PS23424 - Appendix E: Commissioning Letter

Verian (Formerly Kantar Public)
4 Millbank,
Westminster
London
SW1P 3JA

Friday, 12th January 2024

Dear [redacted]

PS21174 - Energy and Climate Change Behavioural Science Framework -
PS23434 - Public attitudes to network infrastructure

Thank you for your response to the Specification for the above Commission by The Department for Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ) (the Customer) through PS21174 – Energy and Climate Change Behavioural Science Framework dated Friday, 22nd December 2023 between (1) The Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ); and (2) Verian (the Framework Agreement).

Annexes:
A. Supplier Submitted Tender
B. Specification for
C. GDPR Processing

The Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ) accepts your Tender from Appendix B – Call off Quote Template (Annex B), submitted in response to our Specification (Annex A)

The Call–Off Terms and Conditions applicable to this contract are those set out in PS21174 – S3 – Services Purchasing Contact to the Framework.

The agreed total charges are £ £86,904.00 exclusive of VAT which should be added at the prevailing rate. The agreed invoice schedule is as follows:

[redacted]

All invoices should be sent to - DESNZ c/o UKSBS, Queensway House, West Precinct, Billingham, TS23 2NF

[redacted]

You are reminded that any Customer Intellectual Property Rights provided in order to perform the Services will remain the property of the Customer. The following deliverables have been agreed:

Deliverables – Please see Annex B Specification.

The Services Commencement Date is Monday, 15th January 2024

The Completion date is Friday, 15th June 2024

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE (COMMERCIAL)

The Contract may be terminated for convenience by giving 30 days' notice in accordance with clause A3-8 of the PS21174 – S3 – Services Purchasing Contract, Call-off Terms and Conditions.

Your invoice(s) for this work must include the following information:
Commission number: PS23434 - Public attitudes to network infrastructure.

Where GDPR applies, The Supplier shall only process in accordance with the instructions as advised in Appendix C and comply with any further written instructions with respect to processing by the Contracting Authority.

The Authorised Representative for this Commission will be [redacted] who can be contacted at [redacted] or [redacted]

Congratulations on your success in being selected to undertake this Commission.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]
Procurement Specialist – Professional Services
UK Shared Business Services Limited

BY SIGNING AND RETURNING THIS COMMISSIONING LETTER THE SERVICE PROVIDER AGREES to enter a legally binding contract with the Customer to provide to the Customer the Services specified in this Commissioning Letter and Annexes incorporating the rights and obligations in the Call-off Terms and Conditions set out in the Framework Agreement.

