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Request for Quotation
Testing eDNA metabarcoding as a technique for monitoring subtidal sediment condition – marine Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment Programme

##

## July 2023

**Request for Quotation**

**eDNA metabarcoding analysis of benthic sediment samples – marine Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment Programme**

You are invited to submit a quotation for the requirement described in the specification, Section 2.

Please confirm by email, receipt of these documents and whether you intend to submit a quote or not.

Your response should be returned to the following email address by:

Email: louise.whatley@naturalengland.org.uk

Date: 25/08/2023

Time: 17:00

Ensure you include the name of the quotation and ‘Final Submission’ in the subject field to make it clear that it is your response.

**Contact Details and Timetable**

Louise Whatley will be your contact for any questions linked to the content of the quote or the process. Please submit any clarification questions via email and note that, unless commercially sensitive, both the question and the response will be circulated to all tenderers.

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| --- | --- |
| **Action** | **Date** |
| Date of issue of RFQ | 28/07/2023 |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | 11/08/2023 |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | 25/08/2023 |
| Intended date of Contract Award | 01/09/2023 |
| Intended Contract Start Date | 01/09/2023 |
| Intended Delivery Date / Contract Duration  | 7 months |

**Section 1: General Information**

**Glossary**

Unless the context otherwise requires, the following words and expressions used within this Request for Quotation shall have the following meanings (to be interpreted in the singular or plural as the context requires):

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|  |  |
| “Authority” | means Natural England who is the Contracting Authority.  |
| “Contract” | means the contract to be entered into by the Authority and the successful supplier. |
| “Response” | means the information submitted by a supplier in response to the RFQ. |
| “RFQ” | means this Request for Quotation and all related documents published by the Authority and made available to suppliers. |

**Conditions applying to the RFQ**

You should examine your Response and related documents ensuring it is complete and in accordance with the stated instructions prior to submission.

Your Response must contain sufficient information to enable the Authority to evaluate it fairly and effectively. You should ensure that you have prepared your Response fully and accurately and that prices quoted are arithmetically correct for the units stated.

By submitting a Response, you, the supplier, are deemed to accept the terms and conditions provided in the RFQ. Confirmation of this is required in Annex 2.

Failure to comply with the instructions set out in the RFQ may result in the supplier’s exclusion from this quotation process.

**Acceptance of Quotations**

By issuing this RFQ the Authority does not bind itself to accept any quotation and reserves the right not to award a contract to any supplier who submits a quotation.

**Costs**

The Authority will not reimburse you for any costs and expenses which you incur preparing and submitting your quotation, even if the Authority amends or terminates the procurement process.

**Self-Declaration and Mandatory Requirements**

The RFQ includes a self-declaration response (Annex 1) which covers basic information about the supplier, as well as any grounds for exclusion. If you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Any mandatory requirements will be set out in Section 2, Specification of Requirements and, if you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

**Clarifications**

Any request for clarification regarding the RFQ and supporting documentation must be submitted via email no later than the deadline for clarifications set out in the Timetable. The Authority shall be under no obligation to respond to queries raised after the clarification deadline.

The Authority will respond to all reasonable clarifications as soon as possible but cannot guarantee a minimum response time. The Authority will publish all clarifications and its responses to all suppliers via email unless deemed commercially sensitive.

If a supplier believes that a request for clarification is commercially sensitive, it should clearly state this when submitting the clarification request. However, if the Authority considers either that:

the clarification and response are not commercially sensitive; and

all suppliers may benefit from its disclosure,

then the Authority will notify the supplier (via email), and the supplier will have an opportunity to withdraw the request for clarification by sending a further message requesting the withdrawal of the clarification request. If not withdrawn by the supplier within 2 working days of the Authority’s notification, the Authority may publish the clarification request and its response to all suppliers and the Authority shall not be liable to the supplier for any consequences of such publication.

The Authority reserves the right to seek clarification of any aspect of a quotation and/or provide additional information during the evaluation phase to carry out a fair evaluation. Where the Authority seeks clarification on any aspect of the quotation, the supplier must respond within the timeframe requested by the Authority.

