



Invitation to Quote

Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)

Subject UK SBS Professional Doctorates: research to understand demand for and the characteristics of the range of professional doctorates in English higher education

Sourcing reference number CR150006HEFCE

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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 customers improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

It is our vision to become the leading provider for our customers 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 customers. 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 its customers, 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 Service (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 Customers, our growth projections anticipate this will rise to £1bn in 2013/14.

Our Customers who have access to our services and Contracts are detailed [here](#).

Our achievements

In 2012/13 the Company grew in turnover from £44.7m to £52.4m, within that growth we:

- Reduced the Research Councils' 'back office' expenditure from £32m to £31.3m
- Saved £33m for the Research Councils in verified procurement savings, being greater than the entire cost of the services we provided to them
- Grew our customers from 7 to 22 (this will likely grow by a further 10 in 2013/14)
- Grew our customer base from 11,000 to 18,000 and will likely expand to 23,000+ in 2013/14
- Achieved an annual spend with SMEs that stands out across Central Government as a leading light at 32% (that's over £104.5M) against the 25% Government target

Our Procurement ambition

Our vision is to be recognised as a centre of excellence and deliver a broad range of procurement services across the public sector; to maintain and grow a procurement service unrivalled in public sector.

Procurement is a market-shaping function. Industry derived benchmarks indicate that UK SBS is already performing at or above “best in class” in at least three key measures (percentage savings, compliant spend, spend under management) and compare well against most other measures.

Over the next five years, it is the function’s ambition to lead a cultural change in procurement in the public sector. The natural extension of category management is to bring about a fundamental change in the attitude to supplier relationship management.

Our philosophy sees the supplier as an asset to the business and the route to maximising value from supply. This is not a new concept in procurement generally, but it is not a philosophy which is widely employed in the public sector.

We are ideally positioned to “lead the charge” in the government’s initiative to reform procurement in the public sector.

UK SBS Procurement’s unique selling points are:

- Focus on the full procurement cycle
- Leaders in category management in common and specialised areas
- Expertise in the delivery of major commercial projects
- That we are leaders in procurement to support research
- Use of cutting edge technologies which are superior to those used generally used across the public sector.
- Use of market leading analytical tools to provide comprehensive Business Intelligence
- Active customer and supplier management

‘UK SBS’ contribution to the Government Procurement Agenda has been impressive. Through innovation and leadership UK SBS has built an attractive portfolio of procurement services from P2P to Strategy Category Management.’

John Collington

Former Government Chief Procurement Officer

Section 2 – About Our Customer

Higher Education Funding Council for England

HEFCE distributes public money to higher education institutions in England and ensures that this money is used to deliver the greatest benefits to students and the wider public.

In 2014-15 HEFCE directly funded 130 universities and higher education colleges and 212 further education colleges. The funding is used to support institutions' teaching, research, knowledge exchange and related activities. This includes research and activity to ensure that everyone with the potential to benefit from higher education has the chance to do so.

To ensure that this money is being used appropriately, HEFCE:

- monitors the institutions' financial and managerial health
- ensures that the quality of teaching is assessed
- organises the assessment of research quality with the other UK funding bodies.

2013 Survey of Higher Education Institutions and other Stakeholders

An independent survey has shown further improvements in our communication and relations with stakeholders.

The survey, carried out by Pye Tait Consulting between July and October 2013, found that HEFCE is considered by its stakeholders to be highly respected, trusted and approachable. Eighty per cent are satisfied with their relationship with HEFCE – an overall improvement since previous surveys were undertaken in 2009 and 2007.

HEFCE is using the survey results to further improve its relations, operations and services.

Further information can be found at: <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/>

Section 3 - Working with UK Shared Business Services Ltd.

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	Customer Name and address	Northavon House, Coldharbour Lane BRISTOL BS16 1QD tel 0117 931 7317 fax 0117 931 7203
3.2	Buyer name	UK Shared Business Services
3.3	Buyer contact details	research@uksbs.co.uk
3.4	Estimated value of the Opportunity	£33,333 to £43,333 (excluding VAT)
3.5	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	All correspondence shall be submitted within the Emptoris e-sourcing tool. Guidance Notes to support the use of Emptoris 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 and location of original Advert	27/02/2015 Contracts Finder
3.7	Latest date/time ITQ clarification questions should be received through Emptoris messaging system	04/03/2015 14.00
3.8	Latest date/time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all potential Bidders by the Buyer through Emptoris	06/03/2015 14.00
3.9	Latest date/time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Emptoris	11/03/2015 14.00
3.10	Date/time Bidders should be available if interviews are required	18/03/2015
3.11	Anticipated rejection of unsuccessful Bids date	20/03/2015 14.00
3.12	Anticipated Award date	23/03/2015
3.13	Anticipated Contract Start date	30/03/2015
3.14	Anticipated Contract End date	10/10/2015
3.15	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