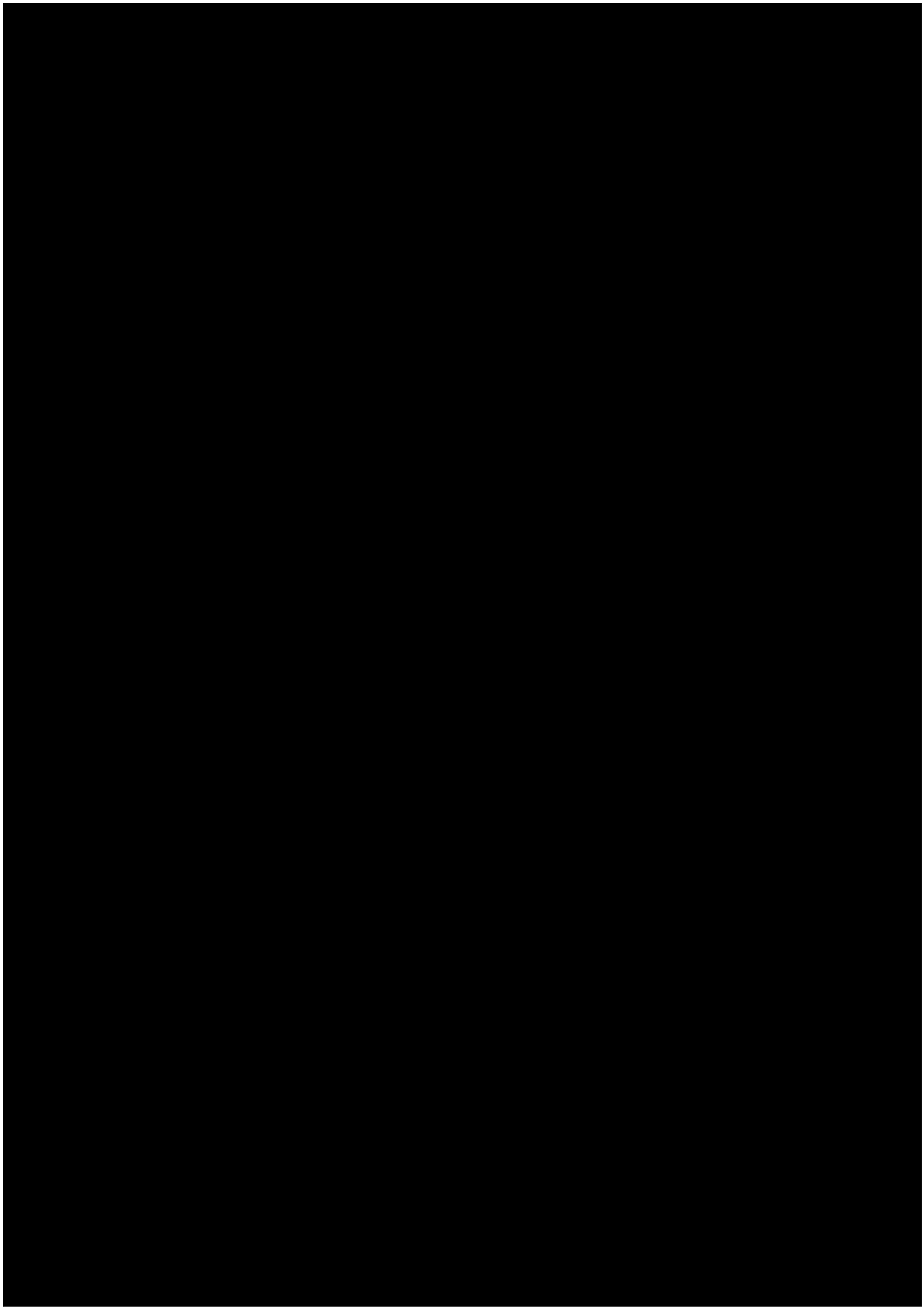
Signed on behalf of (Contracting Authority)

Name and Title	[redacted]
Signature	
Date	

Signed on behalf of (supplier)

Name and Title	[redacted]
Signature	
Date	

A. Supplier Submitted Tender



OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE (COMMERCIAL)

Annex B – Specification

Requirement

Please see below full details of our requirement:

Project Description:

1. Brief background and evidence gaps

Background

The government expects annual electricity demand to increase from current levels by over 35% in 2035 and by over 70% in 2050. New wind generation is shifting the centre of electricity generation from power stations in industrial zones to increasingly remote areas, including at sea generation. This will lead to more infrastructure and greater impacts both onshore and offshore, affecting communities.

The new network infrastructure needed to enable the delivery of electricity from producer to consumer across the UK includes overhead and underground lines, offshore transmission cables, substations and landing infrastructure. We face complex barriers to the development of the transmission and distribution networks ranging from lengthy planning process, system design, supply chains, system constraint costs, environmental pressures, and community engagement.

The deployment of new network infrastructure to bring power onshore from offshore wind farms has caused significant concern in some communities, particularly East Anglia, Lincolnshire, and parts of Scotland. It is commonly agreed by developers, transmission owners, the system operator and OFGEM that there are information gaps relating to and a lack of public understanding of the need for network infrastructure.

