

# Request for Proposal



Department for  
Business, Energy  
& Industrial Strategy

**Request for Proposal (RFP) on behalf of The Department for  
Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)**

**Subject: Research Collaboration Network Framework**

**Sourcing Reference Number: PS22407**

**UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS)**  
[www.ukpbs.co.uk](http://www.ukpbs.co.uk)

Registered in England and Wales as a limited company, Company Number 6330639.  
Registered Office Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 1FF  
VAT registration GB618 3673 25  
Copyright (c) UK Shared Business Services Ltd. 2013

Version 5.0

## Table of Contents

Section	Content
1	<a href="#"><u>About UK Shared Business Services Ltd.</u></a>
2	<a href="#"><u>About the Contracting Authority</u></a>
3	<a href="#"><u>Working with the Contracting Authority.</u></a>
4	<a href="#"><u>Specification and about this procurement</u></a>
5	<a href="#"><u>Evaluation model</u></a>
6	<a href="#"><u>Selection and award questionnaires</u></a>
7	<a href="#"><u>General Information</u></a>
Appendix A	Glossary of Terms
Annex A	Commissioning Letter
Annex B	Mini-Competition Template
Annex C	Mini-Competition GDPR Template
Appendix B	OPSS Report Template Research 2023
Appendix C	OPSS call-off Supplier event slides 25th January
Appendix D	Supplier Event QA

**\*\*\* All Annex and Appendix B, C and D can be found within the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal Document Upload Tab \*\*\***

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

Our broad range of expert services is shared by our Contracting Authorities. This allows 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 the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), UK SBS' goals are aligned with the public sector and delivering best value for the UK taxpayer.

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

### Our Customers

Growing from a foundation of supporting the Research Councils, 2012/13 saw Business 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 Contracting Authorities. Our Contracting Authorities who have access to our services and Contracts are detailed [here](#).

### **Privacy Statement**

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

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

- We will keep your data safe and private.
- We will not sell your data to anyone.
- We will only share your data with those you give us permission to share with and only for legitimate service delivery reasons.

## **Privacy Notice**

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

### **YOUR DATA**

The Contracting Authority will process the following personal data:

Names and contact details of employees involved in preparing and submitting the bid;  
Names and contact details of employees proposed to be involved in delivery of the contract;  
Names, contact details, age, qualifications and experience of employees whose CVs are submitted as part of the bid.

#### *Purpose*

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

#### *Legal basis of processing*

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

#### *Recipients*

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

#### *Retention*

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

### **Your Rights**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **International Transfers**

As your personal data is stored on our IT infrastructure and shared with our data processors Microsoft and Amazon Web Services, it may be transferred and stored securely in the UK and European Economic Area. Where your personal data is stored outside the UK and EEA it will be subject to equivalent legal protection through the use of Model Contract Clauses

### **Complaints**

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

Information Commissioner's Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
Cheshire  
SK9 5AF  
0303 123 1113  
[casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk)

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

### **Contact Details**

The data controller for your personal data is:

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

You can contact the Data Protection Officer at:

BEIS Data Protection Officer, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET. Email: [dataprotection@beis.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@beis.gov.uk).

## Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority

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

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) was created as a result of a merger between the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), as part of the Machinery of Government (MoG) changes in July 2016.

The Department is responsible for:

- developing and delivering a comprehensive industrial strategy and leading the Government's relationship with business;
- ensuring that the country has secure energy supplies that are reliable, affordable and clean;
- ensuring the UK remains at the leading edge of science, research and innovation; and
- tackling climate change.

BEIS is a ministerial department, supported by 46 agencies and public bodies. We have around 2,500 staff working for BEIS. Our partner organisations include 9 executive agencies employing around 14,500 staff.

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

## Section 3 – Working with the Contracting Authority

Section 3 – Contact details		
3.1.	Contracting Authority Name and address	The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) 1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET
3.2.	Buyer	Victoria Clewer
3.3.	Buyer contact details	professionalservices@uksbs.co.uk
3.4.	Maximum value of the Opportunity	The total potential value of this Framework Agreement is <b>£4,000,000.00</b> excluding VAT.  This maximum Framework value is broken down into an estimated <b>£1,000,000.00</b> per annum
3.5.	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	<b>All correspondence shall be submitted within the Messaging Centre of the Jaggaer eSourcing portal. Guidance on how to obtain support on using the Jaggaer eSourcing portal can be found in Section 7.1.11.</b> <b>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, unless formally advised to do so by UKSBS.</b>

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6.	Date of posting of Contract advert to Find a Tender and Contracts Finder.	Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2023
3.7.	Bidder conference <b>Please review section 4 for details on how to register for the Bidder Presentation event</b>	Thursday, 30 <sup>th</sup> March 2023 15:00
3.8.	Latest date / time RFP clarification questions shall be received through the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal	Wednesday 12th April 2023 11:00 am
3.9.	Latest date / time RFP clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal	Wednesday 19th April 2023
3.10.	Latest date and time for Bidder to request access to the RFP documents	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> April 2023 10:00 am
3.11.	Latest date and time RFP Bid shall be submitted through the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal ( <b>the Deadline</b> )	Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> April 2023 11:00 am
3.12.	Anticipated notification of proposed	Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2023

	Framework award to unsuccessful bidders	
3.13.	Anticipated Framework Award Date	Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
3.14.	Commencement of Framework	Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2023
3.15.	Completion of Framework	Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> July 2024 with the option to extend annually up to a maximum of Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> June 2027
3.16.	Bid Validity Period	90 Days



## Section 4 – Specification and about this Procurement

### 1. Overview

UK Shared Business Services (UK SBS), on behalf of the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), Office for Product Safety & Standards (OPSS) wishes to establish a Framework Agreement for the provision of Research Collaboration Network Services.

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”).

The Framework has a maximum value of £4,000,000.00 excluding VAT and the Framework term is four years.

At the time of publication of this Request for Proposal, budgets are still being finalised for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. It is expected those budgets will be confirmed by the time Call-Off Contracts are awarded, however until that happens no call-offs will be commissioned.

The Framework will run on a 1+1+1+1-year basis. This means the effectiveness of the Framework will be reviewed, and future budget availability considered, towards the end of each financial year (31 March).

### 2. Introduction

This OPSS Research Collaboration Network is being commissioned to support the delivery of the **Office for Product Safety & Standards (OPSS)** Strategic Research Programme (SRP). OPSS was established by BEIS in January 2018 in order to enhance protections for consumers and drive forward increased productivity, growth and business confidence. The OPSS SRP provides high quality, strategic, science-based research to strengthen the evidence base for OPSS policy development, delivery and enforcement.

As an evidence-led organisation, OPSS places great importance on research which gathers insights on a number of evidence bases and challenges the product safety system has and faces.

Currently, much of our research is procured through an *ad hoc* approach, sometimes achieving few to no bids for our essential work. In addition, many research projects require a mix of skill sets and specialties that are difficult to find and coordinate through single contracts. The time it takes to procure research is burdensome on both OPSS staff and the suppliers we wish to attract.

We intend to address this by setting up a Research Collaboration Network consisting of four lots to address specific OPSS requirement. OPSS will bring together suppliers and create a community of researchers dedicated to the OPSS objective of keeping people safe and driving forward increased productivity, growth and business confidence. We propose that a joined-up approach for research commissioning will attract more suppliers and will create lots of subject matter experts we can call upon for peer review and technical advice.

