Request for Quotation

Cultural Service Benefit Indicators

15/05/2024

Request for Quotation

Cultural Service Benefit Indicators

You are invited to submit a quotation for the requirement described in the specification, Section 2.

Please confirm by email, receipt of these documents and whether you intend to submit a quote or not.

Your response should be returned to the following email address by:

Email: caitlin.hinson@naturalengland.org.uk

Date: 21/06/2024

Time: 12.00pm (noon)

Ensure you include the name of the quotation and ‘Final Submission’ in the subject field to make it clear that it is your response.

Contact Details and Timetable

Caitlin Hinson ([caitlin.hinson@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:caitlin.hinson@naturalengland.org.uk)) will be your contact for any questions linked to the content of the quote or the process. Please submit any clarification questions via email and note that, unless commercially sensitive, both the question and the response will be circulated to all tenderers.

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| Action | Date |
| Date of issue of RFQ | 15-May-2024 |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | 07-Jun-2024 at [12:00 BST] |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | 21-Jun-2024 at [12.00 BST] |
| Intended date of Contract Award | 28-Jun-2024 |
| Intended Contract Start Date | 08-Jul-2024 |
| Intended Delivery Date / Contract Duration | 08-Jul-2024 to 31-Mar-2025 (9 months) |

Section 1: General Information

Glossary

Unless the context otherwise requires, the following words and expressions used within this Request for Quotation shall have the following meanings (to be interpreted in the singular or plural as the context requires):

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| “Authority” | means Natural England who is the Contracting Authority. |
| “Contract” | means the contract to be entered into by the Authority and the successful supplier. |
| “Response” | means the information submitted by a supplier in response to the RFQ. |
| “RFQ” | means this Request for Quotation and all related documents published by the Authority and made available to suppliers. |

Conditions applying to the RFQ

You should examine your Response and related documents ensuring it is complete and in accordance with the stated instructions prior to submission.

Your Response must contain sufficient information to enable the Authority to evaluate it fairly and effectively. You should ensure that you have prepared your Response fully and accurately and that prices quoted are arithmetically correct for the units stated.

By submitting a Response, you, the supplier, are deemed to accept the terms and conditions provided in the RFQ. Confirmation of this is required in Annex 2.

Failure to comply with the instructions set out in the RFQ may result in the supplier’s exclusion from this quotation process.

Acceptance of Quotations

By issuing this RFQ the Authority does not bind itself to accept any quotation and reserves the right not to award a contract to any supplier who submits a quotation.

Costs

The Authority will not reimburse you for any costs and expenses which you incur preparing and submitting your quotation, even if the Authority amends or terminates the procurement process.

Self-Declaration and Mandatory Requirements

The RFQ includes a self-declaration response (Annex 1) which covers basic information about the supplier, as well as any grounds for exclusion. If you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Any mandatory requirements will be set out in Section 2, Specification of Requirements and, if you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Clarifications

Any request for clarification regarding the RFQ and supporting documentation must be submitted via email no later than the deadline for clarifications set out in the Timetable. The Authority shall be under no obligation to respond to queries raised after the clarification deadline.

The Authority will respond to all reasonable clarifications as soon as possible but cannot guarantee a minimum response time. The Authority will publish all clarifications and its responses to all suppliers via email unless deemed commercially sensitive.

If a supplier believes that a request for clarification is commercially sensitive, it should clearly state this when submitting the clarification request. However, if the Authority considers either that:

* the clarification and response are not commercially sensitive; and
* all suppliers may benefit from its disclosure,

then the Authority will notify the supplier (via email), and the supplier will have an opportunity to withdraw the request for clarification by sending a further message requesting the withdrawal of the clarification request. If not withdrawn by the supplier within 2 working days of the Authority’s notification, the Authority may publish the clarification request and its response to all suppliers and the Authority shall not be liable to the supplier for any consequences of such publication.

The Authority reserves the right to seek clarification of any aspect of a quotation and/or provide additional information during the evaluation phase to carry out a fair evaluation. Where the Authority seeks clarification on any aspect of the quotation, the supplier must respond within the timeframe requested by the Authority.

Amendments

The Authority may amend the RFQ at any time prior to the deadline for receipt. If it amends the RFQ the Authority will notify you via email.

Suppliers may modify their quotation prior to the deadline for Responses. No Responses may be modified after the deadline for Responses.

