetable. UK SBS reserves the right to extend the dates and will advise potential Bidders of any change to the dates.

7.7. UK SBS's Contact Details

- 7.7.1 Unless stated otherwise in these Instructions or in writing from UK SBS, all communications from Bidders (including their sub-contractors, consortium members, consultants and advisers) during the period of this procurement must be directed through the e-sourcing tool to the designated UK SBS contact.
- 7.7.2 All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool may be submitted to Crown Commercial Service, Telephone 0345 010 3503.
- 7.7.3 Bidders should be mindful that the designated Contact should not under any circumstances be sent a copy of their Response outside of the e-sourcing tool. Failure to follow this requirement will result in disqualification of the Response.

7.8. Preparation of a Response

- 7.8.1 Bidders must obtain for themselves at their own responsibility and expense all information necessary for the preparation of Responses. Bidders are solely responsible for all costs, expenses and other liabilities arising in connection with the preparation and submission of their Response and all other stages of the selection and evaluation process. Under no circumstances will UK SBS, or any of their advisers, be liable for any such costs, expenses or liabilities borne by Bidders or their sub-contractors, suppliers or advisers in this process.
- 7.8.2 Bidders are required to complete and provide all information required by UK SBS in accordance with the Conditions of Response and the Request for Proposal. Failure to comply with the Conditions and the Request for Proposal may lead UK SBS to reject a Response.
- 7.8.3 UK SBS relies on Bidders' own analysis and review of information provided. Consequently, Bidders are solely responsible for obtaining the information which they consider is necessary in order to make decisions regarding the content of their Responses and to undertake any investigations they consider necessary in order to verify any information provided to them during the procurement.
- 7.8.4 Bidders must form their own opinions, making such investigations and taking such advice (including professional advice) as is appropriate, regarding their Responses, without reliance upon any opinion or other information provided by UK SBS or their advisers and representatives. Bidders should notify UK SBS promptly of any perceived ambiguity, inconsistency or omission in this RFP, any of its associated documents and/or any other information issued to them during the procurement.
- 7.8.5 Bidders must ensure that each response to a question is within any specified word count. Any responses with words in excess of the word count will only be considered up to the point where they meet the word count, any additional words beyond the volume defined in the word count will not be considered by the evaluation panel.
- 7.8.6 Bidders must ensure that each response to a question is not cross referenced to a response to another question. In the event of a Bidder adding a cross reference it will not be considered in evaluation.

7.9. Submission of Responses

- 7.9.1 The Response must be submitted as instructed in this document through the e-sourcing tool. Failure to follow the instruction within each Section of this document, to omit responses to any of the questions or to present your response in alignment with any guidance notes provided may render the Response non-compliant and it may be rejected.

- 7.9.2 UK SBS may at its own absolute discretion extend the closing date and the time for receipt of Responses specified [Section 3](#).
- 7.9.3 Any extension to the RFP response period will apply to all Bidders.
- 7.9.4 Any financial data provided must be submitted in or converted into pounds sterling. Where official documents include financial data in a foreign currency, a sterling equivalent must be provided. Failure to adhere to this requirement will result in the Response not being considered.
- 7.9.5 UK SBS does not accept responsibility for the premature opening or mishandling of Responses that are not submitted in accordance with the instructions of this document.
- 7.9.6 The Response and any documents accompanying it must be in the English language
- 7.9.7 Bidders must submit their response through the e-sourcing tool:
- 7.9.8 Responses will be submitted any time up to the date indicated in [Section 3](#). Responses received before this deadline will be retained in a secure environment, unopened until this deadline has passed.
- 7.9.9 Responses received after the date indicated in [Section 3](#) shall not be considered by UK SBS unless the Bidder can justify the reason for the delay.
- 7.9.9.1 The Bidder must demonstrate irrefutable evidence in writing they have made best endeavours to ensure the Response was received on time and that the issue was beyond their control.
- 7.9.9.2 Any request for a late Response to be considered must be emailed to bids@uksbs.co.uk in advance of 'the deadline' if a bidder believes their Response will be received late.
- 7.9.9.3 UK SBS reserves the right to accept or reject any late Response without justification to the affected Bidder and make no guarantee it will consider any request for a late Response to be considered.

7.10. Canvassing

- 7.10.1 Any Bidder who directly or indirectly canvasses any employee, or agent of UK SBS or its members or any relevant OPB or any of its employees concerning the establishment of the Contract or who directly or indirectly obtains or attempts to obtain information from any such officer, member, employee or agent or concerning any other Bidder, Response or proposed Response will be disqualified.

7.11. Disclaimers

- 7.11.1 Whilst the information in this RFP, Due Diligence Information and supporting documents has been prepared in good faith, it does not purport to be comprehensive nor has it been independently verified.
- 7.11.2 Neither UK SBS, nor any relevant OPB's nor their advisors, nor their respective directors, officers, members, partners, employees, other staff or agents:
- 7.11.2.1 makes any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness or completeness of the RFP; or

7.11.2.2 accepts any responsibility for the information contained in the RFP or for their fairness, accuracy or completeness of that information nor shall any of them be liable for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.