Another benefit for both the supplier and OPSS is a quicker route to procuring call-off work, enabling quicker research turn-around times.

A framework, enabling call- off contracts to be raised, will gather together suppliers with specific skill sets from which we can efficiently commission work to undertake, rather than going through long bid processes every time. Specific objectives for this Framework are detailed in the objectives section of this document.

### 3. Aims & Objectives

#### **Main Framework Structure & Award**

The aim of the OPSS Research Collaboration Network Framework is to identify and utilise suppliers with skill and expertise in the following areas to support the aims of our Strategic Research Programme (SRP):

<b>Lot 1</b>	<b>Risk</b> communications, management, measurement, prioritisation, and tolerance
<b>Lot 2</b>	<b>Chemicals and Materials</b> identification, characterisation techniques and Exposure studies and Toxicological limits
<b>Lot 3</b>	<b>Analytical</b> Impact analysis, market analysis and consumer/business behaviours and attitudes
<b>Lot 4</b>	<b>Technology hardware and software</b> Literature reviews, SWOT analysis and research testing

The purpose of the Framework is to make it easier and more efficient for both suppliers and OPSS to apply for and commission research, with suppliers only required to make one large bid at the beginning of the Framework which will onboard them into the 'Lot(s)' relevant to their expertise.

Research commissions from OPSS will be *ad hoc* and throughout the period of the Framework but will relate to one of the four Lots detailed above. The Framework is divided into a Lot structure to onboard suppliers into the Framework in a structured manner and to commission this research efficiently.

Suppliers are invited to bid for one or more relevant Lot(s) depending on their area(s) of expertise. There is no limit to the number of Lots a supplier may bid for.

In order to be awarded onto the Framework against the Lot(s) that Bidders apply for, Bidders will need to score a minimum of 60 against each of the Evaluation questions (detailed in Section 5 – Evaluation Model). A score of 40 or below will result in your bid response being unsuccessful.

There is no limit to the number of suppliers that can be in any one Lot.

We hope this Framework will attract smaller research businesses and academic institutions, who may struggle with the demands of bidding on individual research from Contracts Finder or other Government procurement routes. It is worth noting that this will not subsume other methods of procurement and in some cases other frameworks could be used for some research when appropriate.

We are particularly interested in suppliers who have expertise in applying their research methods to non-medical and non-food consumer products. A list of topical areas can be found in Section 4 of this specification.

### **Framework Commercial Response**

The Evaluation and award of Bidders to this Framework Agreement will be based solely on Technical responses.

As part of a Bidders response, you will be required to provide a Commercial (Price) response for your chosen Lot(s).

The Commercial response provided will be the maximum rates that the Bidder may charge for the initial term of this Framework Agreement. For every extension year taken up, the Awarded Suppliers will be allowed to revise their maximum rates in agreement with OPSS and in line with the Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) Index.

For each Mini-Competition, Awarded Suppliers will have their bid submissions assessed against Technical and Commercial criteria.

When submitting a Mini-Competition Commercial response, Suppliers will be able to vary their rates and total fixed cost for completion of the required Services up to the maximum rates submitted at Framework stage.

### **Mini-Competitions**

Following award of this Framework, all individual research requirements will be managed as Mini-Competitions.

At the point that a new requirement is identified OPSS will define the most appropriate Lot for this to be competed against and all awarded Suppliers will be invited to bid.

Within Annex A, B and C we have provided an example of the Commissioning Letter, Mini-Competition tender template and GDPR template that may be used.

Mini-Competitions will be issued via email to the contact specified within the Framework tender submission.

It is the Bidders responsibility to ensure that the contact details for Mini-Competitions to be issued to stay up to date. Where these require amending / updating, Bidders are required to contact the OPSS Framework Manager.

### **Direct Award**

Whilst it is OPSS's intention to secure all resulting Contracts via Mini-Competition award, OPSS reserves the right to Direct Award individual requirements in the following instances:

1. If it is clear that only one Supplier on the relevant Lot is capable of undertaking the Services required. In this instance it may be that a short Expression of Interest is undertaken to all Lot Suppliers to enable them to de-select themselves and validate that only one Supplier is capable
2. Where the value of the Mini-Competition is below £20,000.00 excluding VAT

No Direct Award will be for a value in excess of £50,000.00 excluding VAT

### **Bidder Conference**

As part of the procurement process for this Framework Agreement, we will be undertaking a Bidder Conference on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March at 15:00. The purpose of the Bidder Conference is to allow potential Bidder to ask any clarification questions they may have based on the tender documentation and scope of the Framework.

If you wish to register for this event, please send the names and email addresses of those wishing to attend through the Jaggaer portal messaging function. Once confirmed a Teams invite will then be issued out.

## **4. Objectives**

### **Objectives for the Framework**

- To provide a clear rationale behind OPSS research objectives and challenges to OPSS suppliers and to increase OPSS's research visibility
- Support and enable OPSS to be evidence based in its policy and regulatory functions
- Reduce commissioning timelines for pieces of research for both the supplier and OPSS
- Reduce admin and resource required to identify and connect with appropriate suppliers
- Providing support for a more robust peer review process for OPSS research
- Providing an avenue for further technical advice
- Providing an easier route to provide project partner structured projects
- To ensure experts can be used in every stage of the project development process

## **5. Background to the Requirement**

### **Framework background – Research priorities and themes**

OPSS has a number of policy, regulatory and enforcement functions and responsibilities, some of which are carried out on behalf of other departments such as Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA), and Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and will sometimes involve collaboration with other policy teams within BEIS and across the Civil Service. Each of these responsibilities come with their own challenges and evidence-based requirements. Based on our responsibilities and priorities set out by BEIS and OPSS, we have identified priority evidence bases we wish to develop from June 2023 to June 2027, which have resulted in the below research themes for the OPSS Strategic Research programme.

Under each of these themes there are specific objectives we would like our research to achieve. Under these objectives we then have specific research we would like to conduct to enable us to achieve the objectives for each of the thematic areas. These are not exhaustive lists and will be added to as new requirements are identified but should give the Bidder an indication how and where their work will impact Government policy and enforcement and ultimately the safety of UK citizens.

More information on the specific policy or enforcement challenges the research is supporting, will be given to Bidders at the Mini-Competition stage.

## **Themes**

### **1. The Right Evidence for the Future**

The right evidence for the future is a theme incorporating all research that will support the future regulation of products, new and novel products and encourage a more proactive approach to regulation. The aims of the work within this theme are as follows;

- I. Support the development of an OPSS horizon scanning function and collate evidence for possible future interventions.
- II. Support the future identification of threats and benefits to the product safety system (including work around Net Zero).

Commissioned work in this area in the past has included;

- Study on the impact of artificial intelligence on product safety
- Safety of domestic virtual reality systems
- 3D printing of spare parts for consumer domestic appliances: safety and legal implications

We expect Bidders awarded to **Lot 1 (Risk)** and **Lot 4 (Technology, hardware and software)** to contribute to delivery of this theme through assessing threats and benefits from a risk perspective and exploring the technical threats and benefits.