This was backed in a recent report by the Electricity Networks Commissioner [redacted] who, as part of a set of recommendations to government on how to accelerate the development of network infrastructure, recommended the following:

> ***Electricity Networks Commissioner Recommendation on National Campaign (NC1)***
>
> *NC1: A Government-led national information campaign should be started on the need for electricity infrastructure and how this can lead to good outcomes for people and the communities in which they live and work. This should include how this need can lead to job opportunities for them and their families. This campaign could be like that used by the armed forces. The advertising campaign should show why new electricity transmission infrastructure is required to connect renewable energy to where it is needed.*
>
> *The campaign should also highlight the range of different job opportunities available such as engineering, environmental science, planning and construction, amongst others.*
> *"Light touch" national campaigns, can cost approximately £15-20milion a year. This cost cannot be directly offset against a specific benefit, but it is likely to create a culture of acceptance and understanding around infrastructure needs and will help achieve a sense of ease when individual projects are brought forward.*

OFFICIAL-SENSITIVE (COMMERCIAL)

We wish to evaluate the entrenchment of views on transmission infrastructure, specifically the extent to which transmission infrastructure acceptability can be improved by messaging on its benefits and why it's needed. Through this we intend to provide an indication of the efficacy of such a campaign in our recommendations to ministers. We believe we have the following evidence gaps which this research, alongside other currently ongoing research, will address.

Evidence gaps

- **What are public attitudes to electricity network infrastructure?**
  Most significantly around pylons and substations which represent the major concern area among some community members. This will be answered in part by existing research from DESNZ and industry which is summarised below. The proposed project will draw on and expand on these existing studies.

- **How can more exposure to information on the benefits of network infrastructure affect people's views on its acceptability?**
  This will also be answered by this research, establishing whether or not there is a significant influence on views following exposure to stylised information mimicking a public engagement campaign of the style recommended by [redacted]:he Networks Commissioner, to government in his recent report.[1] This will also enable us to access how movable public views are on network infrastructure.

- **How is attitude entrenchment varied by demographic, geographic and socio-economic factors?**
  This will be answered in part by existing research (for example undertaken by the renewables industry and community benefits survey data) and will inform how a public engagement campaign would take shape to ensure maximum effectiveness.

Existing research on public attitudes to electricity network infrastructure in Great Britain We undertook two evidence reviews which highlighted a limited and relatively dated body of academic research (e.g. early 2010s) on attitudes towards electricity network infrastructure. Some key findings from the reviews include potential public preferences for underground cables compared to overhead lines, common concerns relating to visual intrusion of pylons, and preferences for pylons to be routed away from where people live (Devine-Wright and Batel, 2013; (Devine-Wright et al., 2010; Cotton and Devine-Wright, 2013).

Recently there has been some industry funded research exploring public attitudes towards electricity transmission network infrastructure. It has highlighted how pylons are highly unpopular rural communities in Great Britain (e.g. more unpopular than housing developments and onshore wind) (Onward, 2023), but that community benefits and clear messaging about why they are needed could increase acceptability towards them (Onward, 2023, RenewableUK/Survation, 2023).

Following our evidence reviews it was decided that there is a need to update and validate these findings in the current context, to explore these topics in further detail and to address evidence gaps. This new project will address evidence gaps regarding entrenchment of views towards electricity network infrastructure and the extent to which views can be affected by messaging. It will build on other research we have recently commissioned exploring public views towards electricity network infrastructure and how approaches such as community benefits and alternative network designs can improve acceptability; emerging findings from this work will be shared with contractors given their complementary nature.

2. Research Questions

Primary research questions:

- To what extent can different messages[2] about the benefits and impacts of network infrastructure affect people's views on its acceptability?" (positively and negatively)
- What types of messages are perceived as most persuasive and most effective at positively influencing acceptability of network infrastructure?