Suppliers may withdraw their quotations at any time by submitting a notice via the email to the named contact.

Conditions of Contract

The Authority’s Standard Goods and Services Terms and Conditions (available at [Procurement at Natural England - Natural England - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about/procurement)) provided as part of the RFQ will be included in any contract awarded as a result of this quotation process. The Authority will not accept any changes to these terms and conditions proposed by a supplier.

Suppliers should note that the quotation provided by the successful bidder will form part of the Contract.

Prices

Prices must be submitted in £ sterling, inclusive of VAT.

Disclosure

All Central Government Departments, 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 Authority may disclose within Government any details contained in your quotation. The information will not be disclosed outside Government during the procurement.

In addition, the Authority is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, which provide a public right of access to information held by public bodies. In accordance with these two statutes, the Authority may be required to disclose information contained in your quotation to any person who submits a request for information pursuant to those statutes.

Further to the Government’s transparency agenda, all UK Government organisations must advertise on Contract Finder in accordance with the following publication thresholds:

* Central Contracting Authority’s: £12,000
* Sub Central Contracting Authority’s and NHS Trusts: £30,000

For the purpose of this RFQ the Authority is classified as a Central Contracting Authority with a publication threshold of £12,000 inclusive of VAT.

If this opportunity is advertised via Contracts Finder, we are obliged to publish details of the awarded contract including who has won the contract, the contract value, and indicate whether the winning supplier is a small and medium-sized enterprise (“SMEs”) or voluntary organisation or charity. A copy of the contract must also be published with confidential information redacted.

By submitting a Response, you consent to these terms as part of the procurement.

Disclaimers

Whilst the information in this RFQ and any supporting information referred to herein or provided to you by the Authority have been prepared in good faith the Authority does not warrant that this information is comprehensive or that it has been independently verified.

The Authority does not:

* make any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness or completeness of the RFQ;
* accept any liability for the information contained in the RFQ or for the fairness, accuracy or completeness of that information; or
* accept any liability for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation or any other liability which cannot lawfully be excluded) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.

Any supplier considering entering into contractual relationships with the Authority following receipt of the RFQ should make its own investigations and independent assessment of the Authority and its requirements for the goods and/or services and should seek its own professional financial and legal advice.

Protection of Personal Data

In order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 the supplier must agree to the following:

* You must only process any personal data in strict accordance with instructions from the Authority.
* You must ensure that all the personal data that we disclose to you or you collect on our behalf under this agreement are kept confidential.
* You must take reasonable steps to ensure the reliability of employees who have access to personal data.
* Only employees who may be required to assist in meeting the obligations under this agreement may have access to the personal data.
* Any disclosure of personal data must be made in confidence and extend only so far as that which is specifically necessary for the purposes of this agreement.
* You must ensure that there are appropriate security measures in place to safeguard against any unauthorised access or unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage or disclosure of the personal data.
* On termination of this agreement, for whatever reason, the personal data must be returned to us promptly and safely, together with all copies in your possession or control.

General Data Protection Regulations 2018

For the purposes of the Regulations the Authority is the data processor.

The personal information that we have asked you provide on individuals (data subjects) that will be working for you on this contract will be used in compiling the tender list and in assessing your offer. If you are unsuccessful the information will be held and destroyed within two years of the award of contracts. If you are awarded a contract it will be retained for the duration of the contract and destroyed within seven years of the contract’s expiry.

We may monitor the performance of the individuals during the execution of the contract, and the results of our monitoring, together with the information that you have provided, will be used in determining what work is allocated under the contract, and in any renewal of the contract or in the award of future contracts of a similar nature. The information will not be disclosed to anyone outside the Authority without the consent of the data subject, unless the Authority is required by law to make such disclosures.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

The Client is striving to create a diverse and inclusive working environment where every individual has equality of opportunity to progress and to apply their unique insights to making the UK a great place for living. The Service Provider is expected to respect this commitment in all dealings with Natural England staff and service users.

Suppliers are expected to;

* support Defra group to achieve its Public Sector Equality Duty as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and to support delivery of [Defra group’s Equality & Diversity Strategy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024).
* meet the standards set out in the [Government’s Supplier Code of Conduct](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supplier-code-of-conduct)
* work with Defra group to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion impacts are addressed (positive and negative) in the goods, services and works we procure, barriers are removed and opportunities realised.