### **2. The Application of Risk**

The application of risk is a theme bringing together research into how risk can be applied in OPSS' regulatory system. The main aims of this work include:

- I. Define, standardise and measure the risk of products to support policy and enforcement strategies.
- II. Review regulatory systems to understand when and where risk measurements should be incorporated.
- III. Incorporate risk prioritisation and management methodologies to prioritise regulatory actions.
- IV. Provide evidence to support communication campaigns.

Commissioned work in this area in the past has included;

- Public perceptions of smart products: summary report
- Bayesian product safety: summary report

We expect Bidders awarded to **Lot 1 (Risk)** to deliver the requirements of this theme.

### **3. The Study of Online Market places**

This research theme focuses on growing research around online marketplaces to help support policy, enforcement and potential regulatory decisions being made regarding online marketplaces. The current aims for our research within this theme are:

- I. Provide a baseline understanding of the prevalence of unsafe and non-compliant goods including comparative frequency between retail/ online/ third party sales online to enable a quantification of risk to the consumer.
- II. Understand the impact of OPSS interventions using current policy and enforcement levers and future levers.

Commissioned work in this area in the past has included;

- Review of Product Safety on Online Market Places to Develop Options for a Digital Solution

Future work in this area include;

- Understanding consumer behaviour when engaging with online marketplaces
- Understanding seller behaviour when engaging with online marketplaces through different sales channels
- Understanding OMP business models and the subsequent effect on the safety of products sold via their platform
- Identifying high-risk products, their associated hazards, and the potential impact on the consumer
- Identifying and reviewing digital solutions to improving product safety on OMPs
- Identifying the scale/scope of the problem in relation to other sales channels (physical stores and non-OMP retailers)

This evidence base will be using Bidders awarded to **Lot 1 (Risk), Lot 2 (Chemicals and Materials), Lot 3 (Analytical) and Lot 4 (Technology Hardware and Software)** to contribute to delivery of this theme

Bidders within the **Lot 3 (Analytical)** will support the development of our knowledge of markets and use suppliers with skills in impact analysis to measure impacts of various policy and enforcement interventions. We may also conduct behavioural work to support this evidence base through **Lot 3 (Analytical)**. We expect work produced in this theme to also support challenges in the 'Making regulation work better' theme as outputs of this research may be applicable to other areas of regulation.

#### **4. Consumer Vulnerability**

The consumer vulnerability research theme has been developed to group together and grow our evidence base on factors that affect the consumer detrimentally in our product safety system, to ensure we can make the most effective policy, enforcement changes and implement appropriate strategies to support consumers. The main aims of this thematic area are:

- I. Identify and define those consumers most at risk and/or most vulnerable.
- II. Improve OPSS' knowledge of behaviours and attitudes around the most high-risk products within OPSS's regulatory scope.
- III. Understand how to better use the current available interventions to reduce risk to consumers.
- IV. Evaluate the impact of policy levers to better support vulnerable consumers.
- V. Understand the role that businesses can play in directly reducing risk to vulnerable consumers.

Commissioned work in this area in the past has included;

- Consumer attitudes to product safety
- Consumer behaviours and attitudes to fireworks in the UK
- Consumer attitudes to fire safety information on furniture
- Insights into product recall effectiveness

This evidence base will be using Bidders awarded to **Lot 3 (Analytical)** to contribute to delivery of this theme

## **5. Making Regulation Work Better**

The making regulation work better theme is one of the broadest in the Strategic Research Programme and connects to a number of policy and enforcement challenges across OPSS, including our international and ports and borders work. Findings from other themes may also be brought together under this theme (such as the online marketplaces theme). This theme aims to grow our evidence base around our knowledge of business types and behaviours in the product safety system, supply chains and risks within them and regulatory interventions we could employ to reduce detrimental impacts in the product safety system. The main aims of this theme are;

- I. Understand risk within supply chains and mapping on current interventions to reduce these risks.
- II. Assess impact of interventions.
- III. Develop OPSS understanding of business types, size and their perceptions of the regulatory system to inform intervention options.
- IV. Develop and assess options to improve business engagement.

Commissioned work in this area in the past has included:

- Use of distributed ledger technologies to verify the provenance of goods
- Safety regulations: compliance study
- Product safety and industry

We expect Bidders awarded to **Lot 3 (Analytical)** to contribute to delivery of this theme

## **6. Chemicals and Materials in Products**

The chemicals and materials in products theme brings together all research concerned with chemicals and materials within consumer products. It includes a number of policy and enforcement areas ranging from coatings and content of specific chemicals within materials, to developing methods to efficiently identify and measure chemicals for enforcement purposes. The aims of this research area include:

- I. Review chemicals and materials and their extent of their usage in products
- II. Develop characterisation techniques and measurement methodologies for these chemicals to support the identification and quantification of chemicals
- III. Understand exposure and chemical limits for various chemicals to feed back into regulations
- IV. Development of chemical risk assessments

Commissioned work in this area in the past has included:

- CBD and controlled cannabinoids: results from a ring trial
- The Use of Metal and Non-metal Nanomaterials in Consumer Products and Associated Safety Issues

We expect Bidders awarded to **Lot 1 (Risk)**, **Lot 2 (Chemical and Materials)** and **Lot 3 (Analytical)** to contribute to delivery of this theme.

## **7. Construction Products**

This thematic area is generating evidence and research around construction products to help support the regulation of construction products. The workstream is a programme of work in itself. It is currently interested in developing research in the following areas;

- Lessons from elsewhere
- Supply chains
- Consumers and construction products
- Systems mapping and evidence review
- Manufacturing and product systems
- Testing of construction products
- Innovation and Net Zero

The aims of this workstream are to:

- I. Understand the modern construction product landscape and the relationships involved.
- II. Obtain information to inform both our strategic approach and the regulatory interventions we will deploy.

Commissioned work in this area in the past has included;

- Understanding risk of construction products
- CP Risk assessment methodology
- Construction product - supply chains research

For each of these themes and their objectives we have pre-empted what skills and suppliers we might need to achieve the research we think will be required to achieve the theme's objectives. This should give Bidders an indication of where the majority of their work will help to grow an evidence base (however their skills may cross over into other themes as well).








Specifics of the actual policy/regulatory/enforcement challenge you work will help to feed into will, be given for each piece of research that goes through the Framework. Knowledge of OPSS's responsibilities should give a reasonable indication of the types of policy/regulatory and enforcement work you would be supporting. Indicating your awareness of OPSS's remits will help in your application for the Framework.

We expect Bidders awarded to **Lot 1 (Risk)**, **Lot 2 (Chemicals and Materials)**, **Lot 3 (Analytical)** and **Lot 4 (Technology Hardware and Software)** to contribute to delivery of this theme.

## **Linking Themes to Lots**

The diagram below indicates the evidence bases you will be mainly supporting when applying for a certain Lot.



 <p><b>The right evidence for the future</b> Technology Testing Risk</p>	 <p><b>Construction products</b> Risk Analytical Chemicals and Materials Technology</p>	 <p><b>Chemicals and materials in products</b> Chemicals and Materials Risk</p>
 <p><b>The application of risk in process</b> Risk Analytical Technology</p>	 <p><b>Study of Online marketplaces</b> Analytical Risk Technology</p>	 <p><b>Increasing awareness for vulnerable consumers</b> Risk Analytical</p>
 <p><b>Making regulation work better</b> Analytical Risk</p>		

*Note:* A Bidder can apply for as many Lots as they wish.