Secondary research questions

- What are people's views towards network infrastructure? (baseline for experiment)
- How is the perceived persuasiveness of different messages associated with different attitudinal and background variables? (experiment)
- How are positive changes in acceptability towards network infrastructure associated with different attitudinal and background variables? (experiment)
- What other factors relating to the design and delivery of messages affect the impact of the information on people's views towards new network infrastructure? (survey)
- Overall, what recommendations for future information campaigns can be drawn from this study? (reporting)

3. Rationale *(provide detail on how this is a behavioural science project, why using the framework will be useful for commissioning this project and how the project will inform policy development)*:

This research is a behavioural science project because it examines public attitudes to inform design and ensure effectiveness of a national information campaign. Specifically, this research aims to better understand the extent to which public attitudes towards network infrastructure can be changed by government messaging, and the extent to which they are determined by demographic and socio-economic factors, among others. We expect this research to sit within lot 3 of the Energy & Climate Change Behavioural Science Framework.

Using this framework to commission the research will be useful because:

- **We can leverage the behavioural expertise of suppliers on the framework:** The behavioural framework has recruited contractors who are experts in designing and running online behavioural experiments. Therefore, commissioning this work via the framework will help to ensure a high-quality deliverable.
- **We can deliver the research at pace:** Due to the fast-paced policy delivery timelines, research findings will be required by early 2024. Commissioning via the framework will reduce our timelines so that the findings can be delivered at a timely point in the policy development cycle.

The research findings from this project will provide play a key role in building our evidence base around the potential effectiveness of messaging campaigns on public attitudes towards electricity network infrastructure. Findings will inform high priority policy work to accelerate the development of network infrastructure in Great Britain.

4. Suggested Approach

Below we propose a potential research design which could be suitable to meet our project objectives. We expect contractors to provide a detailed description and justification of their approach, and we welcome alternative approaches which contractors can demonstrate more effectively meet our project objectives. Note that a messaging experiment is an essential requirement but there is some flexibility around how it's designed.

Methodology

1. **Evidence review and message development:** light-touch evidence review to summarise relevant research to inform message design and delivery. This could include consideration of how theoretical frameworks (e.g. behavioural science,

attitudinal segmentation approaches) could be applied to this policy challenge. Other analysis and engagement may also be required to develop messages for use in the online task, these could include stakeholder workshops, case studies, and media analysis. We welcome bidders' views on how to approach this. We expect the contractors to work closely with DESNZ to develop the content of the messages to be tested. The messages could include both images and textual information to replicate what could be seen in a messaging campaign. We anticipate the following themes to be covered by the messages which we test.

- How new network infrastructure will lower energy bills.
- How new network infrastructure is essential in decarbonising our energy supply to address climate change.
- How new infrastructure will support our energy security, independence and resilience.
- How new infrastructure will support a UK wide renewable energy jobs boost.
- The counterfactual of not investing in transmission infrastructure.
- The fact that infrastructure is undergrounded in or avoids protected landscapes.
- The amount of onshore network being built in comparison to offshore/undergrounded network.
- The community benefits available to those located near infrastructure projects

We anticipate that the research will be conducted via a click through task on screen lasting no more than 15 minutes. This would require use of a survey platform that allows for multi-media sources (e.g. images, audio, video). This online survey experiment would involve three short stages:

2. **Participant information and baseline attitudes survey**
    a. to collect background demographic (e.g. gender, age, income, region), background (e.g. housing tenure, occupation, ownership of net zero technologies/services) and attitudinal data (e.g. climate and net zero attitudes) required for analysis.
    b. **To** establish participants' 'baseline' views and awareness of transmission infrastructure
3. **Information exposure to mimic a possible public campaign.** Participants will review multiple messages and associated content (e.g. infographics) one theme at a time. After each message covering a particular theme (e.g. energy security), they will be asked a short set of follow-up questions to assess the perceived persuasiveness of the message (a mean persuasiveness score of each message will be an output from these questions and will be the dependent variable used in our analysis).
4. **Post information survey:** we anticipate that this could be used for a final assessment of the messages that participants have reviewed, for example ranking which of the messages reviewed was perceived as most persuasive. This section could also include a set of final questions to understand overall to what extent participants views towards network infrastructure have been shifted as a result of participating. This section could also cover topics outlined in our research questions not covered during the experimental stage, such as views towards how and by whom messages may be best delivered.

