

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES WITH DISABLED CHILDREN (SFDC)



Department
for Education

**INFORMATION
BOOKLET**

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Department
for Education

01 BACKGROUND TO THE SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES WITH DISABLED CHILDREN FUND

BACKGROUND

This document provides:

- Background information on the Support for Families with Disabled Children Fund
- A description of the services in scope for this prospective procurement including the route to market;
- An indicative procurement timeline
- High level commercial principles underpinning this procurement
- Sets out areas where we are seeking supplier input

Further details on the terms and conditions which apply to this market consultation process can be found in the “Rules of Consultation” document attached to this notice.

02 BACKGROUND TO THE SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES WITH DISABLED CHILDREN FUND

MISSION/ VISION

Support for Families with Disabled Children is one of the Department for Education's longest running grant support schemes. Since 1973, it has provided hundreds of thousands of grants to low-income families with disabled and seriously ill children. These small grants are intended to counter some of the additional financial costs that can arise from raising children with disabilities and to provide respite to families.

The time has now come to transition to a new delivery arrangement for Support for Families with Disabled Children, moving from a single grant agreement to a competed service contract for management and administration of this grant fund.

CONTEXT

Support for Families with Disabled Children (SFDC) was established by Government in 1973 as the Hardship Fund. It was originally intended to provide packages of financial support to families of children impacted by Thalidomide. In the succeeding 50 years, the fund has moved to focus on providing support to low-income families of disabled and seriously ill children. It is one of Government's longest running grant funds and one of its largest by recipient number.

Since the grant fund's inception, it has been managed by the Family Fund Trust (FFT). FFT are based in York and were formerly part of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation. They are a registered charity and one of the UK's largest grant givers. Funding has been distributed to FFT via a direct award throughout this period. SFDC provides over 60,000 families with grant funding every year while processing around 90,000 applications.

In funding this support, government recognises that families of children and young people with disabilities face additional costs to the majority of families.

Those raising one disabled child face average additional costs of £581 per month on average. This additional burden hits families on low incomes the hardest and this fund is intended to alleviate some of that financial pressure.

This new procurement represents a new era for SFDC, intended to ensure maximum value is delivered to service users and that delivery meets key departmental priorities as we move forward. This is an exciting opportunity to be involved in shaping this historic fund's new iteration.

03 MARKET ENGAGEMENT SCHEDULE

MARKET ENGAGEMENT EVENT

In order to provide further information on the opportunity, a market engagement webinar will be held on **17th October from 14:00-16:00**. This will be an online event hosted through the Microsoft Teams platform.

This session will include a presentation at which representatives from the Department will provide detailed information to potential suppliers about the proposed scope of the services and how we intend they will be procured.

This will be followed by a Question-and-Answer session where potential suppliers will have the opportunity to ask questions of Departmental representatives.

To register for the event you will need to be registered as a supplier on the DfE Jaggaer eTendering portal. Further details on how to register can be found in the Procurement Administration section on page 9 of this booklet.

Once registered the event will be accessible via the 'View Opportunities' link on the Homepage. Select the Opportunity Notice for 'Support for Families with Disabled Children Market Engagement Event' and this will take you directly to the registration page.

CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT

Suppliers interested in pursuing this opportunity after the market engagement event will be asked to complete a Capability Assessment. This will assess the expertise, experience, and aptitude of the suppliers. A copy of the proposed Capability Assessment is attached to this notice. The Department would welcome questions and comments on the assessment as part of our market engagement.

Those suppliers who successfully pass the Capability Assessment will be invited to a second round of market engagement events. These will be commercial-in-confidence 1-to-1 sessions between individual suppliers and Department staff to discuss aspects of the procurement in greater depth.

HOW TO EXPRESS INTEREST IN THE MARKET ENGAGEMENT EVENT

If you would like to attend this event please express your interest through the DfE Jaggaer portal by no later than **12:00 noon on 14th October**.

Further details on how to access the DfE Jaggaer portal and register for the event are included within the information pack attached to this notice.

SERVICES IN SCOPE

A full draft specification is attached to this supplier engagement pack and provides in-depth detail on the service required under this procurement.

