Service Description

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# INTRODUCTION

## Ministers / the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) are responsible for making non-executive appointments to a range of DHSC Arm’s Length Bodies (ALBs) and committees. DHSC’s Appointments and Honours Unit is responsible for managing these appointments.

## To effectively assess the quality and fit of candidates for public appointment roles, both Advisory Assessment Panels and Ministers require a pre-assessment of candidate’s applications. Pre-assessment captures the high-level candidate biography, and their fit against the person specification. To ensure we recruit openly, all posts need to be advertised, and sometimes this requires advertising externally with different media.

# PURPOSE

## The Department’s Appointments and Honours Unit requires a single contract to provide:

## (i) pre-assessment services; and

## (ii) external advertising, and provide alternative formats when required.

## Whilst it is not the primary purpose of the contract, we also want a supplier with the capacity and capability to potentially assist, if required with promoting our roles through ways beyond traditional advertising options.

## The contract will be effective from the 1 April 2019 for 12 months, with the option, subject to approval, to extend twice for a further 12 months.

# background

## Ministers/the Department are responsible for making non-executive appointments to a range of DHSC ALBs and committees. Examples include the Chairs and Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) of NHS England, NHS Improvement, Care Quality Commission and National Institute for Health and Care Excellence. It is a requirement of *The Governance Code on Public Appointments* (referred to as ‘the Governance Code’), that applies to Ministerial appointments and which is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments (CPA), that roles are openly advertised and properly promoted to attract a diverse range of quality candidates. The Appointments and Honours Unit is responsible for managing these appointments.

## Those appointed play a key leadership role not just for the organisation to which they are appointed, but for the whole health and social care system.

## Public appointments are the responsibility of Ministers. When we recruit new members, Ministers are expected to abide by the Governance Code, which requires Departments to recruit openly and transparently and to make appointments based on merit. The Government and the CPA are also committed to attracting and appointing candidates from a diverse range of backgrounds, including targets of 50% of appointees to be women and 14% BAME. A target may be about to be set for % disabled appointees. DHSC also applies these same principles to appointments to its expert committees. These committees are also subject to similar requirements as set out in the *Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees.*

## A submission is made to Ministers/Senior Officials at the outset of all public appointment/ expert committee recruitment campaigns, and Ministers/Senior Officials are required to agree all elements of the process (e.g. advertising, assessment, role descriptions, selection panels, timings, etc.) and all the associated expected expenditure. Cabinet Office are also closely engaged with and interested in most of our public appointments.

## **Pre-assessment**

## To support Advisory Assessment Panels and Ministers effectively assess the quality and fit of candidates for public appointments, we are seeking a supplier to pre-assess all candidate’s applications for all roles. Pre-assessment captures the high-level candidate biography; their fit against the person specification; provides a rating (A, B or C) and completes a ‘tick-box’ exercise on the candidate’s main skills/experience (e.g. ‘finance’; ‘lawyer’; ‘clinical’; etc) – which allows our database to be more easily interrogated when looking for potential candidates for other recruitments.

## **Advertising**

## To ensure we recruit openly, all posts need to be advertised. We are seeking a supplier to support us in this. This will include potential support in the preparation of adverts and in engaging with different media for the advert to be placed e.g. Sunday Times, specialist journals, etc, and providing alternative formats when required.

## Online advertising is now our default position and we are continually exploring options for utilising social media to target potential candidates with the relevant skills and expertise.

## We may also be interested in exploring in the future with the supplier, any alternative or additional ways to promote our roles such as through social media, networks or other options. This may be to help generate candidates for specific roles or to help generate a talent pool or pipeline for numerous roles. Candidates may be targeted based on their particular skills or experience or diversity characteristics or a combination. Whilst this work is not the primary focus of this contract we want to appoint a supplier who has capacity, capability and a track record in such work and who could help shape our thinking and potentially deliver some services.

# scope of requirement

## This requirement is for the provision of pre-assessment services and external advertising support, including the capacity and capability to assist with promoting roles and provide alternative formats for adverts and/or Candidate Information Packs where required.

## The provider should deliver an overall value for money service in terms of savings achieved through innovation, efficiencies and continuous improvement.

## Although the plan is that the successful bidder will carry out support for all appointments requiring the pre-assessment and external advertising services, and potentially provide support for other ways to promote roles, DHSC reserves the right to contract with a different organisation on the odd occasion if it feels that the successful bidder is unable to meet its requirements.

## **Pre-assessment**

## Regarding pre-assessment services, the supplier will for all public appointment campaigns:

* Produce a pre-assessment (or “long-listing”) report to support the selection panel in shortlisting candidates for interview, completing a pro-forma supplied by DHSC.
* Review each application and provide:
  + a short biography that briefly captures the key elements of their biog/CV – up to a maximum of 50 words;
  + a rating of A, B or C assessed against the descriptions for A, B and C levels;
  + the fit against the criteria for the role; around 100 words for A; 50 words for B; 25 words for C; and
  + a tick against all the relevant boxes from a list supplied by DHSC for the substantive skills or experience the candidate has.
* Input the report onto the Department’s system; DHSC eXchange initially and then onto the Appointments Database once the facility is up and running (likely to be in Quarter 1 of 2019-20), both are web-based systems.
* If needed, provide brief additional assessment material for candidates requesting feedback following the panel’s formal assessment (where possible the pre-assessment report will be used in the first instance to provide any feedback).
* At the end of the year we would welcome summary information/data from the ‘tick box’ exercise that captures the types of applicants who have applied for our roles over the year.