Below we have outlined a potential research approach in more detail. We welcome alternative research designs which contractors can demonstrate better meet our objectives within the available budget.

Participant information and baseline attitude survey

This section would establish the background data on participants to inform later analysis (for example hypothesis testing, segmentation and/or regression modelling). This will allow us to understand how demographic and background variables affect responses and could inform targeted information and public engagement campaigns. Details assessed will include:

- Age
- Gender
- Work status
- Work sector (if employed)
- Housing status (e.g., homeowner, renter)
- Rurality
- Region
- Length of time living in current location.
- Other factors to be determined with contractor (e.g. views towards net zero and renewables)

It's likely much of this section can be adapted from existing survey screening questionaries ran by DESNZ and contractors. We note that if contractors propose utilising an existing panel, much of this data will already have been collected. If this is the case, we would expect to have additional capacity to ask questions in the main body of the questionnaire.

Following the participant information survey, a short baseline attitudes assessment would then be conducted establishing a baseline of attitudes and awareness towards network infrastructure. This will enable us to assess how far their views change at the end of the study after being exposed to the messaging. This section will ask specifically about the individual's prior knowledge of the need and benefits of electricity infrastructure, their views on it generally and what they most associate it with.

It's likely this would be done via a set of closed survey questions with multiple response options or scoring for favourability assessments. We anticipate that images and /or diagrams may be required to support understanding of participants; these can be provided by DESNZ.

Information exposure to mimic a possible public campaign.

This would be the lengthiest part of the experiment with the purpose of understanding the perceived persuasiveness of different types of messages across a range of themes relating to the benefits and impacts of transmission infrastructure. We expect around eight message interventions would be tested covering the following topics:

- How new network infrastructure will lower energy bills.
- How new network infrastructure is essential in decarbonising our energy supply to address climate change.
- How new infrastructure will support our energy security, independence and resilience.
- How new infrastructure will support a UK wide renewable energy jobs boost.
- The counterfactual of not investing in transmission infrastructure.
- The fact that infrastructure is undergrounded in or avoids protected landscapes.
- The amount of onshore network being built in comparison to offshore/undergrounded network.
- The community benefits available to those located near infrastructure projects.

In phase 1 of the study, the contractors would work closely with the DESNZ project team (comprising policy, analysts and communications) to develop the final set of messages and associated content (e.g. infographics). Each message intervention (i.e. each message and associated content for each theme) would contain a simple, stylised depiction of the theme along with short, informative text designed to mimic an information campaign style.

Participants will review multiple message interventions (e.g. infographics) one theme at a time. After each message intervention covering a particular theme (e.g. energy security), they will be asked a short set of follow-up questions to assess the perceived persuasiveness of the message (a