7.11.3 Any persons considering making a decision to enter into contractual relationships with UK SBS and/or, as applicable, relevant OPB following receipt of the RFP should make their own investigations and their own independent assessment of UK SBS and/or, as applicable, relevant OPB and its requirements for the goods/services/goods and services and should seek their own professional financial and legal advice. For the avoidance of doubt the provision of clarification or further information in relation to the RFP or any other associated documents (including the Schedules) is only authorised to be provided following a query made in accordance with Paragraph 7.15 of this RFP.

7.12. Collusive behaviour

7.12.1 Any Bidder who:

7.12.1.1 fixes or adjusts the amount of its Response by or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other party; or

7.12.1.2 communicates to any party other than UK SBS or, as applicable, relevant OPB the amount or approximate amount of its proposed Response or information which would enable the amount or approximate amount to be calculated (except where such disclosure is made in confidence in order to obtain quotations necessary for the preparation of the Response or insurance or any necessary security); or

7.12.1.3 enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other party that such other party shall refrain from submitting a Response; or

7.12.1.4 enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other party as to the amount of any Response submitted; or

7.12.1.5 offers or agrees to pay or give or does pay or give any sum or sums of money, inducement or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to any party for doing or having done or causing or having caused to be done in relation to any other Response or proposed Response, any act or omission,

shall (without prejudice to any other civil remedies available to UK SBS and without prejudice to any criminal liability which such conduct by a Bidder may attract) be disqualified.

7.13. No inducement or incentive

7.13.1 The RFP is issued on the basis that nothing contained in it shall constitute an inducement or incentive nor shall have in any other way persuaded a Bidder to submit a Response or enter into the Contract or any other contractual agreement.

7.14. Acceptance of the Contract

7.14.1 The Bidder in submitting the Response undertakes that in the event of the Response being accepted by UK SBS and UK SBS confirming in writing such acceptance to the

Bidder, the Bidder will within 7 days of being called upon to do so by UK SBS execute the Contract in the form set out in the Contract Terms or in such amended form as may subsequently be agreed.

7.14.2 UK SBS shall be under no obligation to accept the lowest priced or any Response.

7.15. Queries relating to the Response

7.15.1 All requests for clarification about the requirements or the process of this procurement shall be made in through the e-sourcing tool unless where the e-sourcing tool is unavailable due to Emptoris or Crown Commercial Service system maintenance or failure when a clarification by email to the contact defined in [Section 3](#).

7.15.2 UK SBS will endeavour to answer all questions as quickly as possible, but cannot guarantee a minimum response time.

7.15.3 In the event of a Bidder requiring assistance uploading a clarification to the e-sourcing portal they should use the contact details defined in [Section 3](#).

7.15.4 No further requests for clarifications will be accepted after 5 days prior to the date for submission of Responses.

7.15.5 In order to ensure equality of treatment of Bidders, UK SBS intends to publish the questions and clarifications raised by Bidders together with UK SBS's responses (but not the source of the questions) to all participants on a regular basis.

7.15.6 Bidders should indicate if a query is of a commercially sensitive nature – where disclosure of such query and the answer would or would be likely to prejudice its commercial interests. However, if UK SBS at its sole discretion does not either; consider the query to be of a commercially confidential nature or one which all Bidders would potentially benefit from seeing both the query and UK SBS's response, UK SBS will:

7.15.6.1 invite the Bidder submitting the query to either declassify the query and allow the query along with UK SBS's response to be circulated to all Bidders; or

7.15.6.2 request the Bidder, if it still considers the query to be of a commercially confidential nature, to withdraw the query prior to the end of the closing date and time for Bidder clarifications.

7.15.7 UK SBS reserves the right not to respond to a request for clarification or to circulate such a request where it considers that the answer to that request would or would be likely to prejudice its commercial interests.

7.16. Amendments to Response Documents

7.16.1 At any time prior to the deadline for the receipt of Responses, UK SBS may modify the RFP by amendment. Any such amendment will be numbered and dated and issued by UK SBS to all prospective Bidders. In order to give prospective Bidders reasonable time in which to take the amendment into account in preparing their Responses, UK SBS may, at its discretion, extend the time and/or date for receipt of Responses.

7.17. Modification and withdrawal

7.17.1 Bidders may modify their Response where allowable within the e-sourcing tool. No Response may be modified after the deadline for submission of Responses.

7.17.2 Bidders may withdraw their Response at any time prior the deadline for submission of Responses [or any other time prior to accepting the offer of a Contract]. The notice to withdraw the Response must be in writing and sent to UK SBS by recorded delivery or equivalent service and delivered to UK SBS at UK Shared Business Services Ltd, Procurement Policy Manager, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN2 1ET

7.18. Right to disqualify or reject

7.18.1 UK SBS reserves the right to reject or disqualify a Bidder where

7.18.1.1 the Bidder fails to comply fully with the requirements of this Request for Proposal or presents the response in a format contrary to the requirements of this document; and/or

7.18.1.2 the Bidder is guilty of serious misrepresentation in relation to its Response; expression of interest; or the Response process; and/or

7.18.1.3 there is a change in identity, control, financial standing or other factor impacting on the selection and/or evaluation process affecting the Bidder.

