



Invitation to Quote

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

**Subject UK SBS Monitoring and evaluation of HEFCE funded strand
A activities**

Sourcing reference number **BLOJEU-CR16096HEFCE**

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 North Star House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 1FF
VAT registration GB618 3673 25
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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 Innovation and Skills (BIS) transition their procurement to UK SBS and Crown Commercial Services (CCS – previously Government Procurement Service) agree a Memorandum of Understanding with UK SBS to deliver two major procurement categories (construction and research) across Government.

UK SBS currently manages £700m expenditure for its Customers.

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

Section 2 – About Our Customer

Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)

HEFCE funds and regulates universities and colleges in England. We invest on behalf of students and the public to promote excellence and innovation in research, teaching and knowledge exchange. In all our activities we aim to:

- ensure accountability for funding and be a proportionate regulator
- act in the public interest and be open, fair, impartial and objective
- be an effective broker between Government and the sector and in doing so, ensure that we are implementing government policy effectively.

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	Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) Nicholson House, Lime Kiln Close, Stoke Gifford, Bristol, BS34 8SR
3.2	Buyer name	Laura Barrowman
3.3	Buyer contact details	Research@uksbs.co.uk
3.4	Estimated value of the Opportunity	£59,000 - £62,500 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	27/09/2016
3.7	Latest date/time ITQ clarification questions should be received through Emptoris messaging system	11/10/2016 14:00
3.8	Latest date/time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all potential Bidders by the Buyer through Emptoris	12/10/2016
3.9	Latest date/time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Emptoris	14/10/2016 14.00
3.10	Date/time Bidders should be available if face to face clarifications are required	W/C 24/10/2016
3.11	Anticipated rejection of unsuccessful Bids date	28/10/2016
3.12	Anticipated Award date	28/10/2016
3.13	Anticipated Contract Start date	08/11/2016

3.14	Anticipated Contract End date	01/03/2019
3.15	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

Section 4 – Specification

1. Aims

The introduction of degree apprenticeships and the apprenticeships levy is expected to lead to great change in the higher education sector. The previous Chancellor's Productivity Plan, 'Fixing the foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation' gives a clear rationale for creating degree apprenticeships with an equal legal footing to degrees and the policy is also expected to play a key role in advancing the new government's priorities on social mobility. On 24 March 2016, the then Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills announced a new £10m fund to boost the number of degree apprenticeships available. The development funding has been established to: pump-prime a new HE market for degree apprenticeships; achieve more high-quality new degree apprenticeships; establish capacity and expertise to deliver degree apprenticeships; and secure the cultural and behavioural changes among universities and colleges needed to embed degree apprenticeships in the universal apprenticeship offer and make broader educational opportunities available to learners.

On 4 May 2016, BIS confirmed that £8m would be delivered to HEFCE to allocate through the Degree Apprenticeship Development Fund (DADF), and £2 million ringfenced for the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) to use on learner development. That grant letter indicated that the majority of the £8 million funding for HEFCE (at least 90 per cent) should go to HE providers via a competitive call to be spent on activities and innovative approaches that will increase degree apprenticeship starts from September 2017; these activities comprise Strand A of the DADF.

HEFCE was asked to divide this funding from strand A into two phases and launched a first call in May 2016 for bids for the development of degree apprenticeships during academic year 2016-17, leading to programme delivery from September 2017. This forms phase 1 of strand A of the Degree Apprenticeship Development Fund, with phase 2 to be launched early in academic year 2016-17 and leading to delivery of degree apprenticeships from September 2018.

This tender is for the monitoring and evaluation of HEFCE funded strand A activities, including phase 1 and phase 2. Timelines for the work will extend into early 2019, following the commencement of delivery of the phase 2 funded apprenticeships. The activities will support HEFCE and other key stakeholders to judge the effectiveness of the activity undertaken to achieve the objectives, to reflect on the examples they provide when planning similar work in the future, as well as good practice guidance for institutions looking to develop similar activity themselves.

A minority of the DADF funding provided to HEFCE (about 10 per cent) will be spent on facilitating and coordinating the sector to improve their readiness to deliver. These activities comprise Strand B, which will be a further scheme of work to build sector wide capacity for degree apprenticeships and carried out by a range of sector bodies.