Sustainable Procurement

Addressing global sustainability impacts and realising additional community benefits within commercial activity is core to Defra group’s approach, working with its supply chain is key to achieving sustainable outcomes. In addition to supporting Defra group to meet its outcomes we look to understand and reduce negative sustainability impacts associated with our commercial activity and realise benefits.

The Client encourages its suppliers to share these values, work to address negative impacts and realise opportunities, measure performance and success.

Suppliers are expected to have an understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals, the interconnections between them and the relevance to the Goods, Services and works procured on the Client’s behalf

Conflicts of Interest

The concept of a conflict of interest includes but is not limited to any situation where an Involved Person or Relevant Body has directly or indirectly, a financial, economic or other personal interest which might be perceived to compromise their impartiality and independence in the context of the procurement procedure and/or affect the integrity of the contract award.

We expect suppliers to mitigate appropriately against any real or perceived conflict of interest through their work with government. A supplier with a position of influence gained through a contract should not use that position to unfairly disadvantage any other supplier or reduce the potential for future competition

Where the supplier is aware of any circumstances giving rise to a conflict of interest or has any indication that a conflict of interest exists or may arise you should inform the Authority of this as soon as possible (whether before or after they have submitted a quotation). Tenderers should remain alert to the possibility of conflicts of interest arising at all stages of the procurement and should update the Authority if any new circumstances or information arises, or there are any changes to information already provided to the Authority. Failure to do so, and/or to properly manage any conflicts of interest may result in a quotation being rejected.

Provided that it has been carried out in an open, fair and transparent manner, routine pre-market engagement carried out by the Authority should not represent a conflict of interest for the supplier.

Data Ownership and Intellectual Property Rights

The Intellectual Property Rights resulting from the work shall belong to Natural England. The cover of all reports or drawings will include a statement © Natural England and the date of creation.

When using existing data the supplier should own, or be licensed to use, all Intellectual Property Rights that are necessary to provide the Services. You should seek advice from Natural England on responsibilities for obtaining a data licence for third party data. Note that Natural England requires to know the lineage of your output (i.e., all the datasets that went into the work) and be able to identify what the licence terms for each of the inputs is in order to be able to license the output for use.

The Supplier shall indemnify and keep indemnified Natural England against all actions, claims, demands, losses, damages, costs and expenses and other liabilities Natural England may suffer or incur arising from any infringement or alleged infringement of any third party Intellectual Property Rights except to the extent that they have been caused by or contributed to by Natural England’s acts or omissions.

Section 2: The Invitation

Background to Natural England

[Natural England](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england) is the government’s advisor on the natural environment. We provide practical advice, grounded in science, on how best to safeguard England’s natural wealth for the benefit of everyone.

Natural England was formally established on 1st October 2006 following the successful passage of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 through Parliament. We are an independent statutory Non-Departmental Public Body. Our remit is to ensure sustainable stewardship of the land and sea so that people and nature can thrive. It is our responsibility to see that England’s rich natural environment can adapt and survive intact for future generations to enjoy.

Natural England's priorities aim for thriving nature for people and planet, with people connected to the natural environment for their own and society’s wellbeing, enjoyment and prosperity. It also prioritises improvements in the natural capital that drives sustainable economic growth, healthy food systems and prospering communities. Further information about the Authority can be found at: [Natural England](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/).

Specification of Requirements

The Natural Capital team at Natural England (NE) are looking to appoint a contractor that has a proven institutional track record in delivering high quality, environmental, social science and natural capital research with a particular focus on using both quantitative and qualitative methods, data and information.

The contractor will conduct research to develop indicators for the benefits received from cultural ecosystem services and determine how to include these indicators within the Natural England natural capital approach. This research will include scoping existing evidence and expertise to determine indicators and develop an approach to include quantitative and qualitative evidence into the natural capital indicators framework. Key outputs of this research include focus groups, a technical report and interpretation package to apply findings in place-based projects. This project is expected to take 9 months, ending by 31st March 2025.

The contractor will be required to:

* Engage in regular project meetings with NE staff to provide project updates throughout the duration of the award.
* Develop research methods capable of collecting information on indicators for benefits derived from cultural ecosystem services and be able to link these benefits with the condition of natural assets.
* Develop a methodology capable of delivering the research objectives.
* Be skilled in quantitative and qualitative research methods and analysis techniques to execute the methodology and meet objectives.
* Deliver core outputs and detailed in the specification below, including focus groups, technical report and interpretation package.
* Deliver the core outputs that align with the Natural England Natural Capital team indicator framework.
* Obtain relevant ethical approvals for the project prior to data collection and adhere to General Data Protection Regulations 2018.
* Disseminate research findings to Natural England audiences, including at a Social Science research presentation in April 2025.

