Mini Competition

Mini Competition against an existing Framework Agreement (MC) on behalf of Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)

Subject ACAS Training Feedback Survey Training Courses in 2018/19 and 2019/20

Sourcing reference number CR18041 – Lot 1

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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 Contracting Authorities improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

It is our vision to become the leading service provider for Contracting Authorities for in the UK public sector, continuously reducing cost and improving quality of business services for Government and the public sector**.**

Our broad range of expert services is shared by our Contracting Authorities. This allows Contracting Authorities the freedom to focus resources on core activities; innovating and transforming their own organisations.

Core services include Procurement, Finance, Grants Admissions, Human Resources, Payroll, ISS, and Property Asset Management all underpinned by our Service Delivery and Contact Centre teams.

UK SBS is a people rather than task focused business. It's what makes us different to the traditional transactional shared services centre. What is more, being a not-for-profit organisation owned by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), UK SBS' goals are aligned with the public sector and delivering best value for the UK taxpayer.

Growing from a foundation of supporting the Research Councils, 2012/13 saw Business Innovation and Skills (BEIS) transition their procurement to UK SBS and Crown Commercial Service (CCS) agree a Memorandum of Understanding with UK SBS to deliver two major procurement categories (construction and research) across Government.

UK SBS currently manages £700m expenditure for its Contracting Authorities.

Contracting Authorities who have access to our services and Contracts are detailed here.

Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority

Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)

An independent body, largely funded by the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), ACAS was established formally by statute in 1976. Today it employs around 750 people with a devolved structure with offices in 12 areas grouped into four ACAS regions across England, Scotland and Wales. The Head Office for ACAS is based in London and houses a wide range of corporate support functions and policy makers including the Strategy Directorate who are commissioning this work. Within the Strategy Directorate are the Strategy Unit, Information and Guidance team, Equality and Diversity team, Communication teams and Research and Evaluation Section (RES). RES will manage the project.

ACAS aims to improve organisations and working life through better employment relationships and through a range of services which are delivered with independence, impartiality and are confidential.

ACAS is well known for its role in providing a dispute resolution service both in collective and individual disputes. ACAS offers a collective conciliation service for dealing with disputes between groups of workers and their employers. ACAS also deals with disputes where individuals claim their employer has breached their legal rights and ACAS has a statutory duty to promote the resolution of claims which might result in an Employment Tribunal.

ACAS also provides authoritative advice and guidance on employment and work matters to organisations and their employees, through online and telephone channels. ACAS' national and regional adviser's help organisations improve their employment practice, as well as solve problems when things go wrong, ACAS training and tailored projects help organisations develop employee engagement and productive working environments.

ACAS uses its insight and knowledge of workplace relations to inform policy development working with Government and wider stakeholders.

ACAS' main services can be grouped as follows (all of which would benefit from inclusion in this economic impact assessment):

Resolution of collective industrial disputes:

- Collective Conciliation

- Collective Arbitration

- Workplace Projects to prevent disputes though improved workplace relations

Resolution of individual rights disputes:

- Individual Conciliation in Employment Tribunal claims (IC)

- Early Conciliation in potential Employment Tribunal claims (EC)

Provision of information and advice on employment rights and obligations:

- Helpline - interactive service delivered by phone

– 'Helpline on-line' tool (a question and answer service on the ACAS website)

- Helpline 'webchat' (another form of helpline advice, using real-time online communication between an ACAS advisor and ACAS users)

Services to provide direct assistance to improve workplace practices:

- Open access training services

- Workplace (bespoke) training services

- Charged Workplace Projects (ACAS advice and facilitation to jointly address workplace problems with management and employee representatives)

- In-depth advice (face-to-face visits or telephone advisory work to address workplace problems)

- Mediation in disputes or relationship breakdowns among individuals or groups in the workplace

- Certificate in Internal Workplace Mediation (CIWM): an accredited five day training course in mediation for delegates to use in their own workplace

Guidance to set standards and support self-help in adopting them:

- Statutory Codes of Practice

- Online non-statutory guidance (found on the ACAS Website)

- On-line tools for self-assessment and education accessed via ACAS website, for example ACAS' e-learning modules and the ACAS Model Workplace (AMWP) tool

- Website and other online communication content (employment relations research and discussion papers and advice and signposting to advice on social media etc) which improve employment relations and are not covered in the above

Waived fee and charged services

The majority of ACAS services are free at the point of use, however since around the year 2000 ACAS has offered charged-for services which recover their costs (they break even rather than make a profit). These services are Open Access Training and Workplace Training services; those Workplace Projects which are not related to preventing an imminent or existing collective dispute; Certificate in Internal Workplace Mediation (CIWM) Training; and Mediation to help individuals and groups resolve workplace issues or differences (which are outside the Employment Tribunal and collective conciliation systems).

www.ACAS.org.uk

Section 3 - Working with Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS).