From this analysis of OPSS business needs we have therefore proposed a Research Framework comprising of four Lots. (Lot 1: Risk, Lot 2: Chemicals and Materials, Lot 3: Analytical and Lot 4: Technology hardware and software)

**Specific skills required in each Lot**

These include, but are not limited to, the following:

**Lot 1 – Risk** – risk tolerance, risk communications and management, risk assessment and prioritisation

**Lot 2 – Chemical and Materials** – Identification techniques, Characterisation techniques, exposure studies and toxicological limits

**Lot 3 – Analytical** – Impact analysis, market analysis, consumer and business attitudes

**Lot 4 – Technology, hardware and software** – Literature reviews, SWOT analysis and research testing

**Framework Management**

The Framework structure will be managed by the OPSS Research, Evidence and Dissemination (RED) team, with support from OPSS technical leads working within these research areas.

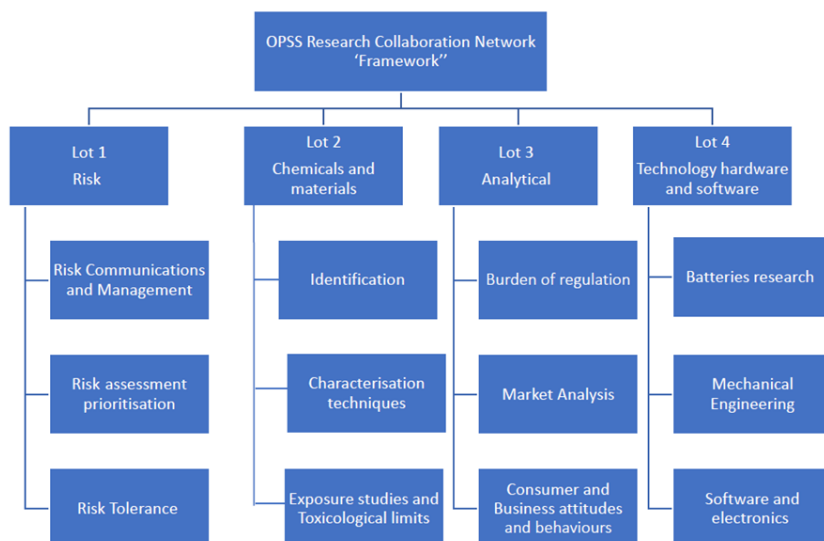
The OPSS Research Collaboration Network Framework offers an exciting opportunity for Bidders to become involved with real world impact through the development of OPSS' evidence bases and engage with Government science that informs both policy and enforcement activities.

**6. Scope**

## Scope of Framework

The Framework has been based around OPSS' seven research themes which are used to describe current OPSS's priority evidence bases, which may change over time. However, the types of research specialisms and skills we require are likely to remain the similar over time.

We have organised the four Lots into the types of skills and expertise that we are seeking from Bidders:



OPSS will not use the Research Collaboration Network Framework to commission all its research. Some projects outside the scope of this Framework will be contracted through the usual Government procurement routes.

The Framework will be for a total of 4 years, let for 12 months initially, with three further annual extensions following annual review of Framework requirements and Supplier performance. It should be noted however, that as with all Government contracts, following annual budget reviews contracts could be terminated at the end of any financial year.

The maximum value of the Framework is £4,000,000.00

There is no commitment from OPSS that it will spend this or any amount of money throughout the Framework Agreement.

There is no cost limit per project.

Where the Framework Agreement is utilised to its full potential, it will naturally end when either its duration has elapsed, or the £4,000,000.00 has been spent, whichever occurs first.

## 7. Requirement

### Scope of requirements for suppliers on the Framework

In addition to research, our expectations of all Bidders in each Lot will be to;

**Essential**

- Bid for opportunities appropriate to their capabilities and specialties *ad hoc* research when contacted by OPSS,
- Form project partners / consortia with Suppliers in the same / other Lots (OPSS to support) where the full skill set does not exist in your organisation,
- Attend project update meetings with OPSS project managers and produce interim reports as required,
- Provide high quality work that meets the research aims and requirements,
- Produce research reports (dependant on requirements of the project) to a publishable standard in agreed OPSS template so that they can be published on GOV.UK. OPSS supports the publication of its research in the scientific literature but requests an opportunity to comment on draft manuscripts prior to journal submission.
- Produce work in line with Government accessibility requirements (guidance pack will be supplied).

**Additional**

- Provide peer review services for other research projects conducted as part of the research programme when contacted by OPSS (this would be a paid activity if Suppliers' availability allows),
- Suppliers will allow OPSS to contact them where there is an opportunity to be on advisory board(s) (this would be a paid activity if suppliers' availability allows),
- Provide technical advice on an *ad hoc* basis and / or through an invitation to be on a project steering board (this would be a paid activity if suppliers' availability allows). The call off contracts would stipulate the same terms and conditions of current advisory contracts in place with OPSS.

**Scope of Management Requirements**

We expect all research projects commissioned to be managed with a project management approach including a project plan, risk register, update meetings and milestone payment plans. Specific to be agreed at individual project award stage.

**Scope of Outputs**

The individual research projects commissioned through the Framework will have their own objectives and requirements. Their outputs will often consist of reports (describing methodology and findings) and data tables. Specific requirements for individual research proposals will be detailed within the Mini-Competition or Expression of Interest documentation which is issued to awarded Suppliers on the relevant Lot.

Clarification of Scope within a Mini-Competition are permitted, and where these are submitted, responses will be provided to all Suppliers (with the exception of those that are commercially sensitive to the Suppliers response)

Outputs produced as part of individual research projects will vary on a project-by-project basis. It is expected however, that each quantitative project carried out as part of this Framework will require an anonymised data set to be provided to OPSS as well as a write up of the research findings. In some cases, transcriptions, recordings, and code frames may also be required but this will be decided on a project-by-project basis. The nature of each research project will inform the reporting process. Where data is an output of work, the format and structure of this, and any metadata, will be agreed with OPSS to support the further use of data within OPSS if appropriate.

### **Scope of Publishing**

It is anticipated that all findings will be published on gov.uk as per our commitment to transparency, therefore, reports should be produced to a quality assured, publishable standard using the agreed OPSS format and template (Appendix B). Reports are also required to adhere to accessibility guidelines. Where traditional reports are appropriate, they are expected to include an executive summary, key findings, methodology, and detailed analysis including charts and tables.

Suppliers must set out their Quality Assurance processes in their proposals for research, and we may ask for evidence of this on a project-by-project basis. OPSS may also wish to request quality assurance logs in applications, and we may ask evidence for this on a project-by-project basis. The Supplier is required to be able to provide this at request. Suppliers are also required to comply with all relevant codes of practice. For example, these may include Market Research Society Code, and other ethical, and legal standards (including GDPR), which will be set out in the Framework Agreement Contract.