SFDC is a large-scale nation-wide grant fund that issues individual awards, grants to low-income families with disabled or seriously ill children. These grants take the form of vouchers, coupons and codes that allow the family to secure goods and services required. The successful supplier will be expected to deliver the following – please note this is not an exhaustive list:

- Negotiate value for money prices with providers of goods and services required, the range of goods and services can be found in the specification.**

- Receive from various channels, process and assess applications for funding in a timely fashion – the successful supplier will assess all applications for funding received ensuring all applications are assessed in a fair and transparent manner and in line with timescales. The successful supplier will then communicate the outcome of the application process and ensure delivery/management of an appeals and complaints process as needed.**

- Carry out due-diligence and fraud prevention on all applications received – the successful supplier will be required to comply with robust financial controls set by the Department for Education, which include compliance with Managing Public Money, controls for accessing programme funds from the Department for Education, and controls for the distribution of grant families**

- Implement effective financial control, forecasting and monitoring to ensure available programme funding does not run out during the funding period**

05 INDICATIVE PROCUREMENT TIMELINE

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE PROCUREMENT TIMELINE MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. YOU WILL BE MADE AWARE OF ANY CHANGE TO DATES

ACTIVITY	DATE
Market Engagement Event 1 (Show & Tell)	17/10/22
Question & Answer Log Released	21/10/22
Capability Assessment Released	21/10/22
Deadline for Capability Assessment	28/10/22
Market Engagement Event 2 (Supplier 1 to 1 Discussions)	07/11/22
ITT Launched	28/2/23
Tender Window Opens	28/2/23
Clarification Question Deadline	14/2/23
Tender Window Closes	28/3/23
Evaluation & Moderation	April 2023
Contract Award	1/5/23
Handover & Transition Period	May–September 2023
New Service Go-Live	01/9/23

06 COMMERCIAL PRINCIPLES

The Department intends to award each contract to the organisation that submits the Most Economically Advantageous Tender – further information on the relevant evaluation criteria will be published in the relevant ITT.

The commercial principles which will apply to any procurement and contract(s) are in the process of being finalised. The Department for Education will publish further details of these via Jaggaer when they are available, which is expected to be within the next few weeks.

ROUTE TO MARKET

The department intends to utilise the Crown Commercial Service – Grant Administration Services Dynamic Purchasing System RM6172. Suppliers interested in this opportunity will be required to complete a capability assessment questionnaire, those who pass will be invited to commercially confidential 1-2-1 discussions with the authority

TRANSFER OF EMPLOYEES

It is expected that the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) regulations (“TUPE”) will apply to employees currently delivering the services. Suppliers should seek their own legal advice on the potential impact of TUPE and other employment related liabilities.

[Please also see TUPE section below.](#)

CONTRACTING PARTIES

The contract will be entered into between the successful supplier and the Department for Education. Whilst the supplier may sub-contract certain elements of its service delivery with the Department for Education’s consent (and consortia bids will be permitted), a single legal entity must execute the contract with the Department for Education.

In the event that the lead bidder has relied on the financial strength of another consortium member and/or a group company to pass the selection stage of the tender evaluation, a guarantee may be required from such consortium member and/or group company as a condition of award.

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PROCUREMENT ADMINISTRATION

The procurement process will be managed through the Department's e-tendering portal JAGGAER. No hard copy documents will be issued and all communications with the Department (including final submission of Tender responses) must be conducted via Jaggaer. It can be accessed via your web browser: <https://education.app.jaggaer.com/>

To ensure all communications relating to this procurement are received, the potential suppliers must ensure that the point of contact it nominates in the Jaggaer portal is accurate at all times. Access to the Jaggaer is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year anywhere in the world via the internet unless notified otherwise by the Jaggaer portal.

Support is available to help the market/tenderers to understand and use the system. Please contact the Jaggaer Service Helpdesk on **0800 069 8630** or e-mail help_UK@jaggaer.com.

In addition to delivering the service scope above, the successful supplier will be required to deliver the following governance and commercial control requirements.

GOVERNANCE

The successful supplier will engage in governance obligations with the Department for Education and other stakeholders. This is likely to include at least monthly Performance reviews. To support engagement in the governance arrangements, the successful supplier will provide information, evidence and data to inform constructive discussion.

DELIVERY INFRASTRUCTURE (INCLUDING IT AND WEBSITE)

The successful supplier will provide and maintain the infrastructure and digital systems needed to administer and deliver the SDC Fund.

The supplier must ensure that their end-to-end service solution is developed in accordance with the UK government's digital service standard, which helps the government provide users with accessible digital services.

Additionally, the supplier must also ensure that digital systems are developed in accordance with the UK government's data protection and security standards and that they secure relevant approvals to operate.