**Amendments**

The Authority may amend the RFQ at any time prior to the deadline for receipt. If it amends the RFQ the Authority will notify you via email.

Suppliers may modify their quotation prior to the deadline for Responses. No Responses may be modified after the deadline for Responses.

 Suppliers may withdraw their quotations at any time by submitting a notice via the email to the named contact.

**Conditions of Contract**

The Authority’s standard [Condensed Terms and Conditions](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about/procurement) provided as part of the RFQ will be included in any contract awarded as a result of this quotation process. The Authority will not accept any changes to these terms and conditions proposed by a supplier.

Suppliers should note that the quotation provided by the successful bidder will form part of the Contract.

**Prices**

Prices must be submitted in £ sterling, exclusive of VAT. Please state whether VAT is applicable to your costs and if so what rate.

**Disclosure**

All Central Government Departments, 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 Authority may disclose within Government any details contained in your quotation. The information will not be disclosed outside Government during the procurement.

In addition, the Authority is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, which provide a public right of access to information held by public bodies. In accordance with these two statutes, the Authority may be required to disclose information contained in your quotation to any person who submits a request for information pursuant to those statutes.

Further to the Government’s transparency agenda, all UK Government organisations must advertise on Contract Finder in accordance with the following publication thresholds:

Central Contracting Authority’s: £12,000

Sub Central Contracting Authority’s and NHS Trusts: £30,000

For the purpose of this RFQ the Authority is classified as a Central Contracting Authority with a publication threshold of £12,000 inclusive of VAT.

If this opportunity is advertised via Contracts Finder, we are obliged to publish details of the awarded contract including who has won the contract, the contract value, and indicate whether the winning supplier is a small and medium-sized enterprise (“SMEs”) or voluntary organisation or charity. A copy of the contract must also be published with confidential information redacted.

By submitting a Response, you consent to these terms as part of the procurement.

**Disclaimers**

Whilst the information in this RFQ and any supporting information referred to herein or provided to you by the Authority have been prepared in good faith the Authority does not warrant that this information is comprehensive or that it has been independently verified.

The Authority does not:

* make any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness or completeness of the RFQ;
* accept any liability for the information contained in the RFQ or for the fairness, accuracy or completeness of that information; or
* accept any liability for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation or any other liability which cannot lawfully be excluded) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.

Any supplier considering entering into contractual relationships with the Authority following receipt of the RFQ should make its own investigations and independent assessment of the Authority and its requirements for the goods and/or services and should seek its own professional financial and legal advice.

**Protection of Personal Data**

In order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 the supplier must agree to the following:

* You must only process any personal data in strict accordance with instructions from the Authority.
* You must ensure that all the personal data that we disclose to you or you collect on our behalf under this agreement are kept confidential.
* You must take reasonable steps to ensure the reliability of employees who have access to personal data.
* Only employees who may be required to assist in meeting the obligations under this agreement may have access to the personal data.
* Any disclosure of personal data must be made in confidence and extend only so far as that which is specifically necessary for the purposes of this agreement.
* You must ensure that there are appropriate security measures in place to safeguard against any unauthorised access or unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage or disclosure of the personal data.
* On termination of this agreement, for whatever reason, the personal data must be returned to us promptly and safely, together with all copies in your possession or control.

**General Data Protection Regulations 2018**

For the purposes of the Regulations the Authority is the data processor.

The personal information that we have asked you provide on individuals (data subjects) that will be working for you on this contract will be used in compiling the tender list and in assessing your offer. If you are unsuccessful the information will be held and destroyed within two years of the award of contracts. If you are awarded a contract it will be retained for the duration of the contract and destroyed within seven years of the contract’s expiry.

We may monitor the performance of the individuals during the execution of the contract, and the results of our monitoring, together with the information that you have provided, will be used in determining what work is allocated under the contract, and in any renewal of the contract or in the award of future contracts of a similar nature. The information will not be disclosed to anyone outside the Authority without the consent of the data subject, unless the Authority is required by law to make such disclosures.