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

Section 3 – Contact details		
3.1	Contracting Authority (CA) Name and address	**Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)** 22nd Floor Euston Tower 286 Euston Road London NW1 3DP
3.2	Buyer name	Victoria Clewer
3.3	Buyer contact details	research@uksbs.co.uk
3.4	Estimated value of the Opportunity	£40,000.00 Ex VAT This includes collection of c.25,000 survey forms, their analysis, and the production of reports outlined below. It does not include costs associated with the proposed pilot study examining the impact of electronic surveys.
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 will result in the Bid not being considered.**

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6	Date of Issue of Mini Competition to all Bidders	Thursday 22nd February 2018
3.7	Latest date/time Mini Competition clarification questions shall be received through Emptoris messaging system	Thursday 1st March 2018 11:00
3.8	Latest date/time Mini Competition clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Emptoris	Friday 2nd March 2018

3.9	Latest date/time Mini Competition Bid shall be submitted through Emptoris	Tuesday 6th March 2018 14.00pm
3.10	Anticipated selection and de selection of Bids notification date	Tuesday 13th March 2018
3.11	Anticipated Award Date	Tuesday 13th March 2018
3.12	Anticipated Contract Start Date	Monday 2nd April 2018
3.13	Anticipated Contract End Date	Tuesday 31st March 2020
3.14	Bid Validity Period	60 Working Days
3.15	Framework and or Lot the Mini competition will be based on	Research & Evaluation Framework Reference CR15025 Lot 1

Section 4 – Specification

1. Introduction

Acas runs a range of paid-for Training events throughout the year. This covers a wide range of events of different scope and subject area, and fall under categories of "Open Access" (which anyone can attend on payment of the fee, and which take place away from the workplace); "Workplace Training", where an employer or group of employees contracts Acas to provide training to staff, which may take place in the workplace itself.

Acas solicits the views of the attendees of these events, using a survey assessment form, which are analysed by the contractor to create regional and national level reports. Findings are used to provide evidence to key stakeholders to inform strategic decisions, and as part of trainers' performance management process.

The project will be commissioned for two full operational years of fieldwork – the 2018/19 and 2019/20 operational years, meaning that the contract will last from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2020.

2. Aims

Over the two operational years of the contract:

- To collect data from the feedback questionnaires from 'workplace' (WPT) training delegates, 'open access' (OA) training delegates.

- To highlight areas for service improvement and compare the performance of different Acas offices and trainers and by types of course and training topic;

- To provide data which contributes to assessments of Acas performance targets

- To enable comparisons between different categories of training course, and between those organised by different regions

- To provide data for training managers to help assess the performance of individual trainers

- To provide comparable data with previous surveys to allow analysis of the progress of the Acas training programme;

- To provide findings which are representative of the population of interest: individual delegates of Acas training sessions;

- To assess the impact on response rates, costs and output timings of any potential move to using electronic methods of feedback, by way of a small-scale online-response pilot project to run concurrently with the main paper-based approach.

3. Background

Acas utilises its extensive knowledge of employment legislation and employment good practice to provide a national programme of training, covering a wide range of topics such as: bullying and harassment; equality and diversity; age discrimination; absence management; discipline and grievance; information and consultation etc.

Courses within the programme are aimed at different audiences ranging from very small businesses with little or no HR experience to HR professionals who want to ensure that they are up-to-date with the latest developments in employment legislation.

The programme is centrally co-ordinated from Acas Head Office, with all courses being based upon a national framework. However, the day-to-day administration and delivery of the training programme is organised through the network of 12 Acas regional offices, to enable it to respond effectively to local needs.

Acas takes two main approaches to training both managers and employees and their representatives, which are known as Open Access (OA) training and 'Workplace training (WPT). Acas also holds Conferences, which are included under the Training umbrella, and fall within the scope of this evaluation, but which are evaluated separately to other OA event.

3.1 Open Access training

Open Access training courses are advertised and open to anyone, and are designed to meet the delegate's on-going training needs, such as how to employ people, as well as responding to new issues such as the introduction of new legislation (such as the National Living Wage). The emphasis is on encouraging good practice in the workplace as well as ensuring an understanding of legal compliance.

As well as being split into topics (such as Discipline and Grievance), Open Access events can be split into five main 'event types'. These are:

- **Key Point Sessions** – Short events which aim to cover the key issues on a particular subject in a clear and concise way. These are intended to be most useful to small and medium sized organisations that do not have access to an HR specialist.