06 COMMERCIAL PRINCIPLES

EXIT MANAGEMENT

The supplier will be required to establish within 3 months of contract award a full plan for exiting the contract, submitting to the Department and to update and maintain that plan throughout the life of the contract. The exit plan will focus on close down of services at the end of the contract period and must also cater for any emergency exit.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY

The supplier will be required to establish, implement and monitor good practice activity to ensure no disruption in service provision, including access to all data derived as part of service delivery. The supplier will be required to prepare, maintain and invoke a business continuity plan for the duration of the contract, on which it will report to the Department.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (INCLUDING KPI'S)

The services will be delivered against a set of Key performance Indicators (KPI's) which will be included in the ITT. The supplier will be required to meet these KPIs, report progress to the Department, and take necessary action to address any performance issues.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The supplier will be required to embed effective risk management processes covering all aspects (including but not exclusively) planning and decision making processes, payment/fraud prevention; payment recovery; compliance; staff recruitment retention, training and also report identified risks/owners and mitigations as part of Operational meetings with the Department.

06 COMMERCIAL PRINCIPLES

COMMERCIAL PRINCIPLES- MARKET ENGAGEMENT INPUT

With this opportunity to move to a new contractual arrangement and a new era of delivery for Support for Families with Disabled Children (SFDC), we are eager to encourage competition and attract a broad range of suppliers.

However, the Department is not liable for this view and bidders should form their own view, taking specialist advice if necessary.

To this end, we are seeking the input of the market on a range of key themes outlined in this section. These key themes and questions are intended to focus your thinking and engagement around a number of commercial approaches under consideration.

We welcome communication prior to the market engagement event on the themes and questions below.

While we will share responses to any questions from supplier, please mark any commercial-in-confidence communication accordingly and we will ensure any information is appropriately anonymised.

As ever with market consultations, we will not be able to meet the demands of all suppliers and there are additional internal considerations related to departmental policy that may require us to make certain decisions.

TUPE

Suppliers are advised that TUPE liability is likely to apply for this opportunity. The incumbent supplier's delivery team of 78 employees are currently based in York. We are currently exploring the possibility of restricting the opportunity to only those suppliers that are able to continue the employment of all 78 employees, ensuring continuity of service for the families the fund supports.

·Would the requirement to transfer of all 78 staff present a barrier to your organisation's interest in this opportunity?

·Would a requirement to operate a physical office within commuting distance of York be a barrier to your organisation's interest in this opportunity?

·If we do not proceed with a mandatory staff transfer, what would be the most attractive approach to the handling of TUPE and related costs for your organisation?

·What would be the most attractive approach to handling any redundancy costs associated with the TUPE transfer for your organisation?

·What would be the most attractive approach to TUPE-related costs in any cost evaluation process?

·What additional information would your organisation require prior to any staff transfer?

06 COMMERCIAL PRINCIPLES

CONTRACT TERM

We are currently assessing the most effective length of contract to offer for provision of this service. Our current recommended route is a three-year contract with a break clause at the end of the second year.

- Would this contract term be attractive to you?
- Would a shorter term be less attractive?
- Would your organisation factor in increased costs in the event of a shorter contract? What would those costs look like?

IMPLEMENTATION/SETUP COSTS

Suppliers are expected to accrue setup costs associated with implementing the service, setting up the project team, strategy and infrastructure necessary for delivery. The Department wishes to ensure that any evaluation of these costs is fair, open and transparent.

- What would be the most attractive approach to the implementation/setup costs in any cost evaluation process?
- Do you anticipate that unfunded implementation/setup costs would be a barrier to your organisation's interest in this opportunity?
- What information would your organisation require to develop an implementation/setup plan?

SPECIFICATION

A draft version of the specification is attached to this supplier pack. This is an iterative document, and we encourage feedback from potential suppliers on its content.

- Do the services set out in the specification appear feasible to your organisation?
- Are there any services or sections that require further detail?
- Does the specification offer sufficient flexibility to your organisation to develop innovative delivery solutions to meet the objectives outlined?
- Are there elements of the specification that you deem overly prescriptive or constraining?
- What additional information is required to enable you to submit a fully costed proposal

CONTACT US

To contact a member of the DfE commercial team prior to the tender go live date please send your query through to the following:

SFDC.PROCUREMENT@EDUCATION.GOV.UK

EMAIL ADDRESS

or

<https://education.app.jaggaer.com/>

E-TENDERING PORTAL