### **Topics we are interested in onboarding suppliers with experience in**

We particularly encourage Bidders who have worked on or within the following topics to apply for one or more of the Lots within the Framework:

- Chemical testing - analytical chemistry, forensic chemistry, trace element/compound analysis, toxicity assays
- Novel process development for chemical detection
- Chemical sensors and devices
- Novel approaches to commodity chemicals
- Nanomaterials
- Batteries and battery testing
- Flame retardants
- Coatings
- Consumer behaviours and attitudes
- Risk
- Energetic materials /explosive materials in the context of fireworks
- Mechanical failure mode analysis
- Batteries / Hydrogen fuel cells
- SMART products
- Supply chains analysis
- Digital twins
- IoT / SMART products
- AI products
- Product Labelling
- Construction products
- Distributed manufacturing

- 5G and 6G products

## 8. Mini-Competition Process

### Mini-Competition Process

At Mini-Competition stage, and for each research project, OPSS will provide a project outline with the aims and objectives, and in some instances a suggested methodology in a format similar to that shown in Annex B.

All Suppliers awarded to the relevant Lot will be contacted and invited to bid for the individual piece of work.

As part of the Mini-Competition response, Suppliers will be required to respond to Technical evaluation questions specific to the required Services. Examples of potential questions that may be used can be found within Annex B.

In addition to providing responses to the Technical evaluation questions, Suppliers will also be asked to provide a Commercial response (Price), for full completion of the Services required.

All Commercial responses must be based on the Maximum AW5.2 Rate Card Submissions that are provided in response to this Framework tender. In line with the Framework Agreement, Commercial responses for Rates may vary from project to project, but rates must not exceed those submitted at the outset of the Framework Agreement.

It is expected that Suppliers will be given 1 week to provide a response to any Mini-Competition issued under this framework, however the OPSS reserve the right to reduce this timescale in the event that the information requested within the Suppliers response is reduced to just a Commercial response and 1 evaluation question.

### Mini-Competition Evaluation

The evaluation and award of each Mini-Competition will be based on the combined score awarded from the Technical and Commercial responses.

Each Technical question will be evaluated 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.

The 0-100 score shall be based on:

0	The Question is not answered, or the response is completely unacceptable.
10	Extremely poor response – they have completely missed the point of the question.
20	Very poor response and not wholly acceptable. Requires major revision to the response to make it acceptable. Only partially answers the requirement, with major deficiencies and little relevant detail proposed.
40	Poor response only partially satisfying the question requirements with deficiencies apparent. Some useful evidence provided but response falls well short of expectations. Low probability of being a capable supplier.
60	Response is acceptable but remains basic and could have been expanded upon. Response is sufficient but does not inspire.

80	Good response which describes their capabilities in detail which provides high levels of assurance consistent with a quality provider. The response includes a full description of techniques and measurements currently employed.
100	Response is exceptional and clearly demonstrates they are capable of meeting the requirement. No significant weaknesses noted. The response is compelling in its description of techniques and measurements currently employed, providing full assurance consistent with a quality provider.

The Commercial response provided will be evaluated based on the lowest compliant response being awarded a score of 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 Commercial criterion.

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

This evaluation criteria will therefore not be subject to any averaging, as this is a mathematical scoring criterion, but will still be subject to a commercial review

### **Mini-Competition Award**

All Suppliers that submit a response to a Mini-Competition will be provided with their overall bid score, as well as the breakdown of afforded scores for each evaluation question. In addition to the Suppliers afforded scores, the name and Commercial response of the winning Supplier will also be provided.

Feedback will not be provided as standard within the Award notification but will be available on request.

## **9. Terms and Conditions**

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

## Section 5 – Evaluation model

### 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 Framework.
- 5.1.2. The evaluation team may comprise staff from UK SBS and the Contracting Authority, and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deem required

### 5.2. Evaluation of Bids

- 5.2.1. Evaluation of Bids shall be based on a Selection questionnaire and Award criteria as clearly 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		
Evaluation Envelope	Q No.	Question subject
<b>Qualification Questionnaire Part 1: Potential Supplier Information</b>		
Section 1	1.3	Contact details and declaration
<b>Qualification Questionnaire Part 2: Exclusion Grounds</b>		
Section 2	2.1 (a)(i)	Participation in a criminal organisation
Section 2	2.1(a)(ii)	Corruption
Section 2	2.1(a)(iii)	Fraud
Section 2	2.1(a)(iv)	Terrorist Offences or offences link to terrorist activities
Section 2	2.1(a)(v)	Money laundering or Terrorist financing
Section 2	2.1(a)(vi)	Child Labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings
Section 2	2.2	Self cleaning
Section 2	2.3(a)	Payment of tax or social security
Section 3	3.1 (a)	Breach of environmental obligations
Section 3	3.1 (b)	Breach of social obligations
Section 3	3.1 (c)	Breach of labour law obligations
Section 3	3.1(d)	Bankruptcy
Section 3	3.1(e)	Guilty of grave professional misconduct
Section 3	3.1(f)	Distorting competition
Section 3	3.1(g)	Conflict of Interest
Section 3	3.1(h)	Prior involvement in procurement process

Section 3	3.1(i)	Prior performance of contract
Section 3	3.1(j)(i)	Serious Misrepresentation
Section 3	3.1(j)(ii)	Withholding information
Section 3	3.1(j)(iii)	Unable to provide supporting documentation for ESPD
Section 3	3.1(j)(iv)	Influenced the decision-making process
<b>Qualification Questionnaire Part 3: Selection Questions</b>		
Section 4	4.1	Audited accounts
Section 5	5.1	Wider group
Section 5	5.2	Parent Company Guarantee
Section 5	5.3	Other Guarantee
Section 6	6.1	Relevant experience and contract examples
Section 7	7.1	Compliance under Modern Slavery Act 2015
Section 8	8.1(a)	Insurance
Section 9	SEL5.5	Health and Safety Policy
Section 9	SEL5.6	Enforcement/remedial orders in relation to the Health and Safety Executive
Section 9	SEL5.7	Breaching environmental legislation
Section 9	SEL5.8	Checking sub-contractors for infringement of environmental legislation
Section 9	SEL5.9	Unlawful discrimination
Section 9	SEL5.10	Checking sub-contractors for unlawful discrimination
Section 9	SEL1.10	Information security requirements
Section 9	SEL2.12	General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) Act and Data Protection Act 2018
Section 9	FOI1.1	Freedom of information
	In the event of a Bidder failing to meet the requirements of a Mandatory pass / fail criteria, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to disqualify the Bidder and not consider evaluation of the any of the selection stage scoring methodology, nor the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria.	

- 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.
- 5.3.6. During the evaluation stage, the intention is that only Bidders who achieve a Pass of 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**

<b>Evaluation Envelope</b>	<b>Q No.</b>	<b>Question subject</b>
Qualification	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Qualification	AW1.2	Bid validity period
Qualification	AW1.3	Certificate of bona fide Bid
Qualification	AW3.2	Conflict of Interest Declaration
Qualification	AW3.2.1	Conflict of Interest Declaration Supporting Information
Qualification	AW4.1	Compliance to the Framework Terms
Qualification	AW4.2	Changes to Framework Terms
Commercial	AW5.2	Maximum Framework Rates
Commercial	AW5.6	Open Book Policy
Technical	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Technical	AW6.2	Variable Bids
-	-	Request for Proposal response – received on time within the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal
In the event of a Bidder failing to meet the requirements of a Mandatory pass / fail criteria, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to disqualify the Bidder and not consider evaluation of the any of the selection stage scoring methodology, nor the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria.		

