

Invitation to Quote

Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of UK Research & Innovation
Subject: Impact of the Energy Research Programme
Sourcing Reference Number: CR20037

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS)
www.uksbs.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
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Version 3.0

UKSBS
Shared Business Services

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Section 1 – About UK Shared Business Services

Putting the business into shared services

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS) brings a commercial attitude to the public sector; helping our Contracting Authorities improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

It is our vision to become the leading service provider for the 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 Contracting Authorities 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, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) 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.

<https://www.uksbs.co.uk/use/pages/privacy.aspx>

For details on how the Contracting Authority protect and process your personal data please follow the link below:

<https://www.ukri.org/privacy-notice/>

Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority

UK Research and Innovation

Operating across the whole of the UK and with a combined budget of more than £6 billion, UK Research and Innovation represents the largest reform of the research and innovation funding landscape in the last 50 years.

As an independent non-departmental public body UK Research and Innovation brings together the seven Research Councils (AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, STFC) plus Innovate UK and a new organisation, Research England.

UK Research and Innovation ensures the UK maintains its world-leading position in research and innovation. This is done by creating the best environment for research and innovation to flourish.

For more information, please visit: www.ukri.org

Section 3 - Working with the Contracting Authority.

In this section you will find details of your Procurement contact point and the timescales relating to this opportunity.

Section 3 – Contact details		
3.1.	Contracting Authority Name and address	UK Research & Innovation, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, SN2 1FL
3.2.	Buyer name	Karl Oakley
3.3.	Buyer contact details	Research@uksbs.co.uk
3.4.	Estimated value of the Opportunity	£150,000.00 (excluding VAT)
3.5.	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	All correspondence shall be submitted within the Messaging Centre of the e-sourcing. Guidance Notes to support the use of Delta eSourcing is available here. 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.

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6.	Date of Issue of Contract Advert on Contracts Finder	Tuesday, 31 March 2020 Contracts Finder
3.7.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Delta eSourcing messaging system	Wednesday, 15 April 2020 14:00
3.8.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Delta eSourcing Portal	Thursday, 16 April 2020
3.9.	Latest date and time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Delta eSourcing	Monday, 20 April 2020 14:00
3.10.	Date Bidders should be available if clarifications are required	Wednesday, 22 April 2020
3.11.	Anticipated notification date of successful and unsuccessful Bids	Thursday, 30 April 2020
3.12.	Anticipated Contract Award date	Tuesday, 05 May 2020
3.13.	Anticipated Contract Start date	Monday, 11 May 2020
3.14.	Anticipated Contract End date	Friday, 31 July 2020
3.15.	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

• Section 4 – Specification

Background

Brief Description of Requirements

The Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) wishes to commission a study to demonstrate the impact and success of research that EPSRC Energy has funded as part of, and since the inception of the RCUK Energy Programme in 2004 across the full breadth of EPSRC Energy's research and activities. The study should focus on highlighting specific impacts (in Research, Economy, Skills, Society, Environment, and Policy), both in academia and industry, of the investments made by EPSRC Energy since 2004. A key deliverable for this study will be the development of high quality case studies.

Completion Date

The case studies will be delivered by 31st August 2020 with drafts provided to EPSRC for review by 30th July 2020.

The final report will be delivered by 31st August 2020 with a draft provided to EPSRC for review by 30th July 2020.

Background

The RCUK Energy Programme was set up in 2004 to provide funding to UK academic researchers with a focus on energy research across the remit of multiple research councils. This aim has remained following the unification of the research councils into UKRI as of April 2018.

Research within this Programme is spread across the following Research Areas:

- Energy Storage
- Nuclear Fusion
- Nuclear Fission
- Solar
- Offshore Renewable Energy (Marine, Wave, Tidal and Wind)
- Whole Energy Systems
- Energy Networks
- Hydrogen and Alternative Vectors
- Fuel Cell Technology
- End Use Energy Demand
- Bioenergy
- Carbon Capture, Storage and Utilisation

Research and innovation priorities over the last two decades have been driven by the 'Energy Trilemma', which referred to the need for the deployment of solutions for energy security, energy affordability and environmental sustainability. The recent introduction of a net-zero emissions target builds on the foundations of that work. The UK's energy system has seen a rapid growth in the share of low-carbon energy, which accounted for 37% of the electricity mix in 2017: natural gas (41%), nuclear (21%), wind (whose share has increased from 3% in 2010 to 15%), solar (3%),

bioenergy and waste (11%), coal (whose share has decreased from 29% in 2010 to 7%) and hydroelectric power (2%).