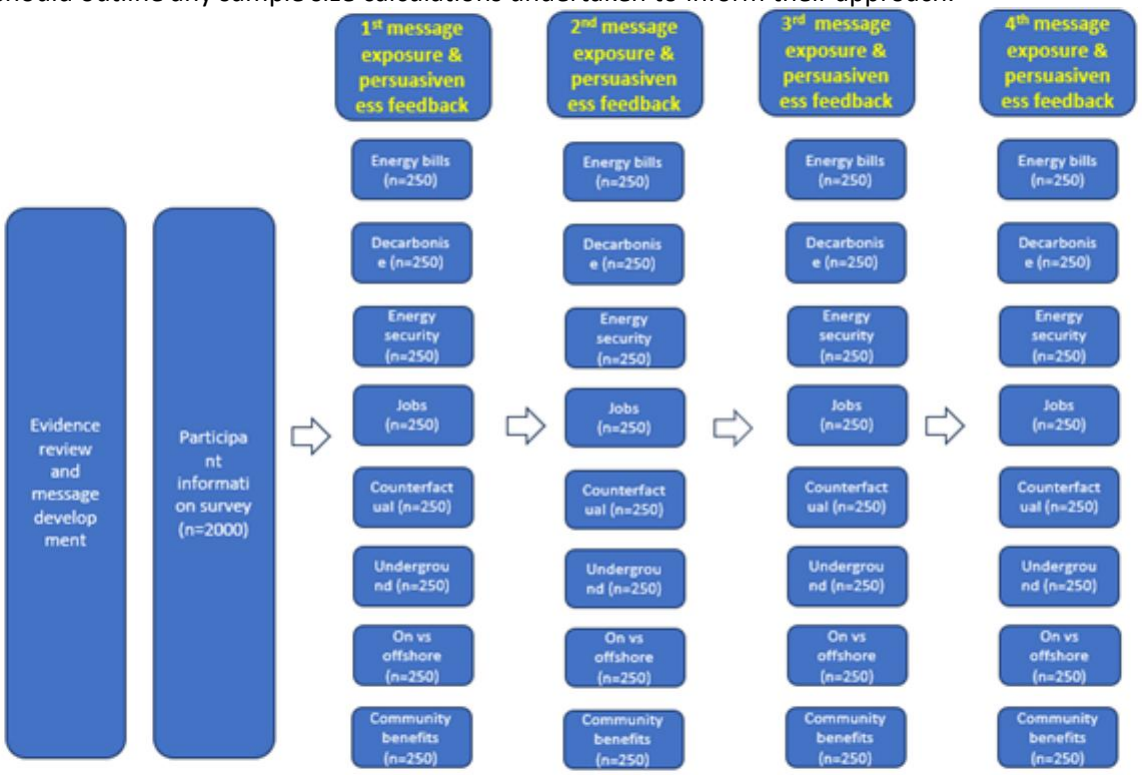
mean persuasiveness score of each message will be an output from these questions and will be the dependent variable used in our analysis).

Message persuasiveness could be established and compared by using or adapting a previously validated indicator; the indicator could use a series of Likert questions which are averaged to create a single score (examples are discussed in this paper); this would provide the dependent variable to be used in statistical testing. Open-text questions could also be used to gather qualitative data.

Due to survey burden, we don't expect that each participant would be able to review all of the messages/themes within a 15-minute survey. We expect that four messages/themes could be covered during this time, but we welcome contractors' reflections and consideration of whether piloting will be required to best assess this.

To ensure there are no biases in who sees different types of messages and the order that messages are viewed, each of the four messages participants review would be randomly assigned to them. The randomisation approach should ensure ordering effects are evenly distributed, that each message should be viewed roughly the same number of times and that each participant only views each message once. With a total of 2000 participants, this design will provide around 1000 participants per message, which we have estimated would provide sufficient sample size to identify small to medium effect sizes in statistical tests to assess differences in mean persuasiveness scores across sub-groups.

We note that this is an example research design and we welcome contractors' views on alternative approaches which they feel could better answer our research questions. Contractors should outline any sample size calculations undertaken to inform their approach.



Post information survey

We expect that this final section would be used to answer a set of questions to understand to what extent participants' views towards network infrastructure have been shifted as a result of participating. These questions should be designed so that they are comparable to responses in the baseline study. This section also provides the opportunity for participants to reflect on all of the

four messages they have viewed, for example by ranking the messages in order of persuasiveness. This section could also cover topics outlined in our research questions not covered during the experimental stage, such as views towards how and by whom messages may be best delivered.

Sampling

It is essential that this online survey experiment develops data which is generalisable to the adult population of Great Britain and that sub-group analysis can be undertaken to understand how persuasiveness of messages and views are affected differently across groups. Therefore, we require a nationally representative sample with sufficient sample size to identify statistically significant differences between groups, and to ensure sufficient sample size for any analysis proposed (e.g. hypothesis testing, segmentation, regression analysis).