5.4.2. The Award stage of due process 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 – Lot 1 Risk****Evaluation Justification Statement**

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

<b>Evaluation Envelope</b>	<b>Q No.</b>	<b>Question subject</b>	<b>Maximum Marks</b>	
			<b>Overall</b>	<b>Breakdown</b>
Technical	PROJ1.1	Product Risk Prioritisation decision tool	100%	16.66%
Technical	PROJ1.2	Effective Communication		16.67%
Technical	PROJ1.3	Risk Attributions		16.67%
Technical	PROJ1.4	Technical Expertise and Capability		40.00%
Technical	PROJ1.5	Social Value		10.00%

### Award Scoring Criteria – Lot 2 Chemicals and Materials

#### Evaluation Justification Statement

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

Evaluation Envelope	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks	
			Overall	Breakdown
Technical	PROJ2.1	The Use of Advanced Materials in Consumer Products and Associated Safety Issues	100%	16.66%
Technical	PROJ2.2	Materials characterisation in consumer and construction products		16.67%
Technical	PROJ2.3	Consumer exposure and toxicological assays		16.67%
Technical	PROJ2.4	Technical Expertise and Capability		40.00%
Technical	PROJ2.5	Social Value		10.00%

### Award Scoring Criteria – Lot 3 Analytical Techniques

#### Evaluation Justification Statement

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

Evaluation Envelope	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks	
			Overall	Breakdown
Technical	PROJ3.1	Impact Analysis	100%	16.66%
Technical	PROJ3.2	Market Analysis		16.67%
Technical	PROJ3.3	Consumer or Business Behaviours		16.67%
Technical	PROJ3.4	Technical Expertise and Capability		40.00%
Technical	PROJ3.5	Social Value		10.00%

### Award Scoring Criteria – Lot 4 Technology hardware and Software

#### Evaluation Justification Statement

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

Evaluation Envelope	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks	
			Overall	Breakdown
Technical	PROJ4.1	Study on lithium-ion batteries used in Consumer Products - What risks do they pose to the consumer?	100%	16.66%
Technical	PROJ4.2	3D printing of spare parts for consumer appliances		16.67%

Technical	PROJ4.3	What are the future threats and benefits of IoT?		16.67%
Technical	PROJ4.4	Technical Expertise and Capability		40.00%
Technical	PROJ4.5	Social Value		10.00%

## Award Evaluation of criteria

### Non-Commercial Elements

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

All questions will be scored based on the above mechanism. As there will be multiple evaluators their individual scores and commentary will be recorded, then a consensus meeting will be convened by the evaluators to determine your score. Note this will include a chairperson or lead and all evaluators are of equal status.

### Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 40

The convened meeting came to a consensus that the final recorded score to given to your submission against this question should be 60, with the justification and reasons for this score recorded.

Once the consensus process has been finalised, all justifications recorded and all non priced scores are agreed, this will then be subject to an independent commercial moderation review.

Any Bidder achieving a score of 40 or less on any individual question within the Technical criterion will not be considered for award to this Framework Agreement.

**Commercial Elements** will be evaluated as Mandatory Pass / Fail at the Framework Award Stage.

## 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"> <li>RFP logged upon opening in alignment with UK SBS's procurement procedures.</li> <li>Any RFP Bid received after the closing date will be rejected unless circumstances attributed to UK SBS, the Contracting Authority or the eSourcing Portal beyond the bidder control are responsible for late submission.</li> </ul>
Compliance check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check all Mandatory requirements are acceptable to the Contracting Authority.</li> <li>Unacceptable Bids maybe subject to clarification by the Contracting Authority or rejection of the Bid.</li> </ul>
Scoring of the Bid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation team will independently score the Bid and provide a commentary of their scoring justification against the criteria.</li> </ul>
Clarifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Evaluation team may require written clarification to Bids</li> </ul>
Re - scoring of the Bid and Clarifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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 and / Award criteria.</li> </ul>
Moderation meeting (if required to reach an award decision)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To review the outcomes of the Commercial review</li> <li>To agree final scoring for each Bid, relative rankings of the Bids</li> <li>To confirm contents of the Standstill letters to provide details of scoring and relative feedback on the unsuccessful Bidders response in comparison with the successful Bidders response</li> </ul>
Due diligence of the Bid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Contracting Authority may request the following requirements at any stage of the Procurement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Submission of insurance documents from the Bidder</li> <li>Request for evidence of documents / accreditations referenced in the / Request for Proposal response / Bid and / or Clarifications from the Bidder</li> <li>Taking up of Bidder references from the Bidders Customers.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Financial Credit check for the Bidder</li> </ul>
Validation of unsuccessful Bidders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To confirm contents of the letters to provide details of scoring and meaningful feedback on the unsuccessful Bidders Bid in comparison with the successful Bidders Bid.</li> </ul>

## Section 6 – Evaluation Response Questionnaires

### 6.1. Qualification / Selection Questionnaire

- 6.1.1 Bidders should note that the Qualification / Selection Questionnaire is located within the **Jaggaer eSourcing Portal**.

**Guidance on how to register and use the Jaggaer eSourcing portal is available at**

**<https://beisgroup.ukp.app.jaggaer.com/>**

**PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY**

### 6.2. Technical and Commercial Questionnaire

- 6.2.1 Bidders should note that the Technical and Commercial Questionnaire is located within the **Jaggaer eSourcing Portal**.

**Guidance on how to register and use the Jaggaer eSourcing portal is available at**

**<https://beisgroup.ukp.app.jaggaer.com/>**

**PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY**

## Section 7 – General information

### 7.1. Introduction

- 7.1.1. The Contracting Authority wishes to establish a Framework for the provision of Research Collaboration Network Services. The Contracting Authority is managing this procurement process in accordance with Public Procurement (as may be amended from time to time) (the “Regulations”). This is a Services Framework being procured under the Open Procedure
- 7.1.2. The Contracting Authority is procuring the Framework for The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).
- 7.1.3. UK SBS and the Contracting Authority logo, trademarks and other identifying marks are proprietary and may not be incorporated in the Companies response without or the Contracting Authority’s written permission.
- 7.1.4. The Bidder shall indemnify and keep indemnified UK SBS and the Contracting Authority 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 or the Contracting Authority. 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 and the Contracting Authority 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 the Contracting Authority. Submitted Responses which are deemed by the Contracting Authority 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. Whilst it is the Contracting Authority’s intention to purchase the majority of its Services under this Framework Arrangement from the Supplier(s) appointed this does not confer any exclusivity on the appointed Suppliers. The Contracting Authority 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 Framework.
- 7.1.9. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to conclude a Framework 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.
- 7.1.10. The Services covered by this procurement exercise have been sub-divided into Lots.

Lot	Description	Number of successful
-----	-------------	----------------------

		suppliers required for this lot
Lot 1	Risk	1
Lot 2	Chemical and materials	1
Lot 3	Analytical Techniques	1
Lot 4	Technology and Software	1

- 7.1.11. The Contracting Authority shall utilise the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal available at <https://beisgroup.ukp.app.jaggaer.com/> 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 Jaggaer eSourcing portal.