Since 2004, the RCUK Energy Programme (of which EPSRC is part) has invested significant sums of money into energy research at UK Universities, with EPSRC alone having committed £1.57bn since 2004 (up to 31st January 2020). The study will need to help show the impact that these investments have made for the UK over the duration of the programme since in 2004. The proposed study is intended to demonstrate academic, industry, environmental, skills and policy impacts from EPSRC Energy investments. The study will provide specific examples of impact in each of the Research Areas in the EPSRC Energy Programme (as detailed above). In addition, the study will be expected to provide a report of a broader set of evidence in key areas where we have attained or maintained international leadership.

Aims and Objectives of the Project

Aims and Objectives

This study will show the impact that EPSRC investment, as part of the RCUK Energy Programme has made since 2004 across all of EPSRC's research areas in Energy through the development of high quality case studies and a report. The study will be expected to provide a minimum of 15 high quality case studies, both bottom up and also led by specific key impacts. The study should provide a wide variety of case studies, of varying formats, to capture the impact of EPSRC's investment in the RCUK Energy Programme across the breadth of EPSRC Energy's specified research areas. **We envisage the use of case studies to demonstrate the wider impacts covering qualitative as well as quantified benefits wherever possible. Case studies should have information that will be useful for different audiences including Treasury/Government, business/investors, and the public.**

In addition, the study will be expected to provide a report of a broader set of evidence in key areas where we have attained or maintained an international place as leaders.

The broader success stories should look to draw from 2-3 of the following areas;

- 1) the retention of capacity and capability in the UK research community as a consequence of continued investment in Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS),
- 2) the UK's place as leaders in Solar Technologies due to discovery and innovation in Perovskite and dye sensitised Photovoltaics,
- 3) our position as leaders in Nuclear Fission in decommissioning waste re-processing,
- 4) the UK's position as international leaders in Offshore Wind.

For these latter case studies, the expectation is that they will be run in a top down fashion, starting at the ultimate impact achieved in that particular area and then linking this backwards to EPSRC investments in these, or related, topics.

It will be important to highlight the investment of business, the development of skills in key growth areas of the economy, and the development and retention of capability and capacity across the UK in these areas as a consequence of these investments. It will also be important to highlight the impact that these investments have made on policy during this period. Furthermore, the study should show how support in key areas of energy research have enabled the UK to attain or maintain our position as a global leader in that area.

The study is expected to capture the impact of the programme's investments on the following areas:

- Research (for example; value of these investments to research advancement, competitiveness, collaborations, efficiency and type and quality of research outputs – this will not include a bibliometric analysis of Energy publications),
- Economy (for example; return on investment through assessing the value of research and research led innovations to the UK economy),
- Skills (for example; value of training a highly skilled technical and analytical workforce across career stages),
- Society (for example; finding ways to address the different societal challenges),
- Environment (for example understanding and mitigating climate change, the environmental impacts of current and future energy generation technologies etc.) and
- Policy (for example; the legal commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2050).

EPSRC wishes to demonstrate the contribution that its investments in Energy Research via the RCUK Energy Programme have made to the advancement of research, research led innovations and skills and the value of the socio-economic benefits enabled by these investments. In particular, the study wants to determine the impact on advancement and competitiveness of research and research led innovations alongside the value that it brings in terms of training highly skilled people for the economy and its benefit to wider communities that benefit from research.

The evidence and information gathered through this study will inform decisions on future investments and provide crucial evidence to support continued investments in Energy Research. The study should establish what impact the programme has made as a result of its investments since 2004.

Key Evaluation Questions

The key questions the study will answer are:

- What are the scientific, economic, societal, environmental and policy impacts of EPSRC's investments via the RCUK Energy Programme?
- How have these investments enabled the UK to attain or maintain a leadership position internationally in key research areas?
- What quantifiable benefits have these investments had?

In order to answer this question, we would like the study to gather qualitative and quantitative data for the following:

Impact on Research

What has the impact of our investments been on research, for example:

- What technical and scientific advances has EPSRC funding in Energy enabled?

- What effect has the funding had on the research landscape, for example facilitating collaborations between disciplines?
- What impact has this investment had on national and international collaboration?
- What impact has this investment had on training across different career stages in academia?