- **Getting It Right Sessions** – These events are aimed at the same audience and cover the same issues as for the 'Key Point Sessions' but they are usually longer and aim to allow delegates more time to explore the issues. They generally include more discussion time than in the 'Key Point Sessions' and involve interactive exercises to embed learning.

- **In-Depth Sessions** – These are designed for professionals, such as HR specialists and Trade Union Officers, who have an existing knowledge of employment legislation and good practice. They tend to be interactive, allowing delegates to explore issues and share views and experiences, while aiming to ensure that those taking part are aware of the latest developments in terms of legislation and good practice.

- **Talks** - From time to time Acas is invited to give talks either to particular groups or as part of a bigger conference. Such talks can raise the profile of Acas in different arenas. Where possible and appropriate, Acas speakers take the opportunity to promote the Acas Model Workplace and other services available from Acas both with the host organisation and with delegates.

Conferences

These one off events may focus on a particular subject, and may be targeted at the needs of a particular group or aim to showcase the full range of Acas services to a particular audience. They are usually attended by a larger number of delegates than other Acas events and have a more varied format. Although considered a category of Open Access (OA) course, they are evaluated separately.

3.2 Workplace Training

Workplace Training events are run within individual organisations, attended by delegates selected by the organisation from among their staff. Existing Acas training content is adapted and tailored towards the particular needs of the organisation. Often organisations will require a series of events to be run over a period of time to either several groups of delegates or on several topics.

4. Volumes and flexibility

4.1 Number of events, delegates and questionnaires

Appendix 1 shows, for the last three operational years:

- the number of training events held
- the number of delegates attending
- the number of feedback questionnaires given out
- the number of feedback questionnaires returned
- the coverage rates of events and delegates
- the response rates for the feedback survey

It also shows the coverage rate of events and delegates broken down by OA and WPT events. The coverage rate of WPT is much lower than OA events (68% for WPT compared to 93% for OA in 2016-17). This is because for WPT events, employers often like to use their own feedback questionnaires and survey their own staff rather than have Acas survey them.

Within Appendix 1, Table 3 shows that in 2016-17 (the last full year for which there are figures) 23,992 questionnaires were returned (10,987 OA and 13,005 WPT questionnaires). This represents a response rate of 96%.

We are expecting similar numbers of returned questionnaires per operating year of the contract. Please indicate any additional costs per hundred returns over 25,000.

4.2 Flexibility

A break clause in the contract is required at the end of the first Operational Year. This is required in case the survey is cancelled, or if the structure or methodology of the survey requires significant changes. If this is the case, Acas will inform the contractor by 1st December 2019 at the latest.

5. Methodology for the Training delegate feedback survey

The current method of this survey is a rolling feedback survey of delegates at Acas training courses. At the end of each event, the Acas trainer hands out to each delegate either; an OA feedback questionnaire (Appendix 2a or Appendix 2b if a large print version required); a WPT feedback questionnaire (Appendix 3a or Appendix 3b if a large print version is required); or a Conference feedback questionnaire (Appendix 4); depending on which training event it is.

The Acas trainer collects the completed feedback questionnaires from delegates and sends them to the research contractor along with either an OA cover sheet (Appendix 5), a WPT cover sheet (Appendix 6) or a Conference cover sheet (Appendix 7).

The contractor receives the feedback survey questionnaires and captures the data from them including any necessary coding.

The contractor chases up any missing questionnaires based on monthly information provided by the Acas Research and Evaluation (RES) team on the training events held in the previous month. (Missing questionnaires tend to be in the region of 15%, although this varies, and are chased up via email.)

The contractor sends RES a cleaned SPSS file of the data captured from the previous quarter's events for checking. RES checks the file and then notifies the contractor of any errors.

Each quarter the contractor produces and sends the RES team the following reports:

- a Word report (an example is shown in Appendix 8) for OA events (excluding Conferences) for each Acas office (11 offices in total).

- a Word report (an example is shown in Appendix 9) for WPT events for each Acas office (11 offices in total).

- a Excel report for Conferences at a national level. No Conference report was produced by the contractor in previous years, but this should follow the format of the OA and WPT annual Excel report.

- an Excel report for the whole of Acas, for OA events: an example is shown in Appendix 10. For this contract period, the Excel report should reproduce this format; however, the analysis by video use is not required, and, for Materials, only analysis by Overall satisfaction is necessary.

- an Excel report for the whole of Acas, for WPT events (an example is shown in Appendix 11). Again, this should not include analysis by video use, and for Materials, only analysis by Overall satisfaction.