**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)**

The Client is striving to create a diverse and inclusive working environment where every individual has equality of opportunity to progress and to apply their unique insights to making the UK a great place for living. The Service Provider is expected to respect this commitment in all dealings with Natural England staff and service users.

Suppliers are expected to;

* support Defra group to achieve its Public Sector Equality Duty as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and to support delivery of [Defra group’s Equality & Diversity Strategy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024).
* meet the standards set out in the [Government’s Supplier Code of Conduct](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supplier-code-of-conduct)
* work with Defra group to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion impacts are addressed (positive and negative) in the goods, services and works we procure, barriers are removed and opportunities realised.

**Sustainable Procurement**

Addressing global sustainability impacts and realising additional community benefits within commercial activity is core to Defra group’s approach, working with its supply chain is key to achieving sustainable outcomes. In addition to supporting Defra group to meet its outcomes we look to understand and reduce negative sustainability impacts associated with our commercial activity and realise benefits.

The Client encourages its suppliers to share these values, work to address negative impacts and realise opportunities, measure performance and success.

Suppliers are expected to have an understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals, the interconnections between them and the relevance to the Goods, Services and works procured on the Client’s behalf

**Conflicts of Interest**

The concept of a conflict of interest includes but is not limited to any situation where an Involved Person or Relevant Body has directly or indirectly, a financial, economic or other personal interest which might be perceived to compromise their impartiality and independence in the context of the procurement procedure and/or affect the integrity of the contract award.

We expect suppliers to mitigate appropriately against any real or perceived conflict of interest through their work with government. A supplier with a position of influence gained through a contract should not use that position to unfairly disadvantage any other supplier or reduce the potential for future competition

Where the supplier is aware of any circumstances giving rise to a conflict of interest or has any indication that a conflict of interest exists or may arise you should inform the Authority of this as soon as possible (whether before or after they have submitted a quotation). Tenderers should remain alert to the possibility of conflicts of interest arising at all stages of the procurement and should update the Authority if any new circumstances or information arises, or there are any changes to information already provided to the Authority. Failure to do so, and/or to properly manage any conflicts of interest may result in a quotation being rejected.

Provided that it has been carried out in an open, fair and transparent manner, routine pre-market engagement carried out by the Authority should not represent a conflict of interest for the supplier.

**Section 2: The Invitation**

**Specification of Requirements**

**Background to Natural England**

Natural England (NE) is the government’s advisor on the natural environment. We provide practical advice, grounded in science, on how best to safeguard England’s natural wealth for the benefit of everyone. Our remit is to ensure sustainable stewardship of the land and sea so that people and nature can thrive. It is our responsibility to see that England’s rich natural environment can adapt and survive intact for future generations to enjoy.

**Project background**

This project is part of the Marine Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment (mNCEA) Programme which is a three-year Defra-funded programme that looks to support the drive for new approaches to decision making based on the Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment (NCEA) approach. The overarching aim is to deliver evidence, tools and guidance on the extent and condition of marine natural capital assets, the ecosystem services they provide and the trade-offs that are necessary in realising the natural capital benefits of most importance to society. In the long term this will revolutionise how we understand and make decisions about our marine environment and ultimately enable us to reach our sustainable blue growth potential.

This particular project is testing DNA metabarcoding as a technique for tracking sedimentary ecosystem asset condition. DNA metabarcoding will be used alongside traditional morphological infauna ID to understand how eDNA of benthic fauna responds to anthropogenic pressure (such as pollution, contaminants, disturbance, etc.). The outputs will be used to assess if these metabarcoding techniques can be used in future monitoring scenarios that will enable more effective and efficient monitoring of impacts on the seabed at greater spatial scales, and with greater ease, than is currently possible.

