



Pre-Tender Market Engagement

OPPORTUNITY TO RUN THE GREEN FLAG AWARD ACCREDITATION SCHEME UNDER LICENCE

Ref: CPD 4122054

Authority: Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities DLUHC (“the Authority”).

Date Response required: 17:00 (GMT), Tuesday 10th Oct 2023.

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This Pre-Tender Market Engagement (PTME) seeks information in preparation for the potential procurement of a Supplier (from herein referred to as a “**Potential Supplier**”) to run the Green Flag Award accreditation scheme under licence. The purpose of this PTME is to:
 - 1.1.1 help define the requirement;
 - 1.1.2 help provide a better understanding of the feasibility of the requirement;
 - 1.1.3 understand the best procurement and service delivery approach;
 - 1.1.4 understand the capacity of the market to deliver and possible risks involved; and
 - 1.1.5 provide the market with an opportunity to ask questions, raise queries and identify any issues to be addressed at an early stage.
- 1.2 The Authority shall maintain commercial confidentiality of information received during the PTME.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities is seeking a Potential Supplier to licence the running of the Green Flag Awards on a financially self-sufficient, concession arrangement basis. It is proposed that the licence will be for a period from 01 August 2024 until 31 July 2029. It may then be renewable for up to a further five years.

3 HIGH LEVEL OUTLINE PROJECT OUTCOMES REQUIRED

- 3.1 The Green Flag Award Scheme (the Scheme) is both a national and international benchmark for quality public green spaces such as parks and community gardens – considered by the green space sector as the annual MOT for green space. It is highly regarded and credited with being a cost-effective way to raise the quality of urban green space and local people’s engagement with it. The current objectives of the Scheme are the following:
 - To ensure that everybody has access to quality green and other open spaces, irrespective of where they live;
 - To ensure that these spaces are appropriately managed and meet the needs of the communities that they serve;



- To establish standards of good management, and to promote and share best practice amongst the green space sector;
 - To recognise and reward the hard work of managers, staff and volunteers.
- 3.2 The Government wishes for the Supplier to sustain these objectives, but also wishes to utilise the Scheme to directly support the recent [cross-government commitment](#) that everyone in England should be within 15 minutes' walk of green or blue space. This may include developing an additional criterion or a set of criteria to award parks that meet the commitment (*i.e.*, recognising parks that are in close proximity to people or celebrating parks with multiple entrances or those that provide access to quality green/blue spaces) while ensuring that existing parks with Green Flag Award status are not penalised. To note, the commitment is for England only, and so it is not essential for this standard to be applied across the Devolved Administrations or internationally.
- 3.3 The Scheme is recognised and used by the majority of local authority green space managers and increasingly by community and voluntary groups. With over 2,200 green spaces currently accredited the Scheme is considered to have significant growth potential and the principal ambition for the future running of the Scheme under licence is to see the majority of green spaces in the United Kingdom, and beyond, accredited. The Scheme has predominantly covered parks and community gardens, but its range now extends to woodlands, nature reserves, allotments, cemeteries, and open spaces around social housing and shopping centres.
- 3.4 The current Scheme has operated on a concessionary licence basis with Keep Britain Tidy since 2012. Keep Britain Tidy manages applications to the Scheme on an annual basis, with each site receiving a detailed feedback report following an assessment by one of Keep Britain Tidy's trained judges. Keep Britain Tidy sublicense the scheme to be delivered in other countries.
- 3.5 More information can be found at: <https://www.greenflagaward.org/>.

4 OUTPUTS/DELIVERABLES

4.1 The main deliverables of the Scheme are:

- To ensure the continued successful operation of, and confidence in, the Scheme as a benchmark for quality public green spaces, raising the standards of management and maintenance of publicly accessible green spaces both in England and around the world, and supporting the Government commitment that every household in England should be within 15 minutes' walk of green or blue space. See paragraph 3.2 for further information on how the scheme could potentially support the 15-minute commitment.
- To increase participation in the Scheme, whilst ensuring the quality of the Scheme is maintained;
- To innovate delivery of the Scheme thereby ensuring self-sufficiency and sustainability;
- To ensure green spaces are accessible to people of all abilities, safe and encouraging of community participation;
- To increase and support biodiversity within green spaces;
- To pursue the ambition of the Scheme to see the majority of green spaces in England become accredited.



4.2 The licensee will administer all core operational aspects of the Scheme necessary to deliver against the objectives listed above, including:

- a. Preparing an annual report and accounts;
- b. Promoting and marketing the Scheme;
- c. Managing an effective and efficient applications system;
- d. Developing and managing an effective and efficient award process;
- e. Managing growth, recruiting, training, accrediting and supporting judges in line with demand;
- f. Periodically reviewing the criteria of the Scheme;
- g. Ensuring that the quality of the Scheme is maintained through a Quality Assurance process;
- h. Keeping up to date and publishing guidance and good practice on the Scheme for the use of applicants and judges;
- i. Delivering a seamless transition from the end of the current licence to the future operation of the Scheme under a new licence and to ensure a seamless transition and handover at the expiry of the new licence.