**External Advertising**

## Regarding external advertising, the supplier will:

* Manage the advertising process on our behalf - from preparing the advert, in line with DHSC style guidance; liaising with the press/publications to negotiate the best advertising rates; booking the space; and uploading the advert.
* Prepare adverts we send and return these to us within 24 hours or less; ensuring DHSC material is of a high quality and with attention to detail to ensure accuracy; as well as following the DHSC Brand Guidelines. Due to the nature of our work, we also require a supplier who can be flexible and respond to requests at short notice, whilst meeting strict deadlines for uploading and placing adverts.
* To offer advice and strategies on effective advertising routes and scope to assist with promoting roles to help generate a diverse range of applicants (including via the use of social media).
* To arrange a wider range of options for alternative formats where required of adverts and/or Candidate Information Packs and the conversion of candidate applications to/from for example:
* Braille
* Audio

and provide Translation Services e.g. Welsh/English.

## We estimate we may require external advertising for up to 75% (40), ofcampaigns in 2019/20 and that there could be up to 3 requests for alternative formats. In terms of pre-assessment, we estimate potentially around 600 candidates will need pre-assessing in 2019/20. These are only outline planning assumptions and DHSC cannot commit to meeting these numbers or limiting activity to these numbers. If our numbers are to become significantly higher for any reason we will ensure we alert the supplier at the earliest opportunity so they can plan accordingly.

## DHSC will inform the Contractor when an advert is due to go live, along with the planned closing date and when the expected deadline is for pre-assessment to be complete. The Contractor will receive or have access to the applications either before and/or when the advert closes.

## DHSC will work together with the Contractor to look at media options for targeted advertising of our public appointments, with particular focus on attracting diverse candidates, with the Contractor advising on relevant publications.

## It is vital to ensure that all skills and knowledge gained by the above requirements are retained by the DHSC for the longer term. Any skills and/or knowledge will be transferred by lessons learned sessions between DHSC and the Contractor, and the provision of pre-assessment reports throughout campaigns.

# service levels and performance

## The Contractor should appoint a Supplier Contract Manager to oversee the work and liaise with/report as DHSC requires to DHSC’s Contract Manager.

## The Supplier Contract Manager will:

## Perform quality assurance on all aspects of the programme.

## Provide the Department with timely and ongoing evaluation and quality assurance information relating to the programme.

## Provide monthly updates on costs.

## Provide feedback from key stakeholders.

### Provide management information, within reasonable time scale (ideally within 3 working days), in a format that it can be easily manipulated (e.g. MS Office applications) and at no additional cost to the Department.

### Hold quarterly review meetings with the Departmental Contract Manager to discuss, which may include but not limited to:

### Service delivery and any issues (including any complaints of poor performance and any actions taken);

### Consideration of any improvements or developments;

### Any changes to key personnel, processes, or delivery, etc.

## The key performance indicators that will be used to measure the success of the contract will be as follows:

## **Pre-assessment**

## Prepare pre-assessment (or longlisting) reports for all public appointment recruitment campaigns within 3 working days of receiving applications and input onto the Department’s system.

## Ensure reports are set out in the agreed pro-forma and are of a high quality with attention to detail to ensure accuracy.

## Ensure pre-assessment of candidates is done against the agreed person specification for roles.

## Be flexible and respond to requests at short notice, for example to changes to the pre-assessment report or requests for further information to inform feedback to candidates.

## **External Advertising**

## Prepare adverts and return these to us within 24 hours or less via email for amendment and approval during office hours.

## Provide concepts and copy for one-off creative or large-scale composite adverts within 5 working days of brief.

## Provide a summary of media schedules (media costs only) within 24 hours of request and a full media schedule (media, costs and detailed rationales) within 2-3 working days dependent on complexity.

## Upload basic online advertising within 24/48 hours of approval and provide DHSC with the link (online publications).

## Book advertisements with the relevant media and despatch when approved by DHSC.

## Ensure adverts are of a high quality with attention to detail to ensure accuracy.

## Ensure due attention to DHSC Branding Guidelines.

## Be flexible and respond to requests at short notice, whilst meeting strict deadlines for uploading and placing adverts.

## On occasion, where requested provide our adverts and/or Candidate Information Packs in alternative formats. We would require these to be delivered within 3-5 working days.

## If there are issues with service delivery, the Supplier Contract Manager will acknowledge the DHSC Programme Manager’s concerns/issues within 24 hours and will propose a series of remedial actions within 72 hours, to prevent further occurrences.

## Respond to requests for wider assistance in promoting roles, including via the use of alternative media/social media for targeting specific candidates within 2-5 working days.

## The Contractor will:

## Monitor the quality of the service provision to ensure customer satisfaction in accordance with the key performance indicators outlined in the Contract, unless otherwise approved by the DHSC Programme Manager.

## Provide a report on progress in delivering the requirement to the DHSC Programme Manager on a regular basis, at least quarterly.

## Attend meetings to review progress and discuss the service, as required by the DHSC Programme Manager.

## Attend a post contract review with the Department to review whether the objectives of the contract were met, to review the benefits achieved and to identify any lessons learnt for future projects.

# Security requirements

## Information regarding candidates is confidential and requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) need to be followed. The DHSC Appointments and Honours Unit will agree a process with the Contractor to ensure compliance with GDPR Regulations.

# BUDGET

## The maximum budget for this contract in 2019/20, and based on the indicative activity figures highlighted in para 4.6, is £24,800 (excluding VAT).

## In terms of advertising, costs should cover the preparation/upload fee only and not the individual costs of the advert itself, i.e. publication or journal.