Section 4 – Specification

Summary

This document invites tenders to undertake a study to understand the demand for and characteristics of the range of professional doctorates in English higher education. The commissioned research will involve qualitative research with stakeholder representatives as well as samples from three interlinked interest groups: HEIs, students and employers. Researchers will also work with HEFCE to collect and evaluate quantitative data on professional doctorates, to better understand the profile of this diverse group of students at the national level. The primary output will be a written report to HEFCE, though we will work closely with the project team throughout and will require regular updates on progress and findings. Results will feed into the Council's wider, cross-cutting theme on postgraduate funding and will inform our work on vocational and technical skills in HE, and beyond, including providing evidence for the 2015 Spending Review.

Introduction

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) promotes and funds high quality, cost-effective teaching and research, meeting the diverse needs of students, the economy and society.

HEFCE was established in June 1992 under the terms of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 as a non-departmental public body operating within a policy and funding context set by the Government and assumed responsibility for funding higher education in England on 1 April 1993. Our main role is to allocate funding from the Government to universities and colleges. The range of institutional activities that this money supports and our current policies in each area can be found on our website: <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/>

Within its remit, the Council aims to develop and sustain a dynamic and internationally competitive research sector that makes a major contribution to economic prosperity, national wellbeing and the expansion and dissemination of knowledge. HEFCE's role is crucial as the major funder of HE research in England. In 2014/15, HEFCE allocated £1,573 million of recurrent research funding and £286 million of research capital funding. We are committed to maintaining the health of research within the HE sector through supporting research careers, including through provision of funding to help universities and colleges meet the costs of supervising research careers, including postgraduate research. Further information on our cross-cutting theme on postgraduate policy and funding can be found at: <http://www.hefec.ac.uk/whatwedo/crosscutting/pg/>.

Professional Doctorates

4. A professional doctorate (PD) is a programme of advanced study and research which satisfies the university criteria for the award of doctorate, is designed to meet the specific needs of a professional group external to the university and develops the capability of individuals to work

within a professional context. PDs are highly structured research awards, which support the acquisition and embedding of generic and practice-related skills, focused on the perceived needs of professionals conducting research in their domain.

5. There is a proliferation of titles and variation in nomenclature for individual PD programmes, with similar awards at different HEIs conferring different titles. PDs currently are available across a wide range of academic disciplines, including engineering, education, psychology and business administration, and are likely to expand into other fields in due course

6. HEFCE is committed to better understanding postgraduate research. During spring 2015, we will begin a focussed evidence gathering exercise, to fill gaps in the evidence base and to seek sector views on how future postgraduate research and funding should be focussed from 2016-17.

7. This tendered project will be part of this package of activities as there is a dearth of evidence regarding professional doctorates, including very limited information on the number of PD programmes being offered by English universities.

8. In 2011, the UKCGE commissioned research to better understand the PD and its role in HE, but this has not been updated or expanded upon subsequently.¹ There is a keen interest to understand the supply and demand for professional doctorates, their impact in the workplace, and thereby their contribution to the economy and society. A recent HEFCE funded study on 'Understanding the recruitment and selection of postgraduate researchers by English higher education institutions' also recommended undertaking further research on Professional Doctorates.² As a matter of urgency, we need to understand how PDs relate to other levels of vocational and technical education and their potential contribution to Government policy in this area. We also know that employers are seeking the highest levels of skills and knowledge to drive innovation and productivity in their businesses, and professional doctorates make an important contribution to this. We are active in improving our understanding with regard to undergraduate and taught postgraduate levels of provision, and this is the next step.

