

www.gov.uk/naturalengland

**Request for Quotation**

**Preparation of landscape-led design principles and guidance for new reservoirs and associated infrastructure**

**31st October 2023**

**Request for Quotation**

**Preparation of landscape-led design principles and guidance for new reservoirs and associated infrastructure**

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 addresses, by:

Email:Jacqui.jobbins@naturalengland.org.uk

Andrew.Gale@naturalengland.org.uk

Date: **15/11/23**

Time: **12:00 noon**

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**

**Andrew Gale and Jacqui Jobbins** will be your contacts 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.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Action | Date |
| Date of issue of RFQ | 31st October 2023 |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | 13th November at 2pm |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | 15th November 2023 at 12 noon |
| Intended date of Contract Award | 20th November 2023 |
| Intended Contract Start Date | 22nd November 2023 |
| Intended Delivery Date / Contract Duration  | 30th March 2024  |

**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):

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| “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 accompanying 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** found at [Procurement at Natural England - Natural England - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about/procurement) 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, **inclusive of VAT**.

**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**

1. **Background and purpose**
	1. Natural England is the national landscape agency for England. We are the government’s advisor on landscape matters for England, the designating authority for National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty AONBs, and a statutory consultee for major development schemes.
	2. Natural England’s broader remit is for the whole of the natural environment, and includes conserving and enhancing the landscape; promoting nature conservation; protecting biodiversity; promoting access to and the understanding and enjoyment of the natural environment; and contributing to the promotion of social and economic well-being. The ‘landscape’ provides an effective framework and scale to deliver these purposes, including the delivery of nature recovery. Further information can be found at [Natural England](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/).
	3. This specification is for the co-creation of design principles and guidance for new reservoirs in the English landscape in conjunction with the water industry to deliver new, environmentally sustainable reservoirs across England which:
		* conserve and enhance existing landscape character, including the natural beauty of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) in line with their statutory purpose to conserve and enhance natural beauty;
		* enhance existing landscapes or produce new high-quality, multi-functional landscapes in the wider countryside which deliver for landscape, nature and nature recovery; and
		* will help them to comply with national planning policy therefore assist in securing planning approval.
	4. The need for design guidance is pressing because:
		* The increasingly erratic weather conditions brought about by climate change, as evidenced by the declared drought in summer 2022 has given renewed impetus to the need for new reservoirs.
		* The water industry is in the process of finalising their statutory Water Resources Management Plans (WRMPs)[[1]](#footnote-2) which include some proposed new reservoirs. A non-statutory process instigated by OFWAT, the Environment Agency and the Drinking Water Inspectorate called ‘RAPID’ (Regulators’ Alliance for Progressing Infrastructure Development) is in place to assess individual schemes they deem “strategic” at key stages, overcome barriers and generally facilitate easier and earlier delivery. Not all reservoirs in the WRMP will be subject to the RAPID assessment process. New water infrastructure is being highlighted as a priority by ministers, and so schemes may be put on a faster track to approval including those within and outside the RAPID process. We therefore need design standards ready to work with whatever review or planning approval process is in place.
		* The revised National Policy Statement (NPS) for water infrastructure was published in April 2023. This establishes the planning policy for water related Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and would be complemented by sector specific design guidance. Planning Inspectors tasked with examining reservoirs categorised as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects or as “strategic” would benefit from this guidance.
	5. The pressing need for reservoir design guidance is prompted by the sheer scale of the changes that these schemes will bring to the receiving landscapes. Landscape scale changes need to be supported by a landscape-led approach to design and delivery to provide a framework through which to secure a host of other essential benefits for the wider natural environment, not least for biodiversity and climate sequestration.
	6. There is an opportunity to provide landscape specific guidance which expands upon the high-level National Infrastructure Commission Design Principles[[2]](#footnote-3) and other water industry design principles[[3]](#footnote-4) to ensure that the landscape implications of reservoirs are addressed, and wider environmental opportunities are identified and included in their design.
2. **Contract scope and requirements**

