

Invitation to Quote

**Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of Natural Environment
Research Council**

Subject Landowner Permissions for Scientific Sampling Visits

Sourcing reference number PS17147

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS)
www.uksbs.co.uk

Registered in England and Wales as a limited company. Company Number 6330639.
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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 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, 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 Customers.

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

Section 2 – About Our Customer

NERC is the UK's main agency for funding and managing research, training and knowledge exchange in the environmental sciences.

NERC's work covers the full range of atmospheric, Earth, biological, terrestrial and aquatic science, from the deep oceans to the upper atmosphere and from the poles to the equator.

The organisation coordinates some of the world's most exciting research projects, tackling major issues such as climate change, environmental influences on human health, the genetic make-up of life on Earth, and much more.

Working internationally, NERC have bases at some of the most hostile places on the planet; running a fleet of research ships and aircraft and investing in satellite technology to monitor gradual environmental change on a global scale. NERC provide forewarning of, and solutions to, the key environmental challenges facing society.

Examples of funded research

- Showing the importance of mature tropical forests to the global climate.
- Developing a safer and cleaner way to mine gold by reducing the use of mercury.
- Studying the hole in the ozone layer - discovered by our British Antarctic Survey - and monitoring climate change.
- Playing a major role in the International Census of Marine Life that monitors our oceans.

NERC also runs six organisations of world renown:

- British Antarctic Survey, in Cambridge.
- British Geological Survey, in Nottingham.
- National Oceanography Centre, in Southampton.
- Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, in Oxfordshire.
- National Centre for Atmospheric Science, in Leeds.
- National Centre for Earth Observation, Swindon.

www.nerc.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	Natural Environment Research Council
3.2	Buyer name	Chloe Smith
3.3	Buyer contact details	Professionalservices@uksbs.co.uk 01793 867005
3.4	Estimated value of the Opportunity	£40,000 total contract value over a four year period. Initial contract period of 12 months with an option to extend for 3 further periods of up to one year. Annual Contract value of £10,000.00.
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	06/07/2017 Contracts Finder
3.7	Latest date/time ITQ clarification questions should be received through Emptoris messaging system	13/07/2017 11.00
3.8	Latest date/time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all potential Bidders by the Buyer through Emptoris	14/07/2017 14.00
3.9	Latest date/time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Emptoris	20/07/2017 11.00
3.10	Anticipated rejection of unsuccessful Bids date	26/07/2017
3.11	Anticipated Award date	26/07/2017
3.12	Anticipated Contract Start date	01/08/2017
3.13	Anticipated Contract End date	31/07/2018 with up to x3 12 month extension options.

3.14	Bid Validity Period	60 Days
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Section 4 – Specification

Introduction

NERC are an academic research organisation, operating as part of the UK Government's Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). NERC conduct research into a wide range of scientific areas including global natural resources, land, nature and effect of our interactions with the countryside.

Aims

NERC are conducting a scientific study that involves taking physical samples of soil and plants from the countryside on a regular basis – this involves a person (or team of 2 or 3 people) travelling to a specific location and collecting samples of soil, insects and plants. This is a regular and normal activity but each time to do this, permission is needed from the owner of the land. The permission covers allowing NERC on the land, getting to the specific location (perhaps across several farm fields for example), and permission to take the samples and collect and use the information that is gathered.

NERC are currently planning a series of these sampling surveys starting in September 2017.

The intention is to visit 80 locations per 12-month period.

Previously NERC have completed the 'landowner permission' process in-house, but are now looking to outsource this in order to relaise effiecincies.

Objectives

The intention is to survey 80 locations (a location is defined as a 1km by 1km square area of land) - within each location NERC need permissions to sample at 5 specific points - NERC call these 'plots'.

$80 \times 5 = 400$ plots altogether, per year.

Because the 5 plots are within the same location (i.e. the same 1km²) it is often the case that the same landowner will own the land of more than one plot. When this is the case, the permission is only needed once, but that permission must explicitly cover all the plots on that land.

It is also sometimes the case that in order to access a particular plot, surveyors will have to cross some other landowner's land (just transit over, not taking samples) - in this case the permission of the landowner whose land NERC is traversing is still needed. This is not very common.

The 80 locations are spread evenly throughout Great Britain. NERC has serveyed all of these locations and ploys before, although not for several years. The landowner may have changed since the last survey.

Scope

The high-level process is:

1. Identify the landowner
2. Identify any other landowners from which transit access will be required
3. Write a letter to each landowner with an explanation and the permission form and SAE for return.
4. If no response, a 2nd letter.
5. If no response, a series of phone calls leaving answering-machine messages as appropriate.
6. If no response, another letter.
7. If no response, another (final) letter.

NERC acknowledges that the situation and timing may not allow this entire sequence - the detail of exception handling must be agreed us as part of the setup process.