The monitoring and evaluation of strand B activities falls outside the remit of the work to be tendered for. With this in mind, organisations bidding for this tender will need to be cognisant of the work being carried out in strand B, with the activities to be provided by the successful tenderer complementing, and not replicating, strand B activities. The successful tenderer will be expected to engage frequently with those organisations undertaking strand B to ensure that activities complement each other.

Strand B activities include

- a. Universities UK – to engage and support the strategic management of HE on Degree Apprenticeships and carry out a mapping exercise of HE engagement and the development activity underway.
- b. Association of Graduate Recruiters – to accelerate employer engagement in the degree apprenticeships area, identify needs and produce an employer toolkit.
- c. University Vocational Awards Council – to provide technical advice and support for higher education providers with regard to SFA entry processes such as the RoTO, RoATP, and Trailblazer standards.

2. Objectives

The successful tender(s) will be expected to commence activities in November 2016 and actively engage in a workshop in late November 2016 for institutions funded in phase 1. The workshop will be led by HEFCE, and it will provide an opportunity for the successful tenderer to introduce themselves and their work to the phase 1 funded institutions. The tenderer should engage with the HEFCE DADF project manager (Darren Watson) about arrangements and details for this workshop. We would expect the successful tenderer to lead, deliver, and facilitate further workshops throughout the following two years to bring the latest evaluation findings to the sector swiftly in keeping with this fast-moving agenda, for example one further workshop prior to September 2017, and a further one or two workshops between September 2017 and September 2018.

The workshops will provide attendees with an opportunity to reflect upon and discuss issues relating to the immediate development and delivery of degree apprenticeships, such as working with employers, working with SFA systems, and developing and delivering to trailblazer standards.

In addition to the workshops, the successful organisation will deliver two formal HEFCE updates, in the form of written reports, reflecting on the development and delivery of the funded activity, prior to the delivery of a final report:

- Preliminary report in January 2017;
- Interim report, December 2017, timed to reflect on phase 1 degree apprenticeship starts in September 2017, and progress on phase 2;
- In late 2018 or early 2019, the final report will be produced for HEFCE and for publication. It will summarise the DADF-funded activity undertaken within higher education providers, evaluating its success in meeting the overall goals of the DADF, and share good practice across the sector. The timing will allow for the recruitment to phase 2 funded degree apprenticeships to be reflected upon.

Reports will examine how institutions develop the funded provision, working together and with employers, how barriers they face are identified and overcome, how they work with SFA expectations, and ultimately, how many degree apprenticeships they are able to enrol as a result of the DADF funding and where relevant, indicating areas for policy developments.

Contact with Providers – the evaluating organisation will need to build effective relationships with DADF funded institutions, and at least one visit will need to be made to lead institutions, plus a representative sample of consortium members, before they commence delivery of the degree apprenticeships linked to the funding, and there will be further formal contact at least once before the degree apprenticeship commences and once more after delivery has commenced, at appropriate times within the timeline of development and delivery. This will be repeated for those that

secure funding in phase 2. We anticipate funding approximately 40 bids over phases 1 and 2.

3. Background to the Requirement

Degree apprenticeships are a new product for higher education (HE) arising as a priority for government from the broader apprenticeship reform agenda which was set in train to help address some of the widely understood issues regarding widening participation, student opportunities, and productivity within the UK. Employer investment in training has taken a nosedive in the last decade (OECD) and skills shortages are said to be responsible for 20 per cent of the lag in productivity between the UK and countries such as the USA, Germany and France ('Relationship between graduates and economic growth across countries', Department for Business, Innovation and Skills 2013, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/graduates-and-economic-growth-across-countries>). With 25 per cent of job openings in the UK classed as skills shortage vacancies, and employer investment in training at historical lows, government policy aims to produce the skilled workforce that employers need by ramping up and reforming apprenticeships to achieve 3 million by 2020. Degree apprenticeships also provide an opportunity for those less able to access traditional higher education to benefit from study and learning at levels 6 and 7.

Three aspects of the apprenticeships reforms directly affect the HE sector. Firstly, the policy establishes an equal footing between apprenticeships and academic degrees by creating new 'degree apprenticeships' at Levels 6 and 7. Secondly, employers are encouraged and supported to design their own training provision through Trailblazer groups, which define training contents and learning outcomes for apprenticeships. Thirdly, the introduction of the apprenticeship levy in April 2017 will require large employers to pay for apprenticeship training, generating a fund of £3 billion a year by 2019-20, which will be open to all employers.