Background to the specific work area

The benefits people receive from nature, such as identities, experiences, capabilities and non-use values, are important components of the way in which people understand and value the natural environment. However, these benefits, and the cultural ecosystem services that provide them, are varied, place-specific, and often rooted in non-quantifiable evidence. In most place-based natural capital applications we can evidence the attributes of the natural environment that we know are important for cultural ecosystem services, however it is difficult to link these attributes to the range of benefits that are received.

As a result, many place-based applications of natural capital aggregate benefits from cultural services or reduce them to a few categories that can be easily quantified and/or valued e.g. recreation and education. Aggregating these benefits is problematic, because it means they can be underrepresented in decision-making despite being highly valued. Much of the evidence for understanding benefits from cultural services more deeply tends to be method-based, qualitative and deliberative. As a result, such methods are not often used in natural capital approaches because they are time consuming and expensive.

The Natural England natural capital approach is based on a logic chain (See below and Lusardi and others 2018: [Natural Capital Indicators: for defining and measuring change in natural capital - NERR076 (naturalengland.org.uk)](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6742480364240896)) which is a simple way of demonstrating how a process works, providing a sequence of steps showing how different elements are linked to achieve desired outcomes. The approach is rooted in: evidence and data about natural capital assets;, indicators of quality, quantity and location of those assets; indicators for ecosystem services associated with the assets; and various metrics that quantifiably measure the indicator. These indicators can be linked to benefits received from nature and driven by ecosystem services, which provide people with value from nature. We have disaggregated and identified the elements of a cultural service logic chain, but not to the extent that we can link specific asset attributes to the practices and/or the benefits that are derived from cultural ecosystem services (see NERR076 Annex 1 Lusardi and others 2018: [Natural Capital Indicators: for defining and measuring change in natural capital - NERR076 (naturalengland.org.uk)](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6742480364240896)). We have also not identified indicators for the benefits derived from cultural services, or determined how to use non-quantitative data within this approach. This is what we want to explore within this research.

Indicator: A property of the environment, practice or benefit, not defined by specific measurable units

Metric: Quantitative measure of a specific indicator, with defined measurable units

Example cultural service logic chain:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Ecosystem Assets | Ecosystem Service Flow  What you do in a place | Benefits  What you feel about it |
| Quantity: Extent of ecosystem types | e.g.  Experiential  Physical  Scientific/educational  Aesthetic  Spiritual | e.g.  Identities  Experiences  Capabilities  Non-use values  Etc. |
| Quality:   * Nature * Landscape * Culture and History * Quietness * Facilities * Accessibility * Safety * Spatial Configuration |
| Location |

This research will develop a deeper understanding to determine and define indicators that link natural capital asset quality, quantity and location with a range of benefits derived from cultural ecosystem services. It will also explore and determine processes for using qualitative and quantitative evidence for indicators within the natural capital approach. This research will stretch beyond current practices to evidence the benefits people receive from cultural services. Cultural ecosystem services are currently underrepresented in the Natural England natural capital approach and robust indicators have not been determined at a level of useable detail for the variety and range of benefits from nature.

Aim

Through this project, Natural England is seeking to identify practically actionable, meaningful indicators, and relevant data sources, for the benefits received from cultural ecosystem services and associate those indicators with attributes of natural capital assets. Natural England is also seeking to determine methods and approaches for including qualitative evidence within the natural capital indicators approach.

Objectives

The aim of this research will be addressed by four objectives:

1. Explore and scope how benefits from cultural ecosystem services can be disaggregated to better represent the diverse relationships people have with nature in places, building on existing natural capital evidence and expertise.
2. Research and make recommendations on how open access quantitative and qualitative evidence and data that represent people's experiences and values can be included in natural capital approaches.
3. Develop the cultural services natural capital logic chains by disaggregating types of benefits received from nature and associating those benefits with attributes of natural capital assets. Including:
   1. propose a suite of robust and practical indicators.
   2. detail how to access and use the data required for the indicators (including, if necessary, any methodologies on combining datasets to for the indicators).
4. Provide an interpretation package that details how to collect, use and apply the findings of the research in place-based natural capital applications.