Economic Impact

What has the overall economic impact of our investments been, for example:

- What additional contributions have been leveraged through EPSRC funding and from which sources? Has this contributed to any direct foreign investment, and if so in what areas?
- Which sectors have benefitted from the research enabled by EPSRC funding?
- What effects has this investment had on regional growth, local economies and jobs? How does the UK compare internationally as a result of this?
- What evidence is there that EPSRC-funded research and training has led to business benefits, for example via cost savings, increased turnover, imports and exports?
- What impact has EPSRC-funded research and training had on innovation, for example, spin-offs, development of innovation clusters, use by business for innovation etc.?

Skills Impact

What has the impact of the Energy Programme been on developing skills for the future in the energy sector, for example:

- How has EPSRC funding contributed to skills training, for example for PhD students, technicians, and other?
- What tangible impact has this had on industry in areas of growth for the UK economy?

Social and Policy Impact

What Social and Policy impacts has investment in the Energy Programme led to, for example:

- How has EPSRC funding helped address key societal challenges?
- What policy impacts has this funding had to facilitate the addressing of these challenges?

Out of Scope

The study is bound by investments made by EPSRC in support of the RCUK Energy Programme since the inception of the programme in 2004. The study should not include investments that are primarily led (more than 50% funding) by the other research councils that form UKRI, or Innovate UK. Nor should any investments made prior to the inception of the programme be included. All grants included in the accompanying data set that will be provided to the successful consultancy by EPSRC will be within this bracket of >50% EPSRC funding and after the inception of the Energy Programme and so are relevant to the study. The study should also include data and impacts from EPSRC investments that have supported the objectives of the Energy Programme beyond schemes administered specifically by the programme itself (i.e. outputs as a result of an accelerating impact account).

The study is restricted to impacts that are for the betterment of the UK. While these can have additional further impacts beyond the UK itself, the information provided will need to give evidence for what benefit these investments have had for UK academics, businesses and the public. Funding provided via NPIF (including Industrial Strategy Challenge Funding – ISCF) will be

specifically OUT OF SCOPE of this review. There is not expected to be any bibliometric study undertaken as part of this study as EPSRC already holds this data and so this will specifically be out of scope.

*Note: We are not expecting this study to perform an analysis of number and impact of publications arising from research in Energy as a bibliometric analysis is not part of this study.

Data and other information provided by EPSRC to help the study

The following data and information will be made available to assist the study and it is expected that an analysis of this data will be provided as part of the report:

- List of all grants funded by Energy since 2004 including; Grant Reference Number, Project Title, Principal Investigator, Scheme, Start date, End date, Value and, where possible, Research Area.
- Industrial partners for each of the above grants.
- A list of outputs from these grants (publications, patents, spin outs etc.) collected from Research Fish.
- Data from Grants on the web (<https://epsrc.ukri.org/links/gow-links/grants-on-the-web-gow/>), and Gateway to research (<http://gtr.ukri.org/>)
- List of grants against which we already have comprehensive case studies and so are not worth pursuing.
- A list of useful contacts (this is not in any way expected to be exhaustive but will be a starting point to allow a fast start for the successful consultancy).
- Indicators on areas where we believe good top-down impact-led case studies can be developed.

It will be expected that any additional data collection will take account of what is already available and be designed to minimise additional burden on researchers.

Suggested Methodology

The bidder is expected to propose methodologies and plans of how they are going to progress and deliver this study addressing the challenges of research impact assessment. However, we would expect a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods including surveys, interviews and subsequent analysis to contribute towards producing a minimum of 15 case studies (at least one for each of EPSRC's research areas and a minimum of 2 top down, impact led studies). The information from these case studies will be used to tie in to the overarching story of the impact the Programme has had that will be explained in the report.

The study should clearly outline any assumptions that are used on any estimation, these might include measures of deadweight, spill overs and leakages where possible. We would like to see these considerations in the proposal. Given the nature of the study there will be an expectation of relying on estimates drawn from the wider literature, the expectation is that proposals would highlight why these are the best and represent robust estimates in order to help the study draw quantifiable conclusions. Additionally, the bidder should consider the challenges and limitations for the evaluation and propose measures to address these where it is feasible. Finally, an indication of how the bidder intends to manage this project in light of the current COVID-19 outbreak and the risk this presents to the project is expected.