Natural England is collecting traditional benthic infauna grab samples and eDNA sediment samples along pressure gradients in up to two sites, including the Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Solent and Dorset Coast Special Protection Area (SPA), and the Thames Estuary. The surveys will be conducted in September-October 2023. Further details of precise sample stations will be confirmed with the successful contractor.

Sampling will be conducted along known pressure gradients at each site including a control site which is unimpacted. Samples will be collected at five stations at each site (including control station). At each station, triplicate grab samples will be collected using a 0.1m2 Day grab. Subsamples of at least 30g of sediment will be collected from the top of the grab sample using a mini-corer (in accordance with the JNCC and NE DNA based benthic monitoring protocols (NatureMetrics, 2022)). Samples will be frozen in sealed and labelled zip-lock bags ready for transport to the lab. On arrival to the lab samples should be frozen at -80°C. A detailed summary of the sampling methods

Infauna analysis of grab samples will be undertaken by a separate contractor; output datasets will be available on 31st December 2023, and will be shared in Excel format with the successful contractor for analysis and discussion in the report.

**Aims and Objectives**

The aim of this contract is to produce DNA metabarcoding data for benthic eDNA sediment samples, and examine this data in the context of pressure gradients and associated infauna data. Metabarcoding and traditional taxonomic output will be evaluated for their respective potential to be used as a method for determining the condition of marine sediments and therefore as a driver of their ecosystem service delivery potential.

The primary interest is to see if there is a change in community composition in response to known pressure gradients. As such we are particularly interested in bacterial and meiofaunal diversity as well as wider community diversity (fish, invertebrates etc). Contractors are invited to suggest costed options for barcode regions/open access primers that could provide a meaningful picture of diversity from the DNA datasets. Natural England will provide the successful contractor with data on pressures such as water quality and/or contaminants for interpretation.

The specific objectives are to:

* Undertake DNA extraction of 30 sediment samples (2 x 15 samples per site).
* Undertake eDNA analysis using Metabarcoding
* Produce report summarising interpretation of results in the form of graphical output and spatial representation across sites in relation to pressure gradient, including diversity and abundance data from both infauna and DNA datasets
* Provide a discussion of the results considering the success of bioinformatic processing and the applicability of DNA-based indicators for monitoring ecosystem asset (marine sediment) condition

Please provide a cost breakdown for sample analysis per site. In the case that a survey of two sites is not possible, one site will be selected for sample collection.

**Outputs**

The results should be provided in a full report written in accordance to the [Natural England report writing guidance](https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5790636781600768).

The methods section should include detailed methodology including:

* Sample collection method, including how samples have been stored both before they got to the lab and at the lab. A summary of the sampling methodology and survey area will be provided by Natural England.
* DNA extraction methods - state any kits used. State how the DNA was quantified and discuss the quality of DNA extracted. Explain how sample contamination was controlled for and avoided
* PCR amplification - Specify the open access primers, PCR cycle conditions and reagents used. Describe the indexing process.
* Sequencing - State how the DNA products were prepared for sequencing including reagents, primers and conditions. State how the DNA was quantified, and the model of the sequencing machine used. The methods should allow the reader to understand confidence in the sequences obtained.
* Bioinformatic processing - State in detail how the bioinformatic processing was completed, by specifying the steps taken. State any programs and models that were used and any thresholds set. Where sequences are being used for taxonomic assignment, please explain the methods used to assign a species and why any reads may have been discarded. State all cut-off thresholds and state whether OTUs or ASVs are used.
* Reference libraries - Name all reference libraries used (open access prefered), and any rules used. State all cut-off thresholds, such as for % identity for taxonomic assignment.
* QA - Explain the QA checks that have been undertaken on the results, including

thresholds that may have been set

The contractor should provide a detailed results section, explaining the results generated, which should include:

* The efficiency of DNA extraction and correct amplification of expected PCR products at each stage
* Number of sequencing reads generated, quality of sequencing reads, proportion of reads discarded and proportion which were assigned to species
* Visualisations of community and species detections by site and further analysis of diversity and abundance data from both infauna and DNA datasets, in relation to pressure gradient.