Methods

Natural England are looking for contractors to design and deliver a methodology suitable for meeting the research aim and objectives, and produce the outputs detailed below. It is expected for the methods to include documentary analysis of existing empirical research on indicators for benefits from cultural services, focus groups with internal staff and experts and a written synthesis of results.

Applicants will be expected to demonstrate relevant experience in conducting primary and secondary social research relating to the methods proposed. Contractors should also demonstrate an institutional track record conducting social research, ideally in relation to natural capital and ecosystem services, and experience and knowledge in producing high quality, accessible, user-friendly outputs, including reports for non-academic audiences.

Created works such as reports, images, map layers, films, audio recordings, software, code, and datasets or databases are legally protected from certain types of re-use. Where you are acquiring an existing work, or commissioning the creation of a new work which may incorporate a third party's work, you need to specify compatibility with your use, sharing and onward licensing requirements. See the guidance for more help.

Sustainability

Natural England protects and improves the environment and is committed to reducing the sustainability impacts of its activities directly and through its supply chains. We expect the Contractor to share this commitment and adopt a sound, proactively sustainable approach in keeping with the 25-year environmental plan/our commitments compliant with all applicable legislation. This includes understanding and reducing direct and indirect sustainability impacts and realising opportunities, including but not restricted to; resilience to climate change, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, water use and quality, biosecurity, resource efficiency and waste, reducing the risk of pollution, biodiversity, modern slavery and equality, diversity & inclusion, and negative community impacts.

As a delivery partner, the successful contractor is expected to pursue sustainability in their operations, thereby ensuring the Contracting Authority is not contracting with a supplier whose operational outputs run contrary to the Contracting Authority’s objectives. The successful contractor will need to approach the project with a focus on the entire life cycle of the project.

Outputs:

The project will be expected to generate the following outputs:

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| --- | --- |
| Deliverable reference | Deliverable details |
| D1 Focus groups | Focus groups with an estimated total participant group of 30 internal staff and experts across Natural England and partner organisations who have knowledge and experiences in using the locally-based values and benefits from cultural ecosystem services, technical knowledge in natural capital approaches, or understanding of the connection between people and nature. |
| D2 Technical report | A technical report detailing research that includes:   * Methodology, findings, limitations and recommendations, including a shortlist of primary or core recommended indicators. * Developed, disaggregated cultural service logic chains for each ecosystem service. * A suite of indicators detailed in a data tracker spreadsheet annex to include:   + indicators (and metrics where appropriate) and associated benefits.   + data sources, including meta-data (to include but not limited to evidence type, coverage, scale, frequency of updates etc.) .   + methods for using the data source for the indicator.   + assessment of rigour and robustness for each indicator against the following criteria: transparent, relevant, meaningful, knowable, actionable, and scalable.   + relevance rating, limitations, confidence rating.   + collation of comments by supplier, NE and steering group. |
| D3 Interpretation package | Interpretation package on how to collect, use and apply the above findings in place-based natural capital applications to enhance the provision of the benefits people receive from nature recovery. Written in plain English and with reference to other NE natural capital place-based work, such as the Natural Capital Evidence Handbook and Natural Capital Atlases. |

Project timeline, management and communication

Once let, the following are the key project milestones:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Milestone number | Milestone | Date |
| MS1 | ​​​​Project inception meeting/ teleconference between contractor/sub-contractor and Natural England​ Steering Group | WC Monday 8th July |
| MS2 | ​​​Agreed final methodology and data gathering approach including project timeline and submission of ethics application. | W/C 19th August |
| MS3 | ​​​Delivery of D1 | W/C Monday 21st October 2024 |
| MS4 | Draft version of D2 and D3 submitted in editable digital format via email. | W/C Monday 3rd February 2025 |
| MS5 | Delivery of D2 submitted in digital editable format via email. | Monday 31st March 2025 |
| MS6 | Delivery of D3 submitted in digital editable format via email. | Monday 31st March 2025 |
| MS7 | Research presentation | TBC - by contractor |

This is the envisaged contract timetable although contractors may need to provide additional timetable detail or adapt this in line with their proposed methodology. Bidders should highlight any proposed deviation from this timeline within their bid.