9. For the reasons stated above, we wish to commission an analysis of the demand for and characteristics of PD programmes, focussing on three interlinked interest groups: HEIs, students and employers. The research will:

- Explore the focus of professional doctorates, the skills and attributes they are seeking to develop, and the premium they may provide to: (1) graduates in different professions; (2) HEIs; (3) employers

¹ [http://www.ukcge.ac.uk/pdf/Professional%20Doctorates%20in%20the%20UK%20\(2011\).pdf](http://www.ukcge.ac.uk/pdf/Professional%20Doctorates%20in%20the%20UK%20(2011).pdf)

² <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/2014/pgrrcruitment/>

- Examine different models of PDs; how have they evolved? Are new and/or revised models being developed by HEIs/employers, and if so why?
- Explore potential overlaps between PDs and other postgraduate programmes, such as PhDs that are part of structured cohorts. We will also investigate the extent to which characteristics traditionally associated with professional doctorates can or may be influencing the structures or expectations associated with other forms of doctoral study.
- Look at the role of PDs in relation to the acquisition of skills, advanced knowledge and specialist expertise, exploring how these elements have been designed into curricula.
- Examine how the research components of PDs fit within these degrees across the diverse types of PD on offer, for instance Eng-Ds versus others.
- Explore what is influencing the choices that are driving this provision and the contribution curricula make to addressing known advanced skills gaps and the needs of participating employers

Research questions

The contractor should design and implement a research study to address the following issues and questions, which are of relevance to all three interlinked interest groups: HEIs, students and employers. Where appropriate, we will encourage contractors to build on the CRAC/Vitae project to frame questions.³ Some of the examples noted below were included in this earlier study. We will also expect the tenderer to suggest questions to us that might need to be examined in the work and/or may arise from the information gathered, as deemed appropriate

1. What are the characteristics of Professional Doctorates in English HEIs? In particular:

- a. What is the balance of taught, practice-based and research elements within professional doctorate programmes?
- b. Duration of courses and length of respective taught and research element phases
- c. What are the differences between disciplines and HEIs?
- d. What are the differences between PDs and other research-based qualifications at this level?
- e. What are the differences between PDs and other postgraduate programmes, e.g. cohort based postgraduate training offers.

2. Who studies for a Professional Doctorate and why?

- a. Anecdotal evidence suggests that candidates pursuing a professional doctorate fall into two broad groups; the first are at an early stage of their career, primarily seeking specialist research training and/or advanced methodologies for application in their work e.g. DClinPsy. The second group includes people at a later point in their career trajectory who are seeking Continuing Professional Development in an advanced research-based context. This study will

³ <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/2014/pgrrcruitment/>

look at the full breadth of the PD population, exploring their educational and employment backgrounds, and their motivations for study.

- b. Collection of profile data against key factors, e.g. gender, ethnicity, age, socio-economic status, prior qualification; NB we would work with the contractor to collect and analyse HESA datasets along these lines during the course of the project
- c. How are PD candidates recruited by HEIs and what motivates them to offer these qualifications? What do HEIs look for in prospective PD students in terms of academic attainment, broader research skills and work experience? What are the constraints that HEIs face in recruiting PD students? What role do employers play?

3. How are PDs recorded and reported? NB where appropriate, we would work with the contractor to collect and analyse HESA datasets along these lines

- a. How are professional doctorates recorded and reported to HESA?
- b. How many students graduate from professional doctorate programmes each year, from which HEIs, and which disciplines
- c. Completion rates

4. Funding

- a. Exploration of the various funding mechanisms in operation to support professional doctorates; how do these work and whether these are appropriate
- b. What role does finance play for different groups of candidates in different subjects and HEIs

5. What role do professional doctorates play in current and future HEI strategies for research, knowledge exchange and postgraduate training?

- a. How do HEIs integrate PD students within their research base, and to what extent are employers involved in this process?
- b. What aspirations do HEIs have to increase PD numbers or utilise the research and skills expertise they develop?
- c. Potential plans to diversify PD offers, for instance into new subject areas

6. How coherently do PDs fit within an overall pattern of vocational and technical provision at all levels of education?

7. What evidence is there to understand whether professional doctorates meet the needs of candidates HEIs and employers in terms of:

- a. The level of employer engagement and influence, e.g. for choice/focus of projects
- b. Current guidance provided to candidates, HEIs and employers on PDs
- c. Candidate experience during the course of study
- d. The quality of research and training outcomes associated with PDs, including an exploration of:
 - i. The impacts of PDs on employers, in terms of skills, expertise and knowledge gained
 - ii. Impacts on future career progression after graduation
 - iii. Outputs, e.g. publications entered to the REF