* 1. The contractor, in close collaboration with the Natural England steering group will:
		1. Engage with the water service and supply companies, industry umbrella bodies and the national regulator. The aim will be to explain the purpose and scope of this project and to secure their participation in co-creating the guidance with Natural England. From the start of this project, it is vitally important to build a clear constituency of support across the sector, and especially with the water service and supply companies, so that the industry adopts and applies the guidance as standard practice. We anticipate the need to establish a small consultative group, convened and managed by the contractor, through which industry input can be channelled and with which emerging outputs can be shared and tested.
		2. Establish, as the basis for the guidance, the defining and guiding principles of a landscape-led approach to reservoir design.
		3. Identify the individual landscape issues to be considered in designing reservoirs in different landscape settings. We anticipate that these could be identified, assessed and presented in relation to broad locational scenarios:
	2. In or within the setting of a nationally designated landscape. This requires reservoir design which is highly responsive to the statutory purposes of National Parks and AONBs (conserving and enhancing natural beauty); to the defining features and characteristics of those areas which constitute their recognised ‘special qualities’ and provide the reason for their national designation; and enable the industry to comply with the national planning policies and guidance which protect our finest landscapes.
	3. In the wider non-designated countryside where conserving and enhancing valued landscape character can be combined, where appropriate, with creating a new high-quality landscape centred on a reservoir and delivering a broad range of benefits for nature, people and recreation, and for the local economy. This is where the concept of a landscape scale multifunctional green/blue infrastructure can be given its fullest expression and provides a delivery context for Nature Recovery Networks and maximising biodiversity net gain.
	4. In the English uplands where new reservoirs involve damming upland valleys (or raising the water level of existing reservoirs), considering the wholescale change to the landscape and its character brought about by permanently flooding a valley, as well as the infrastructure needed for its creation.
	5. In the English lowlands where reservoirs need to be contained within regularly shaped, very high and generally steep sided retaining structures, of typically 5-6km² in size which will likely conflict with existing landscape character and need careful design consideration to assist in settling them into their landscape setting in as naturalistic a way as possible.
		1. Produce a set of principles and guidance, fully illustrated, for each of these scenarios and for the individual issues noted in points i to iv above. This is intended to provide design and engineering teams with a strong steer and inspiration to which they can add their technical expertise to design and deliver their scheme quickly and to a high standard. The design guidance will not deal with detailed engineering and construction matters although high level issues can be highlighted where known and potentially helpful. This would be especially appropriate where a landscape-led design and nature-based approach may also provide practical and effective engineering, construction and/or structural or operational benefits. This might include types of planting to stabilise retaining bunds or reed beds to protect banks and help maintain water quality.
		2. Illustrate and support the guidance as appropriate with relevant case studies, both of recent reservoir schemes and drawing on historical examples; and possibly examples from abroad.
	6. In all cases the design guidance, whilst focused on the new water body itself and the structures needed to contain that water (dams or bunds) should also cover ancillary infrastructure. This would include pump houses, car parking, and any other maintenance or visitor facilities. The guidance should set out the landscape planning and design techniques for accommodating these into the landscape as an integral part of settling the whole scheme into the receiving landscape.

1. **Other information to support this specification**
	1. Technical Appendix 1 of this specification sets out other information which will help to inform the scope, content and structure of the guidance.
2. **Contract outputs**
	1. The output from this contract will be a set of design principles and guidance for the landscape-led design and delivery of new reservoirs in England. This will be a web published document but presented in a format which can be easily printed. The document will feature copyright-free images and will be the property of Natural England.
	2. The document will be supported by illustrations, which present design options and possibilities for different locations and schemes. As explained earlier this will be design guidance and not an instructional guide to engineering and construction. The guidance document will need to make its purpose very clear.