This project will be managed through regular meetings between the supplier and Project Officer. The contract will be managed through the following process:

* Inception virtual meeting using Microsoft Teams between project steering group and supplier on Week Commencing Monday 8th July.
* Fortnightly virtual meetings to update the Natural England Project Officer
* Email update on progress to provide to the Natural England Project Officer 1 working day before each fortnightly teleconference detailing: work and activities completed to date; issues with delivery of the project timeline.
* Attendance at Steering Group meetings in September, December, and March
* Internal presentations of the results

Any delays to the delivery of the timetable during the contract should be immediately raised via email and discussed with the Project Officer.

Payment

The Authority will raise purchase orders to cover the cost of the services and will issue to the awarded supplier following contract award.

The Authority’s preference is for all invoices to be sent electronically, quoting a valid Purchase Order number.

Invoices can be submitted at intervals throughout the project on completion of the following project milestones:

​​​Payment of 15% of the total contract value will be made on completion of MS2​​. A second payment of 15% will be made on completion of MS3. The remainder (70%) of the invoice will be paid on receipt of a detailed invoice following completion (to the satisfaction of the Natural England Nominated Officer) of MS5 (50%) and MS6 (20%) detailed above, and formal acceptance of the specified outputs.

Payment schedule

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Milestone/Deliverable number | Activity/deliverable required for payment. | Payment percentage |
| MS2 | ​​​Agreed final methodology and data gathering approach including project timeline. | 15% |
| MS3 | ​​​Delivery and acceptance of D1 | 15% |
| MS5 | Delivery and acceptance of D2. | 50% |
| MS6 | Delivery and acceptance of D3 | 20% |
| Total |  | 100% |

It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded for a period of 9 months to end no later than 31/03/2025. Prices will remain fixed for the duration of the contract award period. We may at our sole discretion extend this contract to include related or further work. Any extension shall be agreed in writing in advance of any work commencing and may be subject to further competition.

Evaluation Methodology

We will award this contract in line with the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) as set out in the following award criteria:

Technical – 70%

Commercial – 30%

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation weightings are 70% technical and 30% commercial, the winning tenderer will be the highest scoring combined score.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Award Criteria | Weighting (%) | Evaluation Topic & Weighting | Sub-Criteria | Weighted Question |
| Technical | 70% | Service / Product Proposal | Methodology | 2 Questions:  Q1.1: Provide details of your proposed methodology. (25% of technical score available)  Q1.2: Explain how chosen methods deliver results that align with Natural England's natural capital indicators framework (25% of technical score available) |
| Previous Experience and track record | 2 Questions  Q2.1: Provide details of the experience, knowledge and skills of the proposed team and the team structure that you intend to use to deliver the project (20% of technical score available)  Q2.2: Provide details of the experience, knowledge and skills of the proposed team that specifically relates to knowledge exchange with non-technical audiences. (10% of technical score available) |
| Quality assurance | 1 Question  Q3.1: Provide details on the proposed project delivery plan, including timelines, risk, ethics and handling and storage of third-party data. (20% of technical score available) |
| Commercial | 30% | Whole life cost of the proposed Contract | Commercial Model | 1 Question  Q4: Include detailed breakdown of costs to deliver the project in the Commercial Response Form. (100% of commercial score available) |

Technical (70%)

Technical evaluations will be based on responses to specific questions covering key criteria which are outlined below. Scores for questions will be based on the following:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Description | Score | Definition |
| Very good | 100 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. There are no weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority complete confidence that all the requirements will be met to a high standard. |
| Good | 70 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains minor weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that all the requirements will be met to a good standard. |
| Moderate | 50 | Addresses most of the requirements with most of the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains moderate weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that most of the requirements will be met to a suitable standard. |
| Weak | 20 | Substantially addresses the requirements but not all and provides supporting information that is of limited or no relevance or a methodology containing significant weaknesses and therefore raises concerns for the Authority that the requirements may not all be met. |
| Unacceptable | 0 | No response or provides a response that gives the Authority no confidence that the requirement will be met. |

Technical evaluation is assessed using the evaluation topics and sub-criteria stated in the Evaluation Criteria section above.