Interaction with successful bidder

We expect the successful bidder to work closely with EPSRC to develop the approaches and methods by which the questions proposed in the study could be answered. Regular updates should be provided to the EPSRC project management team through fortnightly phone/email updates: these should include access to topic guides and other research material used to gather primary information.

Updates and deliverables should include, but not be limited to, datasets gathered as a result of the exercise, development of case studies and any other qualitative outputs generated, contact with appropriate stakeholders, progress against delivery and spend to date and a report summarising the findings and the underlying basis on which these findings have been derived.

Any issues should be raised promptly with EPSRC.

Deliverables

A draft report based on study findings and examples case studies by 30th July 2020.

All deliverables due by 31st August 2020:

- A final report based on study findings agreed by EPSRC.
- A minimum set of 15 case studies depicting the academic, economic, environmental, social, and political impacts of EPSRC Energy investment agreed by EPSRC.
- Datasets gathered as a result of the exercise.
- Other qualitative outputs generated.
- An explanation of the methodology used for any ROI calculations.
- Any model or modelling tools used to estimate economic impacts.

The outputs of this study are expected to be a report containing a wealth of qualitative and quantitative evidence to highlight the impact of EPSRC funding in the RCUK Energy Programme. Robust evidence should be provided with linkages to specific past investments to help with future bids. In addition, retention or building of capacity and capability in key areas that have enabled the UK to hold a leadership position internationally should be highlighted.

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

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

Where a question is 'for information only' it will not be scored.

The evaluation team may comprise staff from UK SBS and the Contracting Authority and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems required.

The evaluation and if required team may comprise staff from UK SBS and the Contracting Authority and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems required. After evaluation and if required moderation scores will be finalised by performing a calculation to identify (at question level) the mean average of all evaluators (Example – a question is scored by three evaluators and judged as scoring 5, 5 and 6. These scores will be added together and divided by the number of evaluators to produce the final score of 5.33 ($5+5+6 = 16 \div 3 = 5.33$))

Pass / Fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	SEL1.2	Employment breaches/ Equality
Commercial	SEL1.3	Compliance to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act
Commercial	SEL2.10	Cyber Essentials
Commercial	SEL2.12	General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Act and the Data Protection Act 2018
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	AW4.1	Compliance to the Contract Terms
Commercial	AW4.2	Changes to the Contract Terms
Commercial	AW4.3	Non Disclosure Agreement
Price	AW5.1	Maximum Budget
Price	AW5.4	E Invoicing
Price	AW5.5	Implementation of E-Invoicing
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Quality	AW6.2	Variable Bids
Quality	PROJ1.6	Capacity
-	-	Invitation to Quote – received on time within e-sourcing tool
	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 any of the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria.	

Scoring criteria

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 ITQ. The Contracting Authority considers these weightings to be in line with existing best practice for a requirement of this type.

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2	Price	20%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Approach	40%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Staff to Deliver	10%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Understanding the Environment	20%
Quality	PROJ1.4	Project Plan and Timescales	10%

Evaluation of criteria

Non-Price elements

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

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

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

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

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 selection 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. Please be aware that there may be multiple evaluators. If so, their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score as follows:

Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60
 Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 60
 Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 40
 Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 40
 Your final score will $(60+60+40+40) \div 4 = 50$

Price elements will be judged on the following criteria.

The lowest price for a response which meets the pass criteria shall score 100. All other bids shall be scored on a pro rata basis in relation to the lowest price. The score is then subject to a multiplier to reflect the percentage value of the price criterion.

For example - Bid 1 £100,000 scores 100.
 Bid 2 £120,000 differential of £20,000 or 20% remove 20% from price scores 80
 Bid 3 £150,000 differential £50,000 remove 50% from price scores 50.
 Bid 4 £175,000 differential £75,000 remove 75% from price scores 25.
 Bid 5 £200,000 differential £100,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.
 Bid 6 £300,000 differential £200,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.
 Where the scoring criterion is worth 50% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 50.

In the example if a supplier scores 80 from the available 100 points this will equate to 40% by using the following calculation: Score/Total Points multiplied by 50 $(80/100 \times 50 = 40)$

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

Section 6 – Evaluation questionnaire

Bidders should note that the evaluation questionnaire is located within the **e-sourcing questionnaire**.

