

## **CS19403 Prior Information Notice for UK Space Agency – Delivery Partner for UK Space Incubator Programme.**

### **Background**

There has never been a better time to start and grow a space business wherever you are in the UK, with support networks, funding opportunities and advice available across the country.

UK Space Agency has partnered with a number of organisations since 2015 to provide support specifically to space start-up companies. The ambition was to establish a network of support across the country and plan for the long-term future of UK space business support capacity and capability.

We have supported emerging and growing space businesses by funding a nationwide network of incubators and accelerators to foster innovation and new enterprise.

At the end of 2018, we commissioned an independent study of the economic impact of the Network. Although it is too early to tell in many cases, the study indicates a positive impact so far in terms of company survival rates, indicative increases in employment and turnover. We want to do better!

We want to establish a long term, sustainable business support programme which is nationally recognised for provision of high-quality incubation and acceleration to space start-up companies.

We will be inviting proposals from organisations specialising in planning and delivering business growth programmes to space or technology companies. The successful organisation will be contacted to UK Space Agency for a period up to 5 years to partner with, implement the desired transformational change of the UK Space Incubator Programme.

### **Key Objective**

We want to build on our success to create a consistent high-quality approach to the support and growth of young space start-up companies that can be branded a UK Space Agency product/programme.

Key deliverables for the successful bidder will include to design and deliver a number of workshops aligned to the topics identified to add value to the business support provided in our business support centres. These workshops will be accessible to companies throughout the UK so will need to be delivered at venues nationally. The delivery partner will work with UK SA to host annual networking events, host a web site to promote the network and facilitate communication and engagement throughout the network.

The delivery partner will also become a member of the network's Steering Board that will review the success of the programme with other member and use feedback to shape the activities to maximise impact for companies and ensure value for money is provided.

Companies supported by these incubators will be able to identify themselves a 'supported by...' company and will have access to workshops and events that UKSA intends to engage a delivery partner or partners to deliver.

The aim of this programme which forms the basis for this invitation intends to procure a delivery partner to deliver a number of events and workshops throughout the year and spread nationally to enable access to companies in incubators across our nationwide

network. We held a consultation with existing incubation members this year and the following topics have been identified as potentially being of most value

- Access to finance
- Grant writing
- Pitch training
- Entrepreneurial training
- Identifying and accessing the supply chain
- Investment readiness
- Intellectual Property and Patents
- Marketing / diversity
- Routes to market
- Regulation

This list is open to expansion or consolidation or further ideas for workshops that will add most value or have the most impact, however the successful delivery partner would be expected to be able to design and deliver material relevant to the space industry in all or some of the above topics, at this early stage these areas are still being agreed. Suppliers are able to bid as a sole supplier or a consortium. To deliver the best value, highest quality and most comprehensive support. UKSA would expect to have input and/or approve course material.

The successful partner will produce a programme of events to deliver throughout the year at venues around the UK. Provision should be made for some of the most popular events to be held multiple (two or three) times on different dates and venues to maximise the availability to companies in the network. The programme of events will also include two Space Incubator Network networking /showcase events per year.

Part of the procurement will also be to create a dedicated UK Space Incubator Network website which must comply with Government requirements for data protection and electronic media.

As providers of support to space start-up companies we contribute not only to UK economic growth but also to the growth of the space sector. We intend to take a leadership role in influencing Government policy and strategy regarding business support for space start-ups by creating a Space Business Support Steering Board (to meet quarterly) who will be responsible for driving the success of the Network and to table issues, topics and ideas to take forward through appropriate channels. The successful delivery partner would be expected to be a member and provide secretariat to this board .

### **Next Steps**

A supplier workshop will be held at **Polaris House North Star Avenue Swindon on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2019** when potential applicants will be able to meet some of the existing incubation suppliers to gain a deeper understanding of the programme to date. There will be a presentation from UK SA that outlines the growth of the current programme and will detail the key required outcomes of this contract, there will also be an opportunity to ask questions of the UK Space Incubator Network lead and Head of Local Growth Strategy, this will help the Contracting Authority finalise their strategy moving forward. At this stage the final strategy and route to market is still being finalised and input from the market will help in the preparation of the procurement.

If you are interested in attending a supplier engagement session, please confirm your attendance by emailing [professionalservices@uksbs.co.uk](mailto:professionalservices@uksbs.co.uk) stating your organisation and attendee's names. Your email should have the subject heading CS19403 Supplier Day. All requests to attend the supplier day must be received by Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

The format of the day will be

10:00 -10:30 Arrival

10:30 – 11:15 Overview of the Space Incubator Network including achievements so far, our vision, what we want to achieve, how we envisage achieving ---. Followed by questions

11:15 – 11:30 Break

11:30 -12:15 Presentation by incubator providers What adds value

12:15 - 12:30 Procurement process – UKSBS

12:30 -13:30 Any further questions or ideas

Attendees may wish to purchase lunch after the main workshop at the Polaris House restaurant.

A formal Request for Proposal will be released via Tenders Electronic Daily and Contracts Finder once the supplier day has taken place and the Contracting Authority have finalised the strategy and documentation. It is envisaged this will be during January 2020 with a contract being in place for April 2020

This Prior Information Notice is being issued in order to undertake a market consultation exercise with regards to the requirements detailed above. UK Space Agency would like to invite suppliers to attend this engagement session in order to assess the market's appetite, gather intelligence and view on the approach of procuring the work.

Space is limited on the supplier day, and attendance is restricted to 2 people per supplier. We request that attendance is restricted to key members of your organisation that would be able to add value to the discussions that will take place.

The final procurement strategy is still subject to discussion and change. The key element that we are looking to discuss will be around ensuring a deeper overview of the project and growth to date is understood by suppliers as well as what the contract is looking to deliver, it is the plan that suppliers will be able to provide insight from a market perspective of the key areas that will be required as part of the specification to ensure quality submissions are submitted.

UK Space Agency may consider the information and responses received as part of the preliminary market consultation to help inform the specification and further decision making in relation to the planning and conduct of the proposed procurement.

For the avoidance of doubt, this notice is not a Call for Competition; a Contract Notice will be issued as a call for competition. Not registering an interest shall not prevent any supplier participating in a future procurement, nor is it intended that any information supplied as part of the preliminary market consultation shall place any supplier at an advantage in a potential procurement process.