Separate submissions for each technical question should be provided and will be evaluated in isolation. Tenderers should provide answers that meet the criteria of each technical question.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Methodology | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q1.1 Provide details of your proposed methodology.  Set out in detail each element of the methodology and how this will be carried out. This should include the approach, design and analytical strategy proposed to meet the requirements of this project.  Your response should:   * Demonstrate a clear understanding of the requirements defined in the specification. * Be a clear, practical, achievable, and cost-effective methodology to deliver these requirements within the funding time frame. * Provide a clear rationale and justification for the chosen approach. * Outline any support required from the authority (Natural England).   Responses should not exceed four sides of A4, and use Arial font, size 11. | Your response will be evaluated based on:   * The inclusion of information in sufficient detail to allow a full appraisal of the suitability of the approach to deliver for the project. * The appropriateness of the approach to deliver against the defined evidence needs of Natural England. * The extent to which the project is practical, achievable and cost-effective. * The extent to which the methodology will meet the research objectives and deliver the required outputs. |
| Q1.2 Explain how chosen methods deliver results within the Natural England natural capital indicators framework.  Your response should demonstrate:   * Awareness of the principles and practices of the natural capital indicators approach. * How the chosen methodology will deliver the outputs required to align with the natural capital indicators approach.   Responses should be included within the limit set out in Q1.1. | Your response will be evaluated based on:   * Inclusion of information in sufficient detail that allows appraisal of alignment between the chosen methods and delivery of outputs with the natural capital indicators approach. |

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| --- | --- |
| Key personnel | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q2.1 Provide details of the experience, knowledge and skills of the proposed team and the team structure that you intend to use to deliver the project.  The response must demonstrate that the ​project team have sufficient technical expertise across the broad range of skills required to deliver the project objectives, including examples of experience in applied natural capital and/or social science research (provide links/DOIs where applicable) and other relevant skills, such as managing research, experience of applied and policy-related research, data management, writing reports, etc.  Please outline:  Provide an overview of the individual(s) working on this project including for each individual:   * Responsibilities within the project team and level of seniority. * experience relevant to the project objectives and/or methods. * the amount of time (days/hours) will spend on each output and their availability for the contract period.   We suggest this information should be provided in a table.​ The time input should match the staff days included in the cost proposal. Please indicate who will have overall management responsibility for the project and will report to the Natural England project officer.  Responses should not exceed two sides of A4, and use Arial font, size 11. | Your response will be evaluated based on:     * The level and relevance of expertise and skills, provided by ​the Project team and sub-contractors​ and the value added delivered by this. This will consider expertise and skills in: project management; focus group design, qualitative methods, and data management. * The suitability and adequacy of ​the staff making the inputs to each stage of the Project​ (in terms of their expertise and skills), the quantity of their inputs and their availability to do the work. * The institutional track record of the team to deliver this research project to a high standard. * The clarity and sufficiency of lines of ​​reporting. |
| Q2.2: Provide details of the experience, knowledge and skills of the proposed team that specifically relates to knowledge exchange for non-technical audiences.  Responses should be included within the limit set out in Q2.1. | Your response will be evaluated based on:   * Relevant experience and knowledge in producing high quality, accessible, user-friendly outputs, including reports for non-academic audiences. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Quality assurance | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q3.1 Provide details on the proposed project delivery plan, including timelines, risk, ethics and handling and storage of third-party data.  Provide detailed project management arrangements for the project including:   * A Gantt chart presenting milestones, deliverables, timelines, and inter-dependencies. * Identification of possible risks to the delivery of the proposed project, including risks rating (high, medium, low) and actions to mitigate against identified risks. * How your institution will assure the quality and delivery of the outputs. * Information on the ethical approval procedures that will be followed prior to collection of primary data. * Detail how data will be handled, transported, shared and stored securely.   Responses should not exceed one side of A4 (excluding Gantt chart), and use Arial font, size 11. | Your response will be evaluated based on:   * The extent to which the project timeline is practical, achievable and ensures successful delivery of milestones and outputs. * Identification of risks, how you would mitigate these risks. * The proposed plan for quality assurance. * Any ethics process your organisation has and any research ethics considerations that might apply in this project. * The procedure for handling, storing, and sharing data. |

Commercial (30%)

The Contract is to be awarded as a 'fixed price' which will be paid according to the completion of the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements.

Suppliers are required to submit a total cost to provide the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements. In addition to this the Commercial Response template must be completed to provide a breakdown of the whole life costs against each deliverable used in the delivery of this requirement.

Calculation Method

The method for calculating the weighted scores is as follows:

* Commercial

Score = (Lowest Quotation Price / Supplier’s Quotation Price) x [30%] (Maximum available marks)

* Technical

Score = (Bidder’s Total Technical Score / Highest Technical Score) x [70%] (Maximum available marks)

The total score (weighted) (TWS) is then calculated by adding the total weighted commercial score (WC) to the total weighted technical score (WT): WC + WT = TWS.