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

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 7 – General Information

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

DO:

- 7.1 Do comply with Procurement document instructions. Failure to do so may lead to disqualification.
- 7.2 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 ITQ 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
- 7.3 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.
- 7.4 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.
- 7.5 Do ensure you utilise the Delta eSourcing messaging system to raise any clarifications to our ITQ. 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
- 7.6 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.
- 7.7 Do consider who the Contracting Authority is and what they want – a generic answer does not necessarily meet every Contracting Authority's needs.
- 7.8 Do reference your documents correctly, specifically where supporting documentation is requested e.g. referencing the question/s they apply to.
- 7.9 Do provide clear, concise and ideally generic contact details; telephone numbers, e-mails and fax details.
- 7.10 Do complete all questions in the questionnaire or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.11 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.
- 7.12 Do check and recheck your Bid before dispatch.

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

DO NOT

- 7.13 Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.14 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.
- 7.15 Do not share the Procurement documents, they are confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission.
- 7.16 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.
- 7.17 Do not contact any UK SBS staff or the Contracting Authority staff without the Buyers written permission or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.18 Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will reject your Bid.
- 7.19 Do not offer UK SBS or the Contracting Authority staff any inducement or we will reject your Bid.
- 7.20 Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed.
- 7.21 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 Do not exceed word counts, the additional words will not be considered.
- 7.23 Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.24 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 e-sourcing tool. Responses received by any other method than requested will not be considered for the opportunity.

Some additional guidance notes

- 7.25 All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool must be submitted to Delta eSourcing, Telephone 0845 270 7050
- 7.26 Bidders will be specifically advised where attachments are permissible to support a question response within the e-sourcing tool. Where they are not permissible any attachments submitted will not be considered as part of the evaluation process.
- 7.27 Question numbering is not sequential and all questions which require submission are included in the Section 6 Evaluation Questionnaire.
- 7.28 Any Contract offered may not guarantee any volume of work or any exclusivity of supply.
- 7.29 We do not guarantee to award any Contract as a result of this procurement
- 7.30 All documents issued or received in relation to this procurement shall be the property of the Contracting Authority / UKSBS.
- 7.31 We can amend any part of the procurement documents at any time prior to the latest date / time Bids shall be submitted through the Delta eSourcing Portal.
- 7.32 If you are a Consortium you must provide details of the Consortiums structure.
- 7.33 Bidders will be expected to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.34 Bidders should note the Government's transparency agenda requires your Bid and any Contract entered into to be published on a designated, publicly searchable web site. By submitting a response to this ITQ Bidders are agreeing that their Bid and Contract may be made public
- 7.35 Your bid will be valid for 60 days or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.36 Bidders may only amend the contract terms during the clarification period only, only if you can demonstrate there is a legal or statutory reason why you cannot accept them. If you request changes to the Contract terms without such grounds and the Contracting Authority fail to accept your legal or statutory reason is reasonably justified, we may reject your Bid.
- 7.37 We will let you know the outcome of your Bid evaluation and where requested will provide a written debrief of the relative strengths and weaknesses of your Bid.
- 7.38 If you fail mandatory pass / fail criteria we will reject your Bid.
- 7.39 Bidders are required to use IE8, IE9, Chrome or Firefox in order to access the functionality of the Delta eSourcing Portal.
- 7.40 Bidders should note that if they are successful with their proposal the Contracting Authority reserves the right to ask additional compliancy checks prior to the award of

any Contract. In the event of a Bidder failing to meet one of the compliancy checks the Contracting Authority may decline to proceed with the award of the Contract to the successful Bidder.

- 7.41 All timescales are set using a 24-hour clock and are based on British Summer Time or Greenwich Mean Time, depending on which applies at the point when Date and Time Bids shall be submitted through the Delta eSourcing Portal.
- 7.42 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. The information will not be disclosed outside Government. Bidders taking part in this ITQ consent to these terms as part of the competition process.

- 7.43 The Government introduced its new Government Security Classifications (GSC) classification scheme on the 2nd April 2014 to replace the current Government Protective Marking System (GPMS). A key aspect of this is the reduction in the number of security classifications used. All Bidders are encouraged to make themselves aware of the changes and identify any potential impacts in their Bid, as the protective marking and applicable protection of any material passed to, or generated by, you during the procurement process or pursuant to any Contract awarded to you as a result of this tender process will be subject to the new GSC. The link below to the Gov.uk website provides information on the new GSC:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-security-classifications>

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft contract accompanying this ITQ to reflect any changes introduced by the GSC. In particular where this ITQ 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](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)