* 1. A key element of the contract will be the co-creation of the principles and guidance which will be aimed at ensuring the effective adoption of the principles and guidance by the water companies and relevant industry bodies.
	2. A webinar will accompany the principles and guidance to be delivered to industry bodies and water companies.
1. **Meetings and project communication**
	1. Meetings and key contact points should be built into the tender response, and should include:
		* An initial inception meeting with Natural England’s Steering Group to confirm the scope of the work and the steps the contractor intends to take to meet the project requirements.
		* Fortnightly updates and any work needed for immediate action with the Project Managers via MS Teams calls and emails.
		* Virtual meetings with the project managers and other Natural England staff at key points in the programme.
		* Allowance for workshops/meetings with the water service and supply companies, industry umbrella bodies and the national regulator, with one face to face meeting as part of this process. The tender should include information on the frequency and number of these events based on key programme dates and as necessary for effective co-operation; allowance needs to be made for the supplier to arrange the face to face meeting/workshop.
		* Allowance for consultative group meetings (3 in total) as detailed in paragraph 2.1 a) above.
		* A final virtual meeting with the internal Steering Group to present the draft principles and guidance.
		* A webinar to present the work to the industry.
2. **Supplier experience and skill requirements**
	1. Please provide evidence to support your skills and experience as set out below.

* 1. To deliver the project as specified and to acknowledge the high profile and specific stakeholder engagement needed for this work, we are looking for a professional contractor with multi-disciplinary skills and experience. Your tender should include a full explanation of how you would initiate and manage engagement with the water industry to secure their fullest participation in the co-creation of the design principles and guidance.
	2. In particular, the contractor will have the following skills and experience:
		+ A strong background in landscape character assessment, landscape designation and categorisation, landscape-led planning and design; and an understanding of the legislative, planning policy and wider policy framework within which reservoirs are designed, approved, and delivered.
		+ Relevant civil engineering expertise or access to these skills to inform the principles and guidance.
		+ In-house capabilities to produce high quality illustrations or have guaranteed access to them, as the guidance will require illustrations to be produced specifically for the final document.
		+ Stakeholder engagement skills to enable effective co-creation of the principles and buy-in from the relevant industry representatives and water companies.
	3. Tenders from consortia representing the skills set would be acceptable, or clear confirmation that the tenderer has access to specialist advisors who will be brought into the project team to provide the full breadth of expertise required for the work.

* 1. Specific landscape knowledge essential for this project includes:
	2. strong background in landscape character assessment, landscape designation and categorisation, landscape-led/green infrastructure design and delivery; and
	3. an understanding of the legislative, planning policy and wider policy framework within which reservoirs are designed, approved, and delivered.
	4. The following generic skills will also be required for all elements of the work:
	5. excellent research, analytical and written skills;
	6. excellent inter-personal and presentational skills,
	7. the ability to meet tight deadlines whilst maintaining high quality outputs;
	8. identifying risks to project delivery and appropriate mitigation measures;
	9. a flexible approach to meet a varied and fluctuating workload;
	10. an awareness of the nature of Natural England’s and partners/stakeholders work;
	11. the ability to establish good working relationships with industry bodies, water companies, Natural England staff and partners/stakeholders;
	12. experience of working with public sector bodies, utilities and other stakeholders.
1. **Payment and timescale**
	1. The Authority will raise purchase orders to cover the cost of the services and will issue to the awarded supplier following contract award.
	2. The Authority’s preference is for all invoices to be sent electronically, quoting a valid Purchase Order number. At key stages in the process, based on the programme, two invoicing points are proposed, based on a split of 40% and 60% of the work. The details of the exact dates for invoicing will be agreed at the inception meeting. Each invoice would be paid once the project manager has reviewed the output and deemed it to be satisfactory.
	3. As stated on p.4, prices must be submitted in £ sterling, **inclusive of VAT**.