Information to be returned

Please note, the following information requested must be provided. Incomplete tender submissions may be discounted.

Please complete and return the following information:

* completed Commercial Response template
* separate response submission for each technical question (in accordance with the response instructions)
* completed Mandatory Requirements (Annex 1)
* completed Acceptance of Terms and Conditions (Annex 2)

Award

Once the evaluation of the Response(s) is complete all suppliers will be notified of the outcome via email.

The successful supplier will be issued the contract, incorporating their Response, for signature. The Authority will then counter sign.

Annex 1 Mandatory Requirements

Part 1 Potential Supplier Information

Please answer the following self-declaration questions in full and include this Annex in your quotation response.

Part 1.1 Potential Supplier Information:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 1.1(a) | Full name of the potential supplier submitting the information |  |
| 1.1(b) | Registered office address (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(c) | Company registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(d) | Charity registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(e) | Head office DUNS number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(f) | Registered VAT number |  |
| 1.1(g) | Are you a Small, Medium or Micro Enterprise (SME)? | (Yes / No) |

Note: See EU definition of SME <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en>

Part 1.2 Contact details and declaration

By submitting a quotation to this RFQ I declare that to the best of my knowledge the answers submitted and information contained in this document are correct and accurate.

I declare that, upon request and without delay you will provide the certificates or documentary evidence referred to in this document.

I understand that the information will be used in the selection process to assess my organisation’s suitability to be invited to participate further in this procurement.

I understand that the authority may reject this submission in its entirety if there is a failure to answer all the relevant questions fully, or if false/misleading information or content is provided in any section.

I am aware of the consequences of serious misrepresentation.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 1.2(a) | Contact name |  |
| 1.2(b) | Name of organisation |  |
| 1.2(c) | Role in organisation |  |
| 1.2(d) | Phone number |  |
| 1.2(e) | E-mail address |  |
| 1.2(f) | Postal address |  |
| 1.2(g) | Signature (electronic is acceptable) |  |
| 1.2(h) | Date |  |

Part 2 Exclusion Grounds

Part 2.1 Grounds for mandatory exclusion

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 2.1(a) | Please indicate if, within the past five years you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation been convicted anywhere in the world of any of the offences within the summary below. | |
|  | Participation in a criminal organisation. | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Corruption. | ((Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Fraud. | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Money laundering or terrorist financing | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Child labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
| 2.1(b) | If you have answered yes to question 2.1(a), please provide further details.  Date of conviction, specify which of the grounds listed the conviction was for, and the reasons for conviction.  Identity of who has been convicted  If the relevant documentation is available electronically please provide the web address, issuing authority, precise reference of the documents. |  |
| 2.1 (c) | If you have answered Yes to any of the points above have measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (i.e. Self-Cleaning) | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(d) | Has it been established, for your organisation by a judicial or administrative decision having final and binding effect in accordance with the legal provisions of any part of the United Kingdom or the legal provisions of the country in which the organisation is established (if outside the UK), that the organisation is in breach of obligations related to the payment of tax or social security contributions? | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(e) | If you have answered yes to question 2.3(a), please provide further details. Please also confirm you have paid or have entered into a binding arrangement with a view to paying, the outstanding sum including where applicable any accrued interest and/or fines. |  |

Part 2.2 Grounds for discretionary exclusion

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 2.2(a) | The detailed grounds for discretionary exclusion of an organisation are set out on this [webpage](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551130/List_of_Mandatory_and_Discretionary_Exclusions.pdf), which should be referred to before completing these questions.  Please indicate if, within the past three years, anywhere in the world any of the following situations have applied to you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation | |
| 2.2(b) | Breach of environmental obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(c) | Breach of social obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(d) | Breach of labour law obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(e) | Shown significant or persistent deficiencies in the performance of a substantive requirement under a prior public contract, a prior contract with a contracting entity, or a prior concession contract, which led to early termination of that prior contract, damages or other comparable sanctions? | (Yes / No)  If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2 (f) | If you have answered Yes to any of the above, explain what measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (Self Cleaning) |  |

Annex 2 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions

I/We accept in full the terms and conditions appended to this Request for Quote document.

Company \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_