A detailed discussion should be included explaining the results and confidence levels in the bioinformatic processing. Discussion should include:

* A discussion of any problems and how they were resolved, such as issues with PCR leading to a change of reagents or amplification conditions.
* Quality of the sequencing reads obtained.
* Discussion of the pros and cons of the primers and barcode(s) used. Has the expected species diversity been detected? Have non-target taxa been detected? Is species bias expected? Can the assay distinguish between closely related species?
* Discussion of any unexpected species detections. If any non-native or unexpected species have been detected, the confidence in this result.
* Discussion of any reference database or barcode issues which may have led to sequences being wrongly assigned or not assigned to species level.
* Discussion of whether the data can give information on species abundance or not.
* Consideration of the applicability and/or development of DNA-based indicators for monitoring benthic sediment condition
* Recommendations for future work based on the results of the current study.

**Data**

Two sets of data are required:

* A Microsoft Excel spreadsheet listing the species identified, the sample location if applicable and the reference library and sequence ID used to identify the species. If a species was not assigned, the sequence should be identified to the highest possible level, e.g. family.
* Raw sequence reads, in FASTQ format.

**Data ownership**

The intellectual property rights and copyright for all products will lie with Natural England. The data and any report produced will be made available by Natural England under [Open Government Licence](https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/) at the end of the project.

**Other**

In support of this contract NE will provide the winning supplier with:

* Project support from dedicated project lead
* Opportunity to feedback and discuss progress and the project
* Supporting GIS datasets (if required) under licence for use in this contract:
* Base map data from Ordnance Survey
* Raster charts from Oceanwise (Not to be used for Navigation)

Please see the following site for information on how to acquire GI information <https://www.gov.uk/how-to-access-natural-englands-maps-and-data>

**Timelines**

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| --- | --- |
| **Milestone** | **Target date** |
| Successful contractor awarded | 01/09/2023 |
| Samples provided to successful contractor | 18/10/2023\* |
| DNA metabarcoding and bioinformatics analysis complete | 31/12/2023 |
| Infauna data provided to contractor | 31/12/2023 |
| Draft report due to project officer in digital via email | 02/02/2024 |
| Natural England to provide comments on draft report | 09/02/2024 |
| Final report  | 01/03/2024 |
| Contract completion | 31/03/2024 |

**\***This is the latest possible date by which samples will be collected. Precise sampling dates will be confirmed with successful contractor but may be subject to change for example due to weather downtime. Natural England will communicate this with the successful supplier.

Natural England would expect to discuss and review timelines with the successful contractor in the start-up meeting and throughout the duration of the contract. Any delays to this timetable should be discussed with the Natural England Project Officer and delays not outside the control of the contractor will be penalised.

**Payment**

The Authority will raise purchase orders to cover the cost of the services and will issue to the awarded supplier following contract award.

The Authority’s preference is for all invoices to be sent electronically, quoting a valid Purchase Order number. Invoices can be submitted after specific milestones in the project have been met – to be agreed upon commencement of the contract.

It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded for a period of7 months to end no later than 31/03/2024. Prices will remain fixed for the duration of the contract award period. We may at our sole discretion extend this contract to include related or further work. Any extension shall be agreed in writing in advance of any work commencing and may be subject to further competition.

**Evaluation Methodology**

We will award this contract in line with the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) as set out in the following award criteria, the winning tenderer will be the highest scoring combined score.:

Criteria Weighting Scores:

Technical – 50%

Commercial – 50%

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Award Criteria | Weighting (%) | Evaluation Topic & Weighting | Sub-Criteria | Weighted Question |
| Technical | 50% | Proposal | Methodology | Q1.1 Please submit an outline methodology for DNA extraction, PCR amplification, and sequencing (25% of technical score available)Q1.2 Outline methodology for bioinformatic processing (25% of technical score available)Q1.3 Proposed results, data comparisons and discussion sections.(25% of technical score available) |
| Key personnel | Q2 Please include details of previous work that involved reviewing protocols and/or field methods using DNA. (10% of technical score available) |
| Quality Assurance measures | Q3 Please explain the QA checks that will be undertaken on the results(15% of technical score available)  |
| Commercial | 50% | Whole life cost of the proposed Contract | Commercial Model | Q4 Cost breakdown of key tasks indicating milestone deliverables, and payment and invoicing schedule (inclusive of VAT). Please provide a breakdown of analysis costs per site. (100% of commercial score available) |