7.19. Right to cancel, clarify or vary the process

7.19.1 UK SBS reserves the right to:

7.19.1.1 cancel the evaluation process at any stage; and/or

7.19.1.2 require the Bidder to clarify its Response in writing and/or provide additional information. (Failure to respond adequately may result in the Bidder not being selected),

7.20.. Notification of award

7.20.1 UK SBS will notify the successful Bidder of the Contract award in writing and will publish an Award Notice in the Official Journal of the European Union in accordance with the Regulations within 30 days of the award of the contract.

7.20.2 As required by the Regulations all unsuccessful Bidders will be provided with an email advising the outcome of the submission of their RFP response.

Appendix 'A' Glossary of Terms

TERM	MEANING
"UK SBS"	means UK Shared Business Services Ltd herein after referred to as UK SBS.
"Bid", "Response", "Submitted Bid ", or "RFP Response"	means the Bidders formal offer in response to this Request for Proposal
"Bidders"	means the organisations being invited to respond to this Request for Proposal
"Central Purchasing Body"	means a duly constituted public sector organisation which procures goods/services for and on behalf of contracting authorities
"Conditions of Bid"	means the terms and conditions set out in this RFP relating to the submission of a Bid
"Contract"	means the agreement to be entered by UK SBS and the Supplier following any award under the procurement
"Contracting Bodies"	means UK SBS and any other contracting authorities described in the OJEU Contract Notice
"Customer"	means the legal entity (or entities) for which any Contract agreed will be made accessible to.
"Due Diligence Information"	means the background and supporting documents and information provided by UK SBS for the purpose of better informing the Bidders responses to this Request for Proposal
"EIR"	mean the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 together with any guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or relevant Government department in relation to such regulations
FoIA	means the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and any subordinate legislation made under such Act from time to time together with any guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or relevant Government department in relation to such legislation
"Lot"	means a discrete sub-division of the requirements
"Mandatory"	Means a pass / fail criteria which must be met in order for a Bid to be considered, unless otherwise specified.
"OJEU Contract Notice"	means the advertisement issued in the Official Journal of the European Union
"Order"	means an order for served by any Contracting Body on the Supplier
"Other Public Bodies"	means all Contracting Bodies except UK SBS
"Request for Proposal" or "RFP"	means this Request for Proposal documentation and all related documents published by UK SBS and made available to Bidders and includes the Due Diligence Information. NOTE: This document is often referred to as an Invitation to Tender within other organisations
"Supplier"	means the organisation awarded the Contract
"Standard Goods /Services"	means any goods/services set out at within Section 4 Specification

Annex B Commissioning accessible PDF documents

This guidance is for anyone who commissions documents which will be published on the BIS intranet or GOV.UK websites. PDFs which do not meet the minimum accessibility criteria will not be published.

Why is accessibility important?

The Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) and the Government Digital Service (GDS) are working to ensure its publications are accessible to all users regardless of disability.

There is a commitment to achieve AA accessibility as defined by the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#)⁴ (WCAG) produced by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI).

What you must do

All PDF documents created for BIS by outside agencies must be accessible to a standard equivalent to WCAG 2.0 level AA. This is important because all content published on the GOV.UK website must be accessible.

Further guidance – see the Web content Accessibility Guidelines¹ (WCAG) and the [Government Digital Service Content principles 13. Accessible PDFs](#)²

Please ensure the following **standard text** (all the text in the grey box) is included in the terms of reference when procuring publications.

Checklist for PDF accessibility

PDF documents supplied to BIS will be assessed for accessibility upon receipt. **Documents which do not meet one or more of the following checkpoints will be returned to you for re-working at your own cost.**

- document reads logically when reflowed or rendered by text-to-speech software
- language is set to English (in File > Properties > Advanced)
- structural elements of document are properly tagged (headings, titles, lists etc)
- all images/figures have either alternative text or an appropriate caption
- tables are correctly tagged to represent the table structure
- text is left aligned, not justified
- document avoids excessive use of capitalised, underlined or italicised text
- hyperlinks are spelt out (eg in a footnote or endnote)

Titling PDF documents

Please ensure that the title of the document in 'File > Document properties > Title' matches that on the front page.

Assessing the results

You can check the accessibility PDF documents you have commissioned yourself. Accessibility can be evaluated using a combination of automated testing and manual checking.

Within Acrobat you can perform either a Full Check or a Quick Check. Acrobat Reader also has an Accessibility Quick Check function (Document > Accessibility Quick Check).

Manually, you can [reflow the document](#)³ (View > Zoom > Reflow) to check the reading order. If a document containing formatting such as columns and sidebars doesn't make sense when reflowed into a single column, then it won't make sense when read aloud by a screen reader (you can use View > Read Out Loud to hear how the document reads).

⁴ www.w3.org/WAI/intro/wcag.php

You can also check that any captions or alternative text provide accurate descriptions of the images with which they are associated.

For help in evaluating a PDF for accessibility – or to ask any other questions about accessibility – contact the BIS Digital Communications team,
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