All enquiries with respect to access to the eSourcing portal and problems with functionality within the portal must be submitted to Jaggaer eSourcing Helpdesk

**Phone** 08000 698 632

**Email** [customersupport@jaggaer.com](mailto:customersupport@jaggaer.com)

Please note; Jaggaer is a free self-registration portal. Bidders can complete the online registration at the following link:

<https://beisgroup.ukp.app.jaggaer.com/>

- 7.1.12. Please utilise the messaging system within the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal located at <https://beisgroup.ukp.app.jaggaer.com/> 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 the Contracting Authority if they are not articulated by the Bidder within the discussion forum within the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal.
- 7.1.13. Bidders should read this document, and all attachment, messages and the response envelopes located within the Jaggaer eSourcing portal 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 Services and contractual obligations. These instructions constitute the Conditions of Response. Participation in the RFP process automatically signals that the Bidder accepts these Conditions.
- 7.1.14. All material issued in connection with this RFP shall remain the property of the Contracting Authority and shall be used only for the purpose of this procurement. All Due Diligence Information shall be either returned to the Contracting Authority or securely destroyed by the Bidder (at the Contracting Authority's option) at the conclusion of the procurement.
- 7.1.15. The Bidder shall ensure that each and every sub-contractor, consortium member and adviser abide by the terms of these instructions and the Conditions of Response.
- 7.1.16. The Bidder shall not make contact with any other employee, agent or consultant of UK SBS or the Contracting Authority or Customer who are in any way connected with this procurement during the period of this procurement, unless instructed otherwise by the Contracting Authority.

- 7.1.17. The Contracting Authority shall not be committed to any course of action as a result of:
- 7.1.17.1. issuing this RFP or any invitation to participate in this procurement;
  - 7.1.17.2. an invitation to submit any Response in respect of this procurement;
  - 7.1.17.3. communicating with a Bidder or a Bidder's representatives or agents in respect of this procurement; or
  - 7.1.17.4. any other communication between UK SBS or the Contracting Authority (whether directly or by its agents or representatives) and any other party.
- 7.1.18. Bidders shall accept and acknowledge that by issuing this RFP the Contracting Authority shall not be bound to accept any Response and reserves the right not to conclude a Framework for some or all of the Services for which Responses are invited.
- 7.1.19. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend, add to or withdraw all or any part of this RFP at any time during the procurement.
- 7.1.20. 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 the Contracting Authority.
- 7.1.21. 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 the Contracting Authority reserves the right to require a successful consortium to form a single legal entity in accordance with regulation 19(6) of the Regulations. The Contracting Authority 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 the Contracting Authority 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 the Contracting Authority reasonably consider the change to have a material impact of the delivery of the viability of the Response.

## 7.2. Bidder conference

- 7.2.1. A Bidders' Conference will be held in conjunction with this procurement.

As part of the procurement process for this Framework Agreement, we will be undertaking a Bidder Conference on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> March at 15:00. The purpose of the Bidder Conference is to allow potential Bidder to ask any clarification questions they may have based on the tender documentation and scope of the Framework.

If you wish to register for this event, please send the names and email addresses of those wishing to attend through the Jaggaer portal messaging function. Once confirmed a Teams invite will then be issued out.



### 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 the Contracting Authority 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 Framework 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 and the Contracting Authority may disclose detailed information relating to Responses to its employees, agents or advisers and they may make any of the Framework documents available for private inspection by its officers, employees, agents, or advisers. UK SBS and the Contracting Authority also reserve 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, the Contracting Authority may disclose within Government any of the Bidders documentation/information (including any that the Bidder considers to be confidential and/or commercially sensitive such as specific bid information) submitted by the Bidder to the Contracting Authority during this Procurement. 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. The Government revised its Government Security Classifications (GSC) classification scheme on the 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2014 to replace the previous 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 Framework 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. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft Framework 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.

#### USEFUL INFORMATION LINKS

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

#### 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 and the Contracting Authority may be required to disclose information submitted by the Bidder to the to the Contracting Authority.
- 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, the Contracting Authority will endeavour to maintain confidentiality. Bidders should note, however, that, even where information is identified as commercially sensitive, the Contracting Authority may be required to disclose such information in accordance with the FoIA or the Environmental Information Regulations. In particular, the Contracting Authority 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, the Contracting Authority 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 the Contracting Authority and the Bidder should not attempt to answer the request without first consulting with the Contracting Authority.
- 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 the Contracting Authority, and any Call-Off Contract entered into by the Contracting Authority 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. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to extend the dates and will advise potential Bidders of any change to the dates.

## **7.7. The Contracting Authority's Contact Details**

- 7.7.1. Unless stated otherwise in these Instructions or in writing from UK SBS or the Contracting Authority, all communications from Bidders (including their sub-contractors, consortium members, consultants, and advisers) during the period of this procurement must be directed through the eSourcing tool to the designated UK SBS contact.
- 7.7.2. Bidders should be mindful that the designated Contact should not under any circumstances be sent a copy of their Response outside of the Jaggaer eSourcing portal. 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 the Contracting Authority, 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 the Contracting Authority 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 the Contracting Authority to reject a Response.

- 7.8.3. The Contracting Authority 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 the Contracting Authority or their advisers and representatives. Bidders should notify the Contracting Authority 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. The Contracting Authority 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. The Contracting Authority do 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, unless explicitly requested by the Contracting Authority either in the procurement documents or via a formal clarification from the Contracting Authority. Responses received by any other method than requested will not be considered for the opportunity.

- 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 the Contracting Authority, unless the Bidder can justify that the reason for the delay is solely attributable to the Contracting Authority
- 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 the Buyer in [Section 3](#) in advance of 'the deadline' if a bidder believes their Response will be received late.
  - 7.9.9.3. The Contracting Authority 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.
- 7.9.10. Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline (date and time) for receipt of responses has passed.

## **7.10. Canvassing**

- 7.10.1. Any Bidder who directly or indirectly canvasses any employee, or agent of UK SBS, the Contracting Authority, or its members or any of its employees concerning the establishment of the Framework 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, the Contracting Authority, 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 the Contracting Authority following receipt of the RFP should make their own investigations and their own independent assessment of the Contracting Authority and its requirements for the 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 the Contracting Authority 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 the Contracting Authority 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 Framework 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 the Contracting Authority and the Contracting Authority confirming in writing such acceptance to the Bidder, the Bidder will within 5 days of being called upon to do so by the Contracting Authority execute the Framework Contract in the form set out in the Framework Contract Terms or in such amended form as may subsequently be agreed.
- 7.14.2. The Contracting Authority 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 Jaggaer eSourcing portal unless the Jaggaer eSourcing portal is unavailable due to system maintenance or failure, in this instance all clarifications shall be by email to the contact defined in [Section 3](#).
- 7.15.2. The Contracting Authority 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 Jaggaer eSourcing portal they should use the contact details defined in [Section 3](#).
- 7.15.4. No further requests for clarifications will be accepted after 7 days prior to the date for submission of Responses.
- 7.15.5. In order to ensure equality of treatment of Bidders, the Contracting Authority intends to publish the questions and clarifications raised by Bidders together with the Contracting Authority'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 the Contracting Authority 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 the Contracting Authority's response, the Contracting Authority will:
- 7.15.6.1. invite the Bidder submitting the query to either declassify the query and allow the query along with the Contracting Authority'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. The Contracting Authority 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, the Contracting Authority may modify the RFP by amendment. Any such amendment will be numbered and dated and issued by the Contracting Authority to all prospective Bidders. In order to give prospective Bidders reasonable time in which to take the amendment into account in preparing their Responses, the Contracting Authority 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 Jaggaer eSourcing portal. 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 to be awarded to the Framework Agreement. The notice to withdraw the Response must be in writing and sent to the Contracting Authority by recorded delivery or equivalent service and delivered to the Head of Policy UK SBS at UK Shared Business Services Ltd, Procurement, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN2 1ET