RES check the reports and notify the contractor of any errors for rectifying. RES then disseminate the reports within Acas.

At the end of the operational year the contractor provides the RES team with:

- a final dataset in SPSS coving the whole operational year.

- an Excel report for the whole of Acas, for OA events covering the whole operational year, in the same format as the quarterly national-level report discussed above.

- an Excel report for the whole of Acas, for WPT events covering the whole operational year in the same format as the quarterly national-level.

Suggestions for the addition of data visualisation (graphs, charts etc.) to Excel reports (both quarterly and annual) to enable easier utilisation and more ready communication of data to users with limited time are welcome.

RES check these reports and notify the contractor of any errors for rectifying. RES then disseminate the reports within Acas.

The Acas operational year begins in April and ends in March. Acas operational quarters run as follows:

- Quarter 1: April to June
- Quarter 2: July to September
- Quarter 3: October to December
- Quarter 4: January to March

A summary of the current methodology is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of the current methodology of the training delegate feedback survey

No	Process	Responsible	When
1	Open access training courses held at Acas offices/other suitable venues Workplace training courses held at the customer's workplace	Acas	Throughout the year

2	Acas trainer hands out Training Delegate Feedback Questionnaires (Appendix 2a or 2b for Open a access courses, Appendix 3a or 3b for Workplace Training courses, or Appendix 4 for Conferences)	Acas Trainer	After each Training course held
3	Acas trainer collects the feedback forms from delegates and completes a cover sheet (Appendix 5 for Open a access courses and Appendix 6 for Workplace Training courses)	Acas Trainer	After each training course
4	Acas trainer sends the completed feedback sheets and cover sheet to the Contractor	Acas Trainer	After each training course
5	Acas Research and Evaluation Team send the contractor details of all training events held in the previous month broken down by type/date/office etc.	Acas Research and Evaluation Team	At beginning of each month
6	Data entry of feedback questionnaires	Contractor	Ongoing
7	Based on the information provided for item 5, the Contractor chases up any missing feedback questionnaires not received, with Acas training managers.	Contractor	Monthly
8	Contractor sends Acas the SPSS file containing the data captured	Contactor	Quarterly
9	Acas provides comments/requests for amendments to contractor	Acas Research and Evaluation Team	Quarterly
10	Reports at the office and National level are produced and sent to Acas	Contractor	Quarterly

11	National reports are also produced at the end of the operating year with data from all quarters.	Contractor	End of Operational Year

Any changes to the format of the reports to improve efficiency and/or reduce costs are welcome but will need to be agreed with Acas. We are particularly interested in suggestions to improve the turnaround time from submission of completed survey forms to receipt of the corresponding report – however, note that proposals for electronic submission will be subject to the outcome of the pilot discussed below and will not be implemented in this contract period.

As noted above, we also welcome suggestions to add visualisation to national-level Excel reports, both quarterly and annual, to enable more ready communication of findings to users with limited time.

5. Electronic survey pilot

In addition to the main evaluation detailed above. Acas wish to conduct a pilot study to assess the impact on response rates of a move towards electronic (or dual electronic-paper) completion, with the ultimate of aim of improving survey completion to report production turnaround time. This should involve two or three Acas regions, over one quarter, most likely Q2 (July to September). We would like to schedule a set-up meeting in mid-March to discuss this.

6. Requirements

- Layout/graphic design of the Open Access and Workplace training feedback questionnaires and cover sheets (appendices 2a, 2b, 3a, 3b, 4, 5 and 6 respectively) to be provided in PDF format. As noted above, we welcome suggestions to improve the presentation of data and findings, particular for users with limited time. The contractor is not required to print questionnaires as this, as well as postage, will be covered by Acas at its own expense.

- Data processing and reporting for the feedback survey in line with the methodology outlined in section 5.

- Data entry of all the training delegate feedback questionnaires. Typing and back coding of free text responses. Quality assurance of the data entry process.

- Follow up with Acas training managers to chase up any training delegate feedback questionnaires not yet returned but expected back (based upon management information provided by Acas at the end of each month).

- Open Access reports for each Acas office (11 reports) for each quarter, modelled on that shown in Appendix 7.

- Workplace training reports for each Acas office (11 reports) for each quarter, modelled on that shown in Appendix 9.

- For each quarter and also for the operational year, national reports for Open Access feedback as shown in Appendix 10 (Excel) and Word, following the format of the regional OA reports.

- For each quarter and also for the operational year, a national report for Workplace Training feedback as shown in Appendix 11 (Excel) and Word, following the format of the regional WPT reports.

- For each quarter and also for the operational year, a national report for Conference feedback in Excel, modelled on the National level OA and WPT reports.