* 1. It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded in late November 2023, with work starting as soon as practical after that. The contract is expected to run until the end of March 2024.
	2. 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:

Technical (quality) – 60%

Commercial (price) – 40%

**Evaluation criteria**

The evaluation weightings are 60% technical and 40% commercial. The winning tenderer will be the highest scoring combined score.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Award Criteria** | **Weighting (%)** | **Evaluation Topic & Weighting** | **Sub-Criteria** | **Weighted Question** |
| Technical | 60% | Service Proposal | Methodology | Question 1 20% of technical score available |
| Outputs (see para. 5.3) | Question 230% of technical score available |
| Knowledge and experience | Question 320% of technical score available |
| Key personnel | Question 4 20% of technical score available |
| Risks & Constraints | Question 510% of technical score available |
| Commercial | 40% | Whole cost of the proposed contract | Commercial Model | Question 1100% of commercial score available |

**Technical (60%)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Criteria | **Detailed Evaluation Criteria**  |
| Question 1 Please provide details of your understanding of the key aims of the work package, tasks and intended outputs.  |  |
| Question 2 Please provide details of your proposals for completing outputs as set out in section 4 above.  | To include a work programme with key dates and milestones highlighted.  |
| Question 3 Please provide evidence of previous research skills, knowledge and experience.  | To include detail of two projects of comparable scope and complexity, with similar tight timescales, challenges**[[4]](#footnote-5)** and outputs, and completed in the last five years. |
| Question 4 Please provide details of your key personnel, the roles and contributions to the project.  | To include CVs for key staff. |
| Q5 Please provide details of your understanding of the risks/constraints of this project. | To include risk assessment and contingencies for ensuring successful completion of the contract (please address both internal and external risks). |

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.  |

The technical evaluation is assessed using the evaluation topics and sub-criteria stated in the Evaluation Criteria section above.

Separate submissions for each technical question should be provided and will be evaluated in isolation. Tenderers should provide answers that meet the criteria of each technical question.

**Commercial (40%)**

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

Suppliers are required to submit a total cost to provide the outputs stated in the Specification of Requirements. In addition to this, the Commercial Response basic template must be completed to provide a breakdown of the costs against each output used in the delivery of this requirement.

Calculation Method

The method for calculating the weighted scores is as follows:

Technical:

Score = (Bidder’s Total Technical Score / Highest Technical Score) x 60%(Maximum available marks)

Commercial:

Score = (Lowest Quotation Price / Supplier’s Quotation Price) x 40%(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 basic template;
* a separate response to each technical question within the submission (in accordance with the response instructions);
* Proposed timetable;
* Quality assurance measures;
* 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, incorporating their Response, for signature. The Authority will then counter sign'.

**Technical Appendix 1: Further information**

**Benefits and opportunities which arise from accommodating the new reservoirs in the landscape.**

These include:

* Nature recovery, using a multi-disciplinary approach which benefits wider ecosystems services, underpins landscape character, and creates flagship nature-based solutions;
* Contributions to the Government’s 30x30 targets;
* Biodiversity Net Gain and habitat creation, and wider links to Local Nature Recovery Strategies;
* Contribution to net zero by enabling tree and woodland planting delivery;
* Public health and wellbeing benefits providing opportunities to connect with the environment; and
* Developing approaches to off-setting lost or damaged landscape features, including historic environment, and wider hydrological and geomorphological impacts.

**The national planning policy context**

Section 3.6 of the National Policy Statement (NPS) for Water Resources Infrastructure (April, 2023) sets out the overall design criteria for ‘good design’ of water resources infrastructure, specifically for NSIPs. It starts by noting that ‘*Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places and helps make infrastructure projects acceptable to communities*.’ It highlights benefits to good design including saving money, reducing risk and adding value, which would “… *support environmental enhancements and create a legacy that looks good and works well’*. The document also deals more widely with issues of ‘environmental net gain’ (in section 3.4) and with mitigation measures for the environmental effects of water infrastructure, all of which can be supported by the design principles and guidance.