One segment which is of particular interest to the study are rural populations. This is because rural areas will likely be most affected by new transmission network infrastructure. We should consider in dialogue with the supplier if a sample boost is required to ensure rural populations are sufficiently represented and that we have sufficient sample size to understand whether rural populations respond differently to messaging than other groups (Defra estimates 17% population live in rural areas).[3]

It is not possible to specify the exact sample size prior to finalising the experimental design, however we anticipate a minimum of 2000 respondents will be required. Contractors' proposals should outline the final recommended sample size and how this meets the project requirements.

We anticipate that a high-quality online panel will provide the most appropriate sample frame to recruit participants. Ideally a random probability based online panel will be utilised, however this is not essential if undeliverable within the budget and the robustness of an alternative can be demonstrated. Bidders should consider how any limitations to their sampling approach can be mitigated for, including how digitally excluded and hard-to-reach groups may be included. It is important that contractors can demonstrate that their sample is representative of the general public and that participants have not previously taken part in studies on similar topics (e.g. risk that results are biased if participants are more knowledgeable on these topics than the general public). Contractors should identify any additional risks and mitigations relating to sampling.

Analysis

Ultimately analysis will need to provide robust evidence around what types of message on network infrastructure could be effective for who, and how likely messaging on network infrastructure is to change people's views towards network infrastructure.

Contractors should set out an analytical plan in line with the research design and which allows us to answer our research questions. Analysis should enable us to identify statistically significant differences in the perceived persuasiveness of messages for different groups. We expect that at a minimum this would include hypothesis testing (e.g. T-tests to compare mean persuasiveness scores for each message and chi-squared tests to understand variables associated with changes in views). In an example experimental design with 2000 participants in total, where there are eight messages and each participant is randomly assigned to view four messages (as in the example previously outlined), we anticipate that there should be sufficient sample to identify small to medium effect sizes, however contractors should confirm this if utilising these approaches alongside sample size calculations.

We also welcome consideration of how approaches such as regression modelling could be used to understand what is driving differences in persuasiveness between groups when controlling for covariates. Segmentation approaches may also be suitable and help to identify how future messaging could be targeted. Contractors should make their recommendations on what analysis is most appropriate to fulfil our research objectives within the timescales and budget.

5. Desired Outputs

The main output from this piece of work will be a **1.5-hour presentation,** to allow DESNZ colleagues to ask questions and seek clarification.
This will be accompanied by a **short summary repor**t (~15 pages) which includes:

- Research findings
- The methodology (in an annex)
- Presentation slides (in an annex)

Contractors should expect that DESNZ will review at least three drafts of project outputs.
We would also receive light touch policy recommendations, though these would not be included in the published report.
We also expect to be updated on interim findings though catch ups, decided in dialogue with the supplier.
We also require publishable survey data tables (in Excel format) and raw survey data with a data dictionary to enable secondary analysis by DESNZ.

6. Ethical Considerations/Delivery Risks:

Ethical considerations are as follows:

- **GDPR:** UK GDPR will need to be complied with throughout. The GDPR Annex A checklist will be completed and signed off by the DPO to ensure that the project is compliant. Participants will have the opportunity to withdraw from the experiment at any point and will be informed how and why their data is being used prior to taking part in the experiment. Participant data will be kept anonymous in all presented work.

Delivery risks are as follows:

- **Difficulties recruiting sample:** we anticipate that the use of an online panel to achieve a nationally representative sample will be the most appropriate sampling approach. There is a low risk of being unable to recruit participants via this approach. A risk associated with the panel is that if they have been exposed to climate/energy surveys previously they may not be as representative of the general public – contractors must mitigate for this.
- **Particular difficulty recruiting weighting rural participants.** Ensuring a sufficient sample size of rural/semi-rural participants likely to be most affected by new transmission infrastructure will be difficult. We aim to include a sample boost which better reflects this group to enable analysis in isolation as well as in nationally representative proportions.
- **Timelines:** There are tight timelines to deliver this project. Contractors and DESNZ project team will be required to devote sufficient resource to intensively manage the project.
- **Previous exposure to study content:** The SABER subcommittee queried how likely it'll be to be able to access a panel that has had no existing exposure to the issues in focus. Given this is going through the behavioural framework the panel are likely to have been used for other projects. They questioned how realistic the request for people with no exposure is on that basis.

