

Invitation to Quote

**Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of Department for Business,
Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Subject BEIS PS17229 High
quality consumer complaints data**

Sourcing reference number PS17229



UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS)
www.uksbs.co.uk

Registered in England and Wales as a limited company. Company Number 6330639.
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VAT registration GB618 3673 25
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Section 1 – About UK Shared Business Services

Putting the business into shared services

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS) brings a commercial attitude to the public sector; helping Contracting Authorities improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

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

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

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

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

UK Shared Business Services Ltd changed its name from RCUK Shared Services Centre Ltd in March 2013.

Our Customers

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

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

Our Contracting Authorities who have access to our services and Contracts are detailed [here](#).

Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority

Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) was created as a result of a merger between the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), as part of the Machinery of Government (MoG) changes in July 2016.

The Department is responsible for:

- Developing and delivering a comprehensive industrial strategy and leading the government's relationship with business;
- Ensuring that the country has secure energy supplies that are reliable, affordable and clean;
- Ensuring the UK remains at the leading edge of science, research and innovation; and
- Tackling climate change.

BEIS is a ministerial department, supported by 46 agencies and public bodies.

There are around 2,500 staff working for BEIS. BEIS partner organisations include 9 executive agencies employing around 14,500 staff.

<http://www.beis.gov.uk>

Section 3 - Working with the Contracting Authority

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

Section 3 – Contact details		
3.1	Contracting Authority Name and address	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) 1 Victoria Street London SW1H 0ET
3.2	Buyer name	Owen Lister
3.3	Buyer contact details	Professionalservices@uksbs.co.uk
3.4	Estimated value of the Opportunity	£50,000 ex VAT, based on an initial 3 years contract, with a 1+1 year extension period.
3.5	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	All correspondence shall be submitted within the Emptoris e-sourcing tool. Guidance Notes to support the use of Emptoris is available here. Please note submission of a Bid to any email address including the Buyer <u>will</u> result in the Bid <u>not</u> being considered.

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6	Date of Issue of Contract Advert and location of original Advert	03/11/2017 Contracts Finder
3.7	Latest date/time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Emptoris messaging system	10/11/2017 11.00am
3.8	Latest date/time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Emptoris	13/11/2017 14.00pm
3.9	Latest date/time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Emptoris	17/11/2017 14.00pm
3.10	Anticipated selection and the selections of Bids notification date	24/11/2017
3.11	Anticipated Award date	30/11/2017
3.12	Anticipated Contract Start date	07/12/2017
3.13	Anticipated Contract End date	06/12/2020
3.14	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

Section 4 – Specification

Introduction

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) is seeking to procure additional data for use by the Department and members of the Consumer Protection Partnership (CPP).

BEIS's Consumer and Competition Policy Directorate, working in coordination with teams in other Government departments, works to support the functioning of competitive markets, and to protect and promote the interests of consumers. The Directorate also has a role in coordinating consumer policy across other consumer protection organisations, via the CPP.

The CPP, formed in April 2012, brings together consumer protection organisations to jointly identify, prioritise and coordinate collective action to tackle areas where there is greatest harm caused to consumers and where CPP is best placed to respond. The CPP includes National Trading Standards (NTS), Trading Standards Scotland (TSS), the Department for Economy Northern Ireland (DfENI), the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA), the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI), Advertising Standards Agency (ASA), Consumer Council for Northern Ireland (CCNI), Citizens Advice (CitA), and Citizens Advice Scotland (CAS).

To deliver informed and effective evidence-based policy making, BEIS and the CPP have a mutual need to maintain a good understanding of consumers' experience in different markets. Data on the number and nature of consumer complaints is a useful signal of the functioning of different markets across the economy.

Aims

The CPP accesses information from members' databases and third party open sources. The overarching aim is to give consumer protection organisations access to timely insights from additional sources of data on consumer complaints and resolutions. Access to this insight will support the intelligence functions of the organisations involved, allowing them to better track patterns of consumer complaints across markets, and develop deeper understanding of observed problems by sector, company and/or geography. This will ultimately improve the targeting of policy and enforcement interventions.