The design principles and guidance would therefore complement and expand on the provisions of the NPS, providing detailed design guidance for both reservoirs categorised as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and those not governed by NSIP thresholds.

**Historical design standards**

Design standards developed in the middle years of the 20th century (by Dame Sylvia Crowe and others) give a starting point for best practice design standards envisaged, and include:

* Comprehensive environmental site assessment[[5]](#footnote-6) to fully inform decision-making from initial siting to detailed design;
* Fully integrated solutions for all environmental disciplines by working closely together to achieve high quality design and mitigation to bring significant nature benefit and landscape character enhancement, while developing access and recreation opportunities appropriate to the place; and
* Assimilation of auxiliary facilities (e.g., pumping stations and towers, visitor’s centres, car parks for recreation) into the landscape for the benefit of all environmental disciplines.

**Existing landscape guidance for the water industry**

There is no sector specific landscape design guidance. The ‘Water Industry Strategic Environmental Requirements (WISER): technical document’ on the government’s .gov.uk website [Water industry strategic environmental requirements (WISER) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/developing-the-environmental-resilience-and-flood-risk-actions-for-the-price-review-2024/water-industry-strategic-environmental-requirements-wiser)

identifies the relevant statutory duties and national planning policies which apply to the industry. These duties are mirrored in industry’s own guidance on Strategic Environmental Assessments of their WRMP and Drought Plans but it does not give any guidance on how to do this or on strategic mitigation to address adverse environmental impacts. These are covered by National Park and AONB legislation and with wider natural beauty, and rural amenity duties placed on relevant undertakers in the Water Industry Act 1991. Consequently, whilst the legislative and policy drivers are in place the detailed guidance needed to support their full and proper application appears to be absent.

The National Infrastructure Commission promotes Design Principles for National Infrastructure, but these are cross-cutting, very high level and focus on operational needs rather than wider opportunities. They provide over-arching design principles which could complement the sort of guidance we need to secure but won’t by themselves deliver maximum joined-up benefits for the natural environment.

**How the water industry currently deals with reservoir design and the issues arising**

The water industry has a legacy of delivering well designed reservoirs constructed during the period spanning the 1930s to 1970s. The detailed lessons of that period and the very careful consideration given (by commissioned landscape architects) to working with existing landscape character appears not to have been retained, as evidenced by the proposals which are currently coming forward under OFWAT’s RAPID process. A proper understanding of the statutory purposes of National Parks and AONBs, their landscape sensitivity and defined ‘special qualities’ also appears to be lacking.

The privatised water industry is a fragmented one and each water service or supply company will have its own understanding of landscape and design. As with other major infrastructure projects the design process can be led by engineering issues which lean towards a utilitarian design. However, there could be significant environmental benefits in developing an interdisciplinary, integrated approach where design and operational requirements can be adapted to realise a scheme’s environmental and social potential.

The work could draw on historical examples of delivering high quality landscape schemes, with a standout example being Rutland Water[[6]](#footnote-7) and any recent projects which have demonstrated good design. In addition, highlighting some of pitfalls from poor design may also be valuable.

**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.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 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.

**Note** that completion of the terms and conditions themselves are not necessary at this stage. A copy is included with this RFQ for reference only.

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

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

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

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

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

1. <https://www.wrse.org.uk> accessed 24.10.2023 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. [NIC-Design-Principles.pdf](https://nic.org.uk/app/uploads/NIC-Design-Principles.pdf) accessed 28.11.2022 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. <https://www.wrse.org.uk/media/fspcib0h/acwg-design-principles-process-and-gate-2-indicators.pdf> accessed 24.10.2023 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. We are particularly interested in previous work which shows your expertise in relationship building and detailed engagement for specific outcomes. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Includes landscape (including protected landscapes), geology, topography, historic environment (archaeology and cultural heritage), biodiversity, soils, geodiversity and hydrology. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Kielder Water, the largest reservoir in Northern Europe is an exemplar for its treatment and subsequent interpretation of historic landscape features. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)