**Technical (50%)**

Technical evaluations will be based on responses to specific questions covering key criteria which are outlined below. Scores for questions will be based on the following:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Description | Score  | Definition |
| Very good  | 100 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. There are no weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority complete confidence that all the requirements will be met to a high standard.  |
| Good | 70 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains minor weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that all the requirements will be met to a good standard.  |
| Moderate | 50 | Addresses most of the requirements with most of the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains moderate weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that most of the requirements will be met to a suitable standard.  |
| Weak  | 20 | Substantially addresses the requirements but not all and provides supporting information that is of limited or no relevance or a methodology containing significant weaknesses and therefore raises concerns for the Authority that the requirements may not all be met. |
| Unacceptable | 0 | No response or provides a response that gives the Authority no confidence that the requirement will be met.  |

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| --- | --- |
| Methodology  | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q1.1 Please submit an outline methodology for DNA extraction, PCR amplification, and sequencingQ1.2 Outline methodology for bioinformatic processingQ1.3 Proposed results, data comparisons and discussion sections. | Provide details of the methodology and approaches proposed to deliver each element. Your response should:1) Demonstrate a clear understanding of the nature of the requirements.2) Be a clear, practical, achievable, and cost-effective methodology to deliver these requirements.3) Have information in sufficient detail to allow a full appraisal of the suitability of the approach to deliver for the project.Combined responses for Q1 should not exceed four sides of A4, and use Arial font, size 11. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Key personnel | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q2 Please include details of previous work that involved reviewing protocols and/or field methods using DNA | Provide details of previous work that has involved reviewing DNA sampling and/or analysis protocols, that indicates relevant experience.Responses for Q2 should not exceed two sides of A4, and use Arial font, size 11. |

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| Quality assurance measures | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q3 Please explain the QA checks that will be undertaken on the results | Provide details of quality assurance checks and how these will ensure confidence in data outputs and subsequent discussions/recommendations. Responses for Q2 should not exceed two sides of A4, and use Arial font, size 11. |

**Commercial (50%)**

The Contract is to be awarded as a fixed price which will be paid according to the completion of the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements.

Suppliers are required to submit a total cost to provide the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements. In addition to this the Commercial Response template must be completed to provide a breakdown of the whole life costs against each deliverableused in the delivery of this requirement.

Calculation Method:

The method for calculating the weighted scores is as follows:

Commercial

* Score = (Lowest Quotation Price / Supplier’s Quotation Price) x [50%]Maximum available marks)

Technical

* Score = (Bidder’s Total Technical Score / Highest Technical Score) x [50%](Maximum available marks)

The total score (weighted) (TWS) is then calculated by adding the total weighted commercial score (WC) to the total weighted technical score (WT): WC + WT = TWS.

**Information to be returned**

Please note, the following information requested must be provided. Incomplete tender submissions may be discounted.

Please complete and return the following information:

* completed Commercial Response template
* separate response submission for each technical question (in accordance with the response instructions)
* completed Mandatory Requirements (Annex 1)
* completed Acceptance of Terms and Conditions (Annex 2)

**Award**

Once the evaluation of the Response(s) is complete all suppliers will be notified of the outcome via email.

The successful supplier will be issued the contract via a Purchase Order.

A start up meeting will be arranged with the awarded contractor to discuss the planned works. Fortnightly updates by email will be required from the successful contractor, with the project manager available to answer questions as necessary when they arise.