Scope

Quantitative and qualitative methods should be employed within this research project. We would expect the contractor to propose a suitable methodology and sampling strategy to enable a thorough investigation of the pertinent issues with each of the three interest groups identified, with the core foci being HEIs and current candidates. We anticipate that the sample for past students and employers will be more modest, and would be more likely to include a higher proportion of telephone interviews. We also suggest that a small number of targeted in-depth interviews are undertaken with senior representatives employed by key stakeholders in the PD field. We envisage that a project would probably include elements of work as outlined in the table below:

Stage	Description of key activities likely to commence in each fieldwork stage
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rapid knowledge review stage• Identification of sample HEIs and stakeholders
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Working with HEFCE to interrogate the HESA data records in relation to PDs• Qualitative work with HEIs, involving in-depth interviews with key senior staff as well as focus groups with: (1) Academic staff involved with the recruitment and supervision of PDs; (2) <u>Current</u> PD students• Working with HEIs and students to identify employer sample for stage 3• Working with HEIs to identify <u>past</u> PD students• Stakeholder dialogues; in-depth interviews with senior representatives employed by key stakeholders in the PD field
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Qualitative research , e.g. telephone in-depth interviews with employers involved with PD degrees with a range of employers• Qualitative research e.g. telephone in-depth interviews with students who undertook PDs at the above HEIs; ideally including some students that failed to complete,

Tenderers will need to decide how to best focus the research in order to achieve the desired outcomes within the time available. For example, working with the existing literature and evidence, as well as undertaking research with staff at targeted HEIs, students, employers and other organisations. The research will need to gather sufficiently representative views to secure robust results.

We are keen to work closely with the contractor and, as a minimum, regular (at least fortnightly) progress updates should be built into the project plan during the period of fieldwork.

In addition, written deliverables will include: (1) an initial findings presentation and associated document to feed into the PGR evidence gathering exercise noted in para 6; (2) a final project report. The latter would outline the findings of the research, drawing conclusions where

appropriate, as well as scoping out any further research needed to identify potential areas of future work. Results will feed into the Council’s wider, cross-cutting theme on postgraduate funding and will inform our work on vocational and technical skills in HE, and beyond, including providing evidence for the 2015 Spending Review. Research findings will also feed into policy development, relevant to Policy and REKE Directorates, and may provide a platform for further research and data collection/analysis.

Timetable

Start of project	Early April 2015
Interim findings produced (presentation and document) to feed into the on-going PGR consultation exercise and evidence for spending review	July 2015
Draft final report due	Early September 2015
Final report due	Early October 2015

Pricing

Requirements for costing tenders are provided in other, tender documents.

Invoices should be submitted based on the following profile

Percentage of contract value	Timing
30%	Following first steering group meeting
30%	On delivery of interim findings in July 2015
20%	On delivery of the draft report in early September 2015
20%	On delivery of the final report in early October 2015

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.

To maintain a high degree of rigour in the evaluation of your bid, a process of moderation will be undertaken to ensure consistency by all evaluators.

After moderation the 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 ($5+5+6=16\div3=5.33$))

Pass / fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information Exemptions
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	AW4.1	Contract Terms including Non-Disclosure Agreement
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance with the stated tender requirements
Quality	AW6.2	Ability to meet the timing schedule

Scoring criteria

Evaluation Justification Statement

In consideration of this particular requirement UK SBS has decided to evaluate Potential Providers by adopting the weightings/scoring mechanism detailed within this ITQ. UK SBS 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	15.00%
Quality	AW6.3	Proposed methodology	25.50%
Quality	SEL1.2	Evidence of your track record	8.50%
Quality	AW6.4	Project plan for the study including detailed timetable	8.50%
Quality	AW6.5	Resource (including CV's)	4.25%
Quality	AW6.6	A risk assessment	4.25%
Quality	AW6.7	Value for money	4.25%
Quality	AW6.8	Performance at Interview	29.75%

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: Score/Total Points available multiplied by 20 ($60/100 \times 20 = 12$)

Where an evaluation criterion is worth 10% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 10.