## **7.18. Right to disqualify or reject**

- 7.18.1. The Contracting Authority 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. The Contracting Authority 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. The Contracting Authority will notify the successful Bidder of the Framework award in writing and will publish an Award Notice in Find a Tender in accordance with the Regulations within 30 days of the award of the contract.
- 7.20.2. As required by the Regulations all successful and unsuccessful Bidders will be provided with an email advising the outcome of the submission of their RFP response.

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

### **DO:**

- 7.21.1. Do comply with Procurement document instructions. Failure to do so may lead to disqualification.
- 7.21.2. Do provide the Bid on time, and in the required format. Remember that the date/time given for a response is the last date that it can be accepted; we are legally bound to disqualify late submissions. Responses received after the date indicated in the RFP shall not be considered by the Contracting Authority, unless the Bidder can justify that the reason for the delay, is solely attributable to the Contracting Authority
- 7.21.3. Do ensure you have read all the training materials to utilise e-sourcing tool prior to responding to this Bid. If you send your Bid by email or post it will be rejected.
- 7.21.4. Do use Microsoft Word, PowerPoint Excel 97-03 or compatible formats, or PDF unless agreed in writing by the Buyer. If you use another file format without our written permission, we may reject your Bid.
- 7.21.5. Do ensure you utilise the Jaggaer eSourcing messaging system to raise any clarifications to our RFP. You should note that we will release the answer to the question to all Bidders and where we suspect the question contains confidential



information, we may modify the content of the question to protect the anonymity of the Bidder or their proposed solution

- 7.21.6. Do answer the question, it is not enough simply to cross-reference to a 'policy', web page or another part of your Bid, the evaluation team have limited time to assess bids and if they can't find the answer, they can't score it.
- 7.21.7. Do consider who the Contracting Authority is and what they want – a generic answer does not necessarily meet every Contracting Authority's needs.
- 7.21.8. Do reference your documents correctly, specifically where supporting documentation is requested e.g. referencing the question/s they apply to.
- 7.21.9. Do provide clear, concise, and ideally generic contact details; telephone numbers, e-mails and fax details.
- 7.21.10. Do complete all questions in the questionnaire or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.21.11. Do ensure that the Response and any documents accompanying it are in the English Language, the Contracting Authority reserve the right to disqualify any full or part responses that are not in English.
- 7.21.12. Do check and recheck your Bid before dispatch.

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

#### DO NOT

- 7.22.1. Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.22.2. Do not attach 'glossy' brochures that have not been requested, they will not be read unless we have asked for them. Only send what has been requested and only send supplementary information if we have offered the opportunity so to do.
- 7.22.3. Do not share the Procurement documents, they may be confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission.
- 7.22.4. Do not seek to influence the procurement process by requesting meetings or contacting UK SBS or the Contracting Authority to discuss your Bid. If your Bid requires clarification the Buyer will contact you. All information secured outside of formal Buyer communications shall have no Legal standing or worth and should not be relied upon.
- 7.22.5. Do not contact any UK SBS staff or the Contracting Authority staff without the Buyers written permission or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.22.6. Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will reject your Bid.
- 7.22.7. Do not offer UK SBS or the Contracting Authority staff any inducement or we will reject your Bid.

- 7.22.8. Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed.
- 7.22.9. Do not cross reference answers to external websites or other parts of your Bid, the cross references and website links will not be considered.
- 7.22.10. Do not exceed word counts, the additional words will not be considered.
- 7.22.11. Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.22.12. Do not unless explicitly requested by the Contracting Authority either in the procurement documents or via a formal clarification from the Contracting Authority send your response by any way other than via the Jaggaer eSourcing portal. Responses received by any other method than requested will not be considered for the opportunity.

## Appendix A – Glossary of Terms

TERM	MEANING
<b>“UK SBS”</b>	means UK Shared Business Services Ltd herein after referred to as UK SBS.
<b>“Bid”, “Response”, “Submitted Bid”, or “RFP Response”</b>	means the Bidders formal offer in response to this Request for Proposal
<b>“Bidder(s)”</b>	means the organisations being invited to respond to this Request for Proposal
<b>“Central Purchasing Body”</b>	means a duly constituted public sector organisation which procures supplies / services / works for and on behalf of Contracting Authorities
<b>“Commissioning Form”</b>	means the document set out in Annex A
<b>“Conditions of Bid”</b>	means the terms and conditions set out in this RFP relating to the submission of a Bid
<b>“Competed Supplies / Services”</b>	means the competed services which will be Ordered from the Framework Agreement following a Mini-Competition
<b>“Contracting Bodies”</b>	means the Contracting Authority and any other contracting authorities described in the Find a Tender and Contract Notice
<b>“Contracting Authority”</b>	A public body regulated under the Public Procurement Regulations on whose behalf the procurement is being run
<b>“Customer”</b>	means the legal entity (or entities) for which any Contract agreed will be made accessible to.
<b>“Direct Award”</b>	means the award of a Call Off Contract by application of the terms laid down in the Framework Agreement without re-opening competition
<b>“Due Diligence Information”</b>	means the background and supporting documents and information provided by the Contracting Authority for the purpose of better informing the Bidders responses to this Request for Proposal
<b>"EIR"</b>	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
<b>“Find a Tender”</b>	Means the UK Government Portal that superseded the OJEU as from 1/1/2021 <a href="https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/Search">https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/Search</a>
<b>“FoIA”</b>	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
<b>“Framework Agreement”</b>	means the agreement to be entered by the Contracting Authority and the Supplier following any award under the procurement
<b>“Further Competition / Mini-Competition”</b>	means re-opening competition under a framework
<b>“Lot”</b>	means a discrete sub-division of the requirements
<b>“Mandatory”</b>	Means a pass / fail criteria which must be met in order for a Bid to be considered, unless otherwise specified.
<b>“Named Procurement person ”</b>	means the single point of contact for the Contracting Authority based in UK SBS that will be dealing with the procurement
<b>“Order”</b>	means an order for served by any Contracting Body on the

	Supplier
<b>“Request for Proposal” or “RFP”</b>	means this Request for Proposal documentation and all related documents published by the Contracting Authority and made available to Bidders and includes the Due Diligence Information. <b>NOTE:</b> This document is often referred to as an Invitation to Tender within other organisations
<b>“Supplier(s)”</b>	means the organisation(s) awarded the Contract
<b>“Supplies / Services / Works”</b>	means any supplies/services and supplies or works set out at within <a href="#">Section 4 Specification</a>