The degree apprenticeships development funding has been established to: pump-prime a new HE market for degree apprenticeships; achieve more high-quality new degree apprenticeships; establish capacity and expertise to deliver degree apprenticeships; and secure the cultural and behavioural changes among universities and colleges needed to embed degree apprenticeships in the universal apprenticeship offer and make broader educational opportunities available to learners.

Further information on the Degree Apprenticeship Development Fund, including the criteria used to judge the bids that were received, can be found at <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/kess/apprentice/dadf/> and http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2016/CL_062016/.

4. Scope

Organisations and individuals submitting bids for this work will be required to undertake activities as detailed in this document. They will bring an independent, but informed, perspective to the monitoring and evaluation of the scheme, enabling HEFCE, BEIS/DfE, and other stakeholders to be able to judge the effectiveness of the activity undertaken and to reflect on the examples they provide when planning similar work in the future, as well as for institutions looking to develop similar activity and provide the targeted growth that the government expects.

We are interested in receiving bids which will result in the range of outputs listed in this document. Bidding organisations or individuals will bring to bear their knowledge regarding degree apprenticeships and skills provision in HE, developments within the sector, and the wider economic and professional context. Whilst we would welcome bids from higher education providers, to ensure that the independence of the activity cannot be questioned, individuals involved in bids for funding as part of the DADF scheme are not able to bid to lead this evaluation activity.

It is envisaged that much of the activity will take place in academic years 2016/17 and 2017/18, as this is when the funded activity within higher education providers will take place. However, apprenticeships developed within phase 2 will commence delivery in academic year 2018/19. Apprentices on funded degree apprenticeships will be in employment during their studies, but we expect that the impact of their first year of studies will provide an opportunity for final evaluation in late 2018 or early 2019.

The successful tenderer will not be required to closely monitor the delivery of the degree apprenticeships following the commencement of delivery, beyond a broad assessment of their success at meeting the needs of employers and apprentices. Tenderers are expected to focus evaluation on the development activity, considering the observed and evidenced barriers or issues to successful development; to comment on strengths or weaknesses of collaborations; to highlight best practice and also points for learning; how funded institutions and employers have worked together to develop the provision; and how funded institutions have worked with SFA procedures and within their expectations. Tenderers are not expected to assess the efficacy of degree apprenticeships at providing vocational opportunities (policy evaluation), nor on whether the developed degree apprenticeships deliver that expanded opportunity.

The successful tenderers will gather together available data, including employer data, tripartite apprenticeship agreements, individual learner records, student records, available HMRC data, and information from the Digital Apprenticeship Service, and collate their own on the characteristics and types of apprentices targeted and enrolled on the funded degree apprenticeships. This would include

- their background, including whether those recruited come from under represented groups or from areas with relatively low participation in higher education;
- their salaries, and whether the part time study model results in differences of satisfaction;
- their entry qualifications, and whether degree apprentices include those with existing higher education qualifications;
- whether degree apprentices are drawn from an employer's existing staff or are recruited from elsewhere.

The support of HEFCE may be required to gain appropriate access to some secure and confidential data.

Higher education providers receiving funding from the DADF will reflect upon feedback they receive from employers and apprentices about the funded provision. This information, and how the higher education providers respond to it, along with any similar information that the successful tenderer might collate, will provide useful data that may support continuous improvement of the funded provision and good practice for the sector as a whole.

Evaluation of the success of apprenticeships will reflect on financial and non-financial outcomes, such as well-being.

As part of their engagement with those organisations undertaking strand B activities, the successful tenderers will reflect on opportunities to exchange data and information with strand B organisations, and with HEFCE, including its Analytical Services Directorate.

In addition, the successful tenderers will be required to reflect on the characteristics of providers, including consortium members, and their engagement in the mechanisms and process for engaging within the degree apprenticeship agenda, including the subjects that they provide, the level of their provision, their Registration of Training Organisations and Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers engagement, cohort size, relationships with employers, the format and mode of study, the costs of provision, and the duration of studies.