1. **Which DESNZ Colleagues Will Work on the Project? How Will They Work with the Supplier?** *(you should also reach out to your team's social researcher [or other analysts if no social researchers are available] and request that they provide analyst support for the project – please confirm this here, with their name)***:** The project will be led by DESNZ social researchers.

7. Funding and contract dates *(if applicable)*:

Funding Directorate[4]	[redacted]
Finance Business Partner[5]	
Approximate value of the project[6]	**£90,000 (maximum)**
Budget financial year[7]	**At least 50% in 23/24 (with remaining expenditure in 24/25)**
Contract start date	**November 2023 [exact date tbc]**
Contract end date	**May 2024 [exact date tbc]**
Are those dates flexible	*Flexible – with preference for completion on or shortly after the new financial year.*

Appendix C – Schedule of Processing, Personal Data and Data Subjects

The Supplier shall only process in accordance with the instructions as advised below and comply with any further written instructions with respect to processing by the Contracting Authority. Any such further written processing instructions required by the Contracting Authority shall be incorporated into this Schedule and shall be a subject of a formal amendment to this Contract.

Description	Details
Subject matter of the processing	This project will process qualitative and quantitative responses related to participants attitude towards transmission infrastructure. The processing of names and business contact details of staff of both Contracting Authority and Contractor will be necessary to deliver the services exchanged during the course of the Contract, and to undertake Contract and performance management. The Contract itself will include the names and business contact details of staff of both the Contracting Authority and the Contractor involved in managing the Contract. The Supplier will need to confirm that they are UK GDPR or GDPR (if operating in the EEA) compliant when submitting a bid.
Duration of the processing	The data will be collected and processed between January 2024 and June 2024 (6 months total).

Nature and purposes of the processing	The nature of the processing: collection, storage, and analysis. Data will be collected in video calls/telephone calls, drawing from a panel of individuals residing in England and Wales. The raw data will be stored and analysed by the Supplier. The supplier will produce a non-disclosive summary report based on this analysis. The purpose of the processing is: to generate evidence to inform and justify the development of a public information campaign on transmission infrastructure. The nature of processing will include the storage and use of names and business contact details of staff of both the Contracting Authority and the Supplier as necessary to deliver the services and to undertake the Contract and performance management. The Contract itself will include the names and business contact details of staff of both the Contracting Authority and the Supplier involved in managing the Contract.
Type of Personal Data	**Sociodemographic characteristics:** A range of characteristics including socio-economic group. **Attitudes, behaviours, choices:** Responses to questions relating to transmission infrastructure. Name, date of birth, location, income bracket, Age, Gender, Work status, Work sector (if employed), Housing status (e.g., homeowner, renter), Rurality, Region, Length of time living in current location. Other factors to be determined with contractor (e.g. views towards net zero and renewables) Names, business telephone numbers and email addresses, office location and position of staff of both the Contracting Authority and the Supplier as necessary to deliver the services and to undertake the Contract and performance management. The Contract itself will include the names and business contact details of staff of both

	the Contracting Authority and the Supplier involved in managing the Contract
Categories of Data Subject	Members of the public in Great Britain.
Plan for return and destruction of the data once the processing is complete UNLESS requirement under union or member state law to preserve that type of data	The supplier should delete the Personal Data and erase the Personal Data from any computers, storage devices and storage media that are to be retained by the Supplier after the expiry of the Contract. The Supplier will certify to the Contracting Authority that it has completed such deletion. Where Personal Data is contained within the Contract documentation, this will be retained in line with the Department's privacy notice found within the Procurement Documents.