5 KEY DATES & TENDERING PROCESS

5.1 Indicative dates for the anticipated procurement are as follows:

Procurement Stage	Indicative Date
ITT issued	Nov 2023
Tender Submission Deadline	Dec 2023 (min. 25 calendar days)
Licence Awarded	Mar / Apr 2024
Full-Service Commencement	1 st Sep 2024

5.2 These indicative dates are for information purposes only. DLUHC reserve the right to amend these dates at any time, and Potential Suppliers rely on them entirely at their own risk.

5.3 The contract is expected to be for a period of 5 years, and it may be renewed for up to a further 5 years.

5.4 It is currently anticipated that any procurement competition will be conducted in accordance with the [Concession Contracts Regulations 2016](#).

5.5 Any procurement process is expected to be conducted via the Authority's e-tendering portal and Potential Suppliers are encouraged to register on the portal as soon as possible in readiness for launch of a procurement: [New User Registration \(site.com\)](#)

6 RESPONSE

6.1 Potential Suppliers are encouraged to respond to the questions below. In order to facilitate effective consideration of your feedback, please ensure responses are clearly structured, succinct and do not contain superfluous sales material.

6.2 Please ensure your email and response includes '**Ref: CPD 4122054 – Green Flag Award Accreditation Scheme**' in the title.



6.3 Please respond by email to commercialtenders@levellingup.gov.uk with responses to the following questions by 17.00 GMT, Tuesday 10th October 2023 (the “Response Deadline”).

- Q1 Would you be interested in bidding for this project? If not, please provide your reasons, including detail of any perceived commercial or operational barriers to bidding that the Authority could potentially try to address.
- Q2 Does the indicative procurement timetable present any particular challenges, and / or are there any specific timetable considerations the Authority should take into account?
- Q3 Are there any particular aspects (operational / logistical / commercial) regarding mobilisation of the services / transition to new licence arrangements that the Authority needs to consider?
- Q4 Are the scope of services and objectives for the Scheme clear, and what further information would you like to see included in any Invitation to Tender (ITT), in order to facilitate submitting a high quality, value for money tender.
- Q5 How do you propose to use the Scheme to support the cross-government 15-minute commitment?
- Q6 Is there anything relating specifically to the scope and deliverables of the Green Flag Scheme which the Authority should consider, e.g., anything you consider irrelevant, outdated or unnecessary?
- Q7 Is there anything relating specifically to the financial viability of operating a 5yr concessionary licence for the Green Flag Scheme that the Authority should consider?
- Q8 Is there anything relating to the legal aspects of utilising concessionary licence terms for the scheme that Authority should consider?
- Q9 Which of the Government’s Social Value Model Themes, Policy Outcomes and Criteria would you consider appropriate for this requirement and why?

7 QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

- 7.1 Potential Suppliers may raise questions or seek clarification regarding any aspect of this PTME document at any time prior to the Response Deadline. Questions must be submitted by email to **commercialtenders@levellingup.gov.uk** only.
- 7.2 To ensure that all Potential Suppliers have equal access to information regarding this PTME exercise, responses to questions raised by Potential Suppliers will be published in a “Questions and Answers” document, which will also be circulated by email, with updates appearing at regular intervals (approximately two to three working days).
- 7.3 Responses to questions will not identify the originator of the question.
- 7.4 If a Potential Supplier wishes to ask a question or seek clarification without the question and answer being revealed, then the Potential Supplier must state this in their email and provide its justification for withholding the question and any response. If the Authority does not consider that there is sufficient justification for withholding the question and the corresponding response, the Potential Supplier will be invited to decide whether:



- 7.4.1 the question/clarification and the response should in fact be published; or
- 7.4.2 it wishes to withdraw the question/clarification.

8 GENERAL CONDITIONS

- 8.1 This PTME will help the Authority to refine the requirements and to understand the potential level of interest in the delivering requirements. It will also aid Potential Supplier's understanding of the requirements in advance of any formal competitive tender exercise.
- 8.2 The Authority reserves the right to change any information contained within this PTME at any time, and Potential Suppliers rely upon it entirely at their own risk.
- 8.3 The Authority reserves the right not to proceed with a competitive tender exercise after this PTME or to award any contract.
- 8.4 Any and all costs associated with the production of such a response to this PTME must be borne by the Potential Supplier.
- 8.5 No down-selection of Potential Suppliers will take place as a consequence of any responses or interactions relating to this PTME.
- 8.6 The Authority expects that all responses to this PTME will be provided by Potential Suppliers in good faith to the best of their ability in the light of information available at the time of their response.
- 8.7 No information provided by a Potential Supplier in response to this PTME will be carried forward, used or acknowledged in any way for the purpose of evaluating the Potential Supplier, in any subsequent formal procurement process.