- For each quarter a fully labelled SPSS dataset containing all the data for that quarter including derived variables.

- Flexibility to end the contract after one operational year should Acas or the contractor require this as outlined in section 4.2.

- A pilot study examining the impact of electronic survey completion on response rates (costed separately as an option for Acas.)

Section 5 – Evaluation of Bids

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

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

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

After moderation the scores will be finalised by performing a calculation to identify (at question level) the mean average of all evaluators (Example – a question is scored by three evaluators and judged as scoring 5, 5 and 6. These scores will be added together and divided by the number of evaluators to produce the final score of 5.33 (5+5+6 =16÷3 = 5.33)

Pass / fail criteria

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information Exemptions
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
-	-	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 Mini Competition. The Contracting Authority considers these weightings to be in line with the framework.

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2	Price	20%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Understanding the Requirement	40%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Methodology	20%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Project Team and Capability to Deliver	20%

Evaluation of criteria

Non-Price elements
Non-Price (Quality) 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 = {weighting percentage} x {bidder's score} = 20% x 60 = 12

The same logic will be applied to groups of questions which equate to a single evaluation criterion.

The 0-100 score shall be based on (unless otherwise stated within the question):

0	The Question is not answered or the response is completely unacceptable.
10	Extremely poor response – they have completely missed the point of the question.
20	Very poor response and not wholly acceptable. Requires major revision to the response to make it acceptable. Only partially answers the requirement, with major deficiencies and little relevant detail proposed.
40	Poor response only partially satisfying the selection question requirements with deficiencies apparent. Some useful evidence provided but response falls well short of expectations. Low probability of being a capable supplier.
60	Response is acceptable but remains basic and could have been expanded upon. Response is sufficient but does not inspire.
80	Good response which describes their capabilities in detail which provides high levels of assurance consistent with a quality provider. The response includes a full description of techniques and measurements currently employed.
100	Response is exceptional and clearly demonstrates they are capable of meeting the requirement. No significant weaknesses noted. The response is compelling in its description of techniques and measurements currently employed, providing full assurance consistent with a quality provider.

All specific: Quality questions will be marked based on the above mechanism. Please be aware that there may be multiple evaluators. If so, their individual scores will be averaged to determine your final score as follows:

Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 40

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 80

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 60

Your final score will be calculated as follows (60+40+80+60) ÷ 4 = 60

Price elements will be judged on the following criteria.	

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

For example - Bid 1 £100,000 scores 100,
Bid 2 £120,000 differential of £20,000 or 20% remove 20% from price scores 80
Bid 3 £150,000 differential £50,000 remove 50% from price scores 50.
Bid 4 £175,000 differential £75,000 remove 75% from price scores 25.
Bid 5 £200,000 differential £100,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.
Bid 6 £300,000 differential £200,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.

Where the scoring criterion is worth 50% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 50

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

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. Unless formally requested to do so by UK SBS e.g. Emptoris system failure

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 Mini Competition. You should note that we will release the answer to the question to all Bidders and where we suspect the question contains confidential information we may modify the content of the question to protect the anonymity of the Bidder or their proposed solution

7.6   Do answer the question, it is not enough simply to cross-reference to a 'policy', web page or another part of your Bid, the evaluation team have limited time to assess bids and if they can't find the answer, they can't score it.

7.7   Do consider who the Contracting Authority is and what they want a generic answer does not necessarily meet every Contracting Authority's   needs.

7.8   Do reference your documents correctly, specifically where supporting documentation is requested e.g. referencing the question/s they apply to.

7.9   Do provide clear and concise and ideally generic contact details; telephone numbers, e-mail 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.

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 Contracting Authority to discuss your Bid. If your Bid requires clarification the Buyer will contact you. All information secured outside of formal Buyer communications shall have no Legal standing or worth and should not be relied upon.

7.16   Do not contact any UK SBS staff or the Contracting Authority 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 the Contracting Authority 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, unless the Framework explicitly permits this.

Some additional guidance notes 📖

7.23   All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool must be submitted to Crown Commercial Service (CCS – 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 as part of the evaluation process.

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 / UKSBS.

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 Mini Competition 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 during the clarification period only, if you can demonstrate there is a legal or statutory reason why you cannot accept them. If you request changes to the contract terms without such grounds and the Contracting Authority fail to accept your legal or statutory reason is reasonably justified we may reject your Bid.

7.35 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 Call Off 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 Mini Competition consent to these terms as part of the competition process.

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

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

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft contract accompanying this Mini Competition to reflect any changes introduced by the GSC. In particular where this Mini Competition 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](#)