5. Requirement

The appointed consultant(s) should expect to work actively with the HEFCE project manager to ensure evaluation findings are fed into current and evolving policy development. The HEFCE project manager will act as the evaluator(s)'s main point of contact. This will involve regular meetings, in person or by phone, with the HEFCE project manager, and visits to institutions. Estimates for likely travel expenses should be included within tenders.

Bidders will be expected to carry out activities which will result, as a minimum, in the following outputs:

- Participating in the delivery of a workshop with successful bidders, to be carried out in late November 2016, which focuses upon the development of the funded apprenticeships, open to phase 1 funded institutions (programme to be agreed by HEFCE);
- Leading on later workshops, one in academic year 2016/17 and two in academic year 2017/18, focusing upon the experience and challenges of developing the apprenticeships (programmes to be agreed by HEFCE);
- Visiting funded institutions, including a representative sample of consortium members, and collating primary research on the activities being funded, the markets they serve, and the solutions being proposed. It is anticipated that each funded institution will be visited at least once, at appropriate points within the development, marketing, and delivery of the funded courses, with further formal contact with institutions at appropriate points within the timeline leading up to delivery of the degree apprenticeships and shortly after;
- Produce a series of reports on the development and marketing of the funded courses, as well as any early issues or findings. The first of these reports is required in January 2017, and the second in December 2017;
- Regularly report verbally to HEFCE key information regarding the progress of funded activities. This would involve regular update meetings or discussions with the Project Manager, which would take place approximately every two to three months; and
- A final report which builds on the interim reports, assesses the activity funded by strand A of the DADF, and highlights lessons learned from these which may be applied to the development of future degree apprenticeships, and reflects on the employment outcomes of those who have undertaken apprenticeships funded through this scheme. This is required in late December 2018 or early in 2019. We want this evaluation to examine how institutions are developing this provision, working together and with employers to get it in motion, what barriers they're facing, ways they are finding to operate around SFA expectations, and ultimately, how many degree apprenticeships they're able to enrol. This should present some clear success factors and highlight which barriers continue to impede growth. The report will need to consider and reflect upon
 - Achievement of objectives and target numbers;
 - Key barriers to progress and achievement of objectives;
 - Alignment with local / national strategies;
 - What kind of people are taking up the apprenticeships, from what background, with what qualifications, and other characteristics;

- Potential for scalability and key factors to achieving this;
- Potential for greater efficiency or reduced cost;
- Employer perception of benefits, including productivity and staff retention.

6. Timetable

Certain aspects of the required programme of activity are time sensitive, given that funded institutions will be developing and marketing their apprenticeships in anticipation of delivery starting in September 2017. The timings detailed below are designed to coincide with periods when the activity within institutions which it contributes to or reflects upon takes place.

In terms of outputs, the evaluator would need to deliver the following:

Date	Output Due
30 November 2016 (to be confirmed)	Support the delivery of the first workshop with funded institutions. This is currently scheduled to take place on 30 th November
Before September 2017	Deliver the second workshop with funded institutions
Within academic year 2017/18	Deliver the third and fourth workshops
During first half of academic year 2016/17	Visit all phase 1 funded institutions at least once
During academic year 2016/17	Further formal contact with phase 1 funded institutions prior to commencement of delivery of funded Degree Apprenticeships
During early academic year 2017/18	Formal contact with phase 1 funded institutions once funded degree apprenticeships commence
During academic year 2016/17	Visit all phase 2 funded institutions at least once
During academic year 2017/18	Further formal contact with phase 2 funded institutions prior to commencement of delivery of funded Degree Apprenticeships
During early academic year 2018/19	Formal contact with phase 2 funded institutions once funded degree apprenticeships commence
January 2017	Produce the first annual interim report

December 2017	Produce the second annual interim report
Late 2018 or early 2019	Produce the final report. In addition to delivery of the report, the evaluator will be asked to present their findings and observations to colleagues in HEFCE.

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 UK SBS deem 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 ($5+5+6=16\div3=5.33$))

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
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Add 	Add 	[add 
-	-	Invitation to Quote – received on time within e-sourcing tool

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%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Understanding	45%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Methodology	25%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Project Plan	15%

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: $\text{Score/Total Points} \times 50$ ($80/100 \times 50 = 40$)

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.
- 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](#)