Whilst each organisation will have specific requirements and uses for insight on consumer complaints and detriment, there are two clear cross-cutting sources of value in such data. These are:

- (a) scanning trends in metrics across markets to identify emerging problems; and
- (b) getting detailed insight into known or suspected issues.

More specifically, accessing new sources of insight will allow consumer organisations to better:

- Scan across markets for potentially concerning trends in complaints which may warrant further investigation.
- Understand the types of issues which are driving observed trends in consumer complaints or detriment.
- Understand the nature of complaints across markets, such as the likelihood of resolution, timeliness of resolution, consumer satisfaction at each point in the resolution process, and the severity of issue raised.

Identify and evidence specific incidents or types of consumer detriment for enforcement purposes.

Objectives

There are two distinct objectives which must be met to securely deliver high-quality data to the various consumer protection organisations.

The first phase of the project, following identification of suitable data sources, requires the delivery of virtual infrastructure that allows the data to be securely accessed by consumer protection organisations.

The second phase is the ongoing, regular supply of high quality data via the infrastructure in place (further information on quality expectations is set out below). The effective design and delivery of suitable digital infrastructure is therefore paramount for organisations to gain access to the data.

The project must deliver a secure and reliable Application Programming Interface (API), with clear documentation on how users can interact with it. In addition to the API, the contractor should also provide a user interface which allows quick and easy manipulation of the data.

Background to the Requirement

BEIS and the CPP currently draw on a wide range of quality data sources to understand the consumer experience across markets. These sources include the ONS, HM Courts & Tribunals Service, Citizens Advice, economic regulators, ADR providers, and surveys such as the EU Consumer Scoreboard and Consumer Markets Monitoring survey. We are continually seeking to further improve our intelligence sources to better understand where markets are not working well for consumers. This involves improving the dissemination and sharing of data across organisations as well as exploring new sources of data that consumer protection organisations currently do not have access to.

Analysts in BEIS and CPP organisations use consumer complaints data to identify where problems are occurring and understand the nature of these problems (including the demographics of consumers involved). This assists with policy development and targeting of enforcement actions. Offices of CPP organisations are based in all countries and regions of the UK. For example, NTS analysis draws on regional intelligence analysts and a central NTS Intelligence Team.

In addition to analysts embedded in each organisation, CPP members collectively fund the CPP Knowledge Hub, which coordinates knowledge sharing across members of the CPP. This is a key role for sharing insights, corroborating understanding and joining up actions.

The Knowledge Hub is also responsible for producing and disseminating analytical work across consumer protection organisations.

All of the organisations that wish to use the data will, on occasion, have cause to publish analysis of the procured data. This will be in research reports, evaluations and/or studies into the performance and outcomes of markets.

Scope

The requirement is for high quality consumer complaints data (as defined in the 'Requirements' section below) for use by consumer protection organisations. The development of the digital infrastructure required to deliver this data is an essential prerequisite, but is ultimately ancillary to the supply of high quality data. To ensure compatibility with the internal systems of the data owners, the contractor must deliver both the high quality data and all necessary data infrastructure.

The contractor is not required to supply any additional hoc analytical work (i.e. one-off data processing and/or analysis in addition to the requirements set out below). Organisations accessing the data (via the API or an interactive user interface) should have the flexibility to conduct their own in-depth analysis without further assistance from the contractor.

The intellectual property of the data supplied will remain the property of the contractor. The data will be licensed for use by consumer protection organisations only. Beyond the named users, there will be no commercial use of the data and no external licensing, exporting, publication or media use without prior permission of the contractor. The intellectual property rights subsisting in any reports, evaluations and/or studies produced using that data will belong to the organisation creating it. Quoting of data in this context may be permitted without specific permission from the contractor.

Upon termination of the contract, the purchasing organisations will cease have access to the data but will retain intellectual property of any reports, evaluations and/or studies that have been produced making use of the data supplied by the contractor.

The provision of the services outlined in this document does not constitute an endorsement or financial support (beyond reasonable costs incurred in the supply of the data) for the services provided by any particular contractor. On the basis of this contract, the contractor would not be allowed to publically