NERC will provide:

1. A timetable of when NERC would like access to the plots in each of the 80 locations (usually flexible within a specific week).
2. An excel file of the grid references or the lat/long coordinates of each plot.
3. If possible NERC will provide the names, addresses and phone numbers of the landowners they were contacted in the last survey, but the Supplier must not assume this is either available or accurate.
4. Sample wording of letters that were sent to landowners in previous surveys.
5. An explanation of information that the landowner is likely to ask of us (for example, biosecurity protocols).
6. Sample wording of the exact permissions (a little bit like a contract) this is required this year.
7. Up to 8 hours of NERC staff time to meet or talk to the supplier's staff to go through in detail the procedures, issues, lessons learnt and tips that has been gathered from doing this in the past.
8. Translation of text from English to Welsh of up to 2000 words (i.e. several letter's worth)
9. Access to our Welsh speaking staff to translate from Welsh to English up to 15 written items that the supplier might receive from landowners in Wales.

Requirement

The **primary objective** is to obtain action no 2 from the numbered list below, i.e. “For each plot, the permissions required to access the plot and to sample, collect and use data. These permissions should be obtained at least 15 days before the start of the survey week that has been identified for that plot.”

In addition:

Adhere to statutory Data Protection Act requirements and commit to an additional privacy policy and data security policy that is provided.

Provide a Data Management Plan that demonstrates that all data generated and captured will be safe, backed-up and properly controlled. At the end of the contract period and after NERC acknowledges safe receipt of all data transmitted to us, it is required that the supplier physically and permanently delete all copies of the data captured or generated in the course of this contract within 30 days. This is in order to protect both parties.

Agree standard communication and the landowner contact process with us at least 1 week before the first attempts to contact are made.

Communicate all and any feedback, complaints or comments from all contacts to us with 24 hours.

Consider and discuss with NERC Welsh language requirements for those locations that are based in Wales (approx. 15% of them per year).

What is want as an output from the supplier:

1. A continuing good reputation with the people and organisations that the supplier has contacted on our behalf.
2. For each plot, the permissions required to access the plot and to sample, collect and use data. These permissions should be obtained at least 15 days before the start of the survey week that has been identified for that plot.
3. Detailed records of each and every contact with every person.
4. All information gathered during the research or contact processes (for example, phone numbers and email addresses).
5. Details of all partial permissions given (or any other restrictions) that were communicated or captured from contact with the landowner (for example; “you can come only Thursday or Friday only”, or “you can come but you must ring in the morning first”).

NERC acknowledges that the situation and timing may not allow this entire sequence - the detail of exception handling must be agreed as part of the setup process. The process must be somewhat flexible and react to the situation of each landowner. The letters maybe contain several pages and enclosures. Letters to landowners in Wales must be bilingual.

The letters and phone calls will offer the landowner a variety of ways to respond:

1. A reply-slip, by return post
2. To phone in and talk to a person if questions or to provide permission
3. An email response
4. Accessing a website to provide a response online (NERC will provide this website)

The supplier must provide a dedicated phone number and human call-handling to handle coming phone responses. Volume is very low but properly handling each one is critical (because it might be granting permission). Extended phone answering hours are required; ideally 6am to 9pm, 7 days a week but lesser hours will be considered (evening hours are more important than early morning hours, Saturday is more important than Sunday).

At times contact might happen with a tenant of the land (eg a tenant farmer), this is useful but not sufficient. Permissions must be granted from the landowner. Tenants often will supply landowner details and tenants will may provide practical advice about access. All information should be captured.

Timetable

First visit on 1st September 2017.

Although known from experience that it may take 6 weeks or more to gain a specific landowner's permission.

In future years the location visits may be evenly spread throughout the year, because of this specific timing in 2017 NERC expect to make the required 80 location visits between September and November (ie not December).

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, the Customer and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems required. After evaluation 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 ($5+5+6 = 16 \div 3 = 5.33$))

Pass / fail criteria

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	SEL1.2	Employment breaches/ Equality
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
Price	AW5.5	E Invoicing
Price	AW5.6	Implementation of E-Invoicing
	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Commercial	SEL3.11	Compliance to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act
	-	Invitation to Quote – received on time within e-sourcing tool

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	PROJ.1.1	Methodology	35%
Quality	PROJ 1.2	Processes	15%
Quality	PROJ 1.3	Organisational expertise and skills	15%
Quality	PROJ 1.4	Issues and Risks	8%
Quality	PROJ 1.5	Data Management Plan	7%

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.
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 the final score returned may be different as there may be multiple evaluators and their individual scores 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 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: $\text{Score}/\text{Total Points}$ 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.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 the Contracting Authority.
- 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 the Contracting Authority 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 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.

- 7.39 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, 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.

- 7.41 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>

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

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