Example if a Bidder scores 60 from the available 100 points this will equate to 6% by using the following calculation: Score/Total Points available multiplied by 10 ($60/100 \times 10 = 6$)

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.
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10	Extremely poor response – they have completely missed the point of the question.
20 or 30	Very poor response and not wholly acceptable. Requires major revision to the proposal to make it acceptable. Only partially answers the requirement, with major deficiencies and little relevant detail proposed.
40 or 50	Poor response only partially acceptable with deficiencies apparent. Some useful evidence provided but response falls well short of providing full confidence in the approach / solution described. Low probability of success.
60 or 70	Response is acceptable but remains basic and could have been expanded upon. Response is sufficient but does not inspire. Good probability of success, weaknesses can be readily corrected.
80 or 90	Good response which describes in detail an approach / solution which provides high levels of assurance consistent with a quality provider. Great probability of success, no significant weaknesses noted.
100	Excellent response – comprehensive and useful, demonstrating a detailed understanding of the requirement. High probability of success, no weaknesses noted. The response includes a full description of techniques and measurements to be employed, providing full assurance consistent with a quality provider.

Please be aware that the final score returned may be different as there will be multiple evaluators and their individual scores after a moderation process will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score.

Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 50

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 50

Your final score will $(60+60+50+50) \div 4 = 55$

Price elements will be judged on the following criteria.

The median score of the bids is calculated. This represents what would score exactly half of the available score. The other bids shall be scored by their difference from the median bid value being calculated as a percentage and this percentage being added or removed from the median score. For example if the available score is 50 and the bids we receive are £8100, £9000 and £10800.

- The median score £9000 is awarded half of the available score, so scores 25.
- £8100 is 10% cheaper than the median score so receives 10% more of the available score, so scores 30%
- £10800 is 20% more expensive than the median score so receives 20% less of the available score, so scores 15%

The highest possible score is 100. The lowest possible score is 0.

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.uksbs.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.
- 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 Emptoris messaging system to raise any clarifications to our ITQ. You should note that typically 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 your customer is and what they want – a generic answer does not necessarily meet every customer'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 and concise 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 check and recheck your Bid before dispatch.

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

DO NOT

- 7.12 Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.13 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.
- 7.14 Do not share the Procurement documents, they are confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission.
- 7.15 Do not seek to influence the procurement process by requesting meetings or contacting UK SBS or the Customer to discuss your Bid. If your Bid requires clarification the Buyer will contact you.
- 7.16 Do not contact any UK SBS staff or Customer staff without the Buyers written permission or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.17 Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will reject your Bid.
- 7.18 Do not offer UK SBS or Customer staff any inducement or we will reject your Bid.
- 7.19 Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed.
- 7.20 Do not cross reference answers to external websites or other parts of your Bid, the cross references and website links will not be considered.
- 7.21 Do not exceed word counts, the additional words will not be considered.
- 7.22 Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be rejected.

Some additional guidance notes

- 7.23 All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool may be submitted to Crown Commercial Service (previously Government Procurement Service), Telephone 0345 010 3503.
- 7.24 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.
- 7.25 Question numbering is not sequential and all questions which require submission are included in the Section 6 Evaluation Questionnaire.
- 7.26 Any Contract offered may not guarantee any volume of work or any exclusivity of supply.
- 7.27 We do not guarantee to award any Contract as a result of this procurement
- 7.28 All documents issued or received in relation to this procurement shall be the property of UK SBS.
- 7.29 We can amend any part of the procurement documents at any time prior to the latest date / time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.30 If you are a Consortium you must provide details of the Consortiums structure.
- 7.31 Bidders will be expected to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.32 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
- 7.33 Your bid will be valid for 60 days or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.34 Bidders may only amend the Contract terms if you can demonstrate there is a legal or statutory reason why you cannot accept them. If you request changes to the Contract and UK SBS fail to accept your legal or statutory reason is reasonably justified we may reject your Bid.
- 7.35 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.
- 7.36 If you fail mandatory pass / fail criteria we will reject your Bid.
- 7.37 Bidders are required to use IE8, IE9, Chrome or Firefox in order to access the functionality of the Emptoris e-sourcing tool.

- 7.38 Bidders should note that if they are successful with their proposal UK SBS 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 UK SBS may decline to proceed with the award of the Contract to the successful Bidder.
- 7.39 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 Emptoris.
- 7.40 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, UK SBS 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 UK SBS 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.

- 7.41 From 2nd April 2014 the Government is introducing its new Government Security Classifications (GSC) classification scheme 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 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>

UK SBS 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

- [Emptoris Training Guide](#)
- [Emptoris e-sourcing tool](#)
- [Contracts Finder](#)
- [Tenders Electronic Daily](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)