**References**

NatureMetrics. 2022. Protocol for Sampling Marine Benthic Sediment for DNA-based Analysis. JNCC Report No. 706, JNCC, Peterborough, ISSN 0963-8091.

**Annex 1 Mandatory Requirements**

**Part 1 Potential Supplier Information**

Please answer the following self-declaration questions in full and include this Annex in your quotation response.

**Part 1.1 Potential Supplier Information:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 1.1(a) | Full name of the potential supplier submitting the information |  |
| 1.1(b)  | Registered office address (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(c) | Company registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(d) | Charity registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(e) | Head office DUNS number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(f) | Registered VAT number  |  |
| 1.1(g) | Are you a Small, Medium or Micro Enterprise (SME)? | (Yes / No) |

Note: See EU definition of SME <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en>

**Part 1.2 Contact details and declaration**

By submitting a quotation to this RFQ I declare that to the best of my knowledge the answers submitted and information contained in this document are correct and accurate.

I declare that, upon request and without delay you will provide the certificates or documentary evidence referred to in this document.

I understand that the information will be used in the selection process to assess my organisation’s suitability to be invited to participate further in this procurement.

I understand that the authority may reject this submission in its entirety if there is a failure to answer all the relevant questions fully, or if false/misleading information or content is provided in any section.

I am aware of the consequences of serious misrepresentation.

|  |  |  |
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| Question no.  | Question | Response |
| 1.2(a) | Contact name |  |
| 1.2(b) | Name of organisation |  |
| 1.2(c) | Role in organisation |  |
| 1.2(d) | Phone number |  |
| 1.2(e) | E-mail address  |  |
| 1.2(f) | Postal address |  |
| 1.2(g) | Signature (electronic is acceptable) |  |
| 1.2(h) | Date |  |

**Part 2 Exclusion Grounds**

**Part 2.1 Grounds for mandatory exclusion**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no.  | Question | Response |
| 2.1(a) | Please indicate if, within the past five years you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation been convicted anywhere in the world of any of the offences within the summary below. |
|  | Participation in a criminal organisation.  | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Corruption.  | ((Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Fraud.  | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Money laundering or terrorist financing | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Child labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
| 2.1(b) | If you have answered yes to question 2.1(a), please provide further details.Date of conviction, specify which of the grounds listed the conviction was for, and the reasons for conviction.Identity of who has been convictedIf the relevant documentation is available electronically please provide the web address, issuing authority, precise reference of the documents. |  |
| 2.1 (c) | If you have answered Yes to any of the points above have measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (i.e. Self-Cleaning) | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(d) | Has it been established, for your organisation by a judicial or administrative decision having final and binding effect in accordance with the legal provisions of any part of the United Kingdom or the legal provisions of the country in which the organisation is established (if outside the UK), that the organisation is in breach of obligations related to the payment of tax or social security contributions? | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(e) | If you have answered yes to question 2.3(a), please provide further details. Please also confirm you have paid or have entered into a binding arrangement with a view to paying, the outstanding sum including where applicable any accrued interest and/or fines. |  |

**Part 2.2 Grounds for discretionary exclusion**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no.  | Question | Response |
| 2.2(a) | The detailed grounds for discretionary exclusion of an organisation are set out on this [webpage](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551130/List_of_Mandatory_and_Discretionary_Exclusions.pdf), which should be referred to before completing these questions. Please indicate if, within the past three years, anywhere in the world any of the following situations have applied to you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation |
| 2.2(b) | Breach of environmental obligations?  | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(c) | Breach of social obligations?  | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(d) | Breach of labour law obligations?  | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(e) | Shown significant or persistent deficiencies in the performance of a substantive requirement under a prior public contract, a prior contract with a contracting entity, or a prior concession contract, which led to early termination of that prior contract, damages or other comparable sanctions? | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2 (f) | If you have answered Yes to any of the above, explain what measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (Self Cleaning) |  |

**Annex 2 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions**

I/We accept in full the terms and conditions appended to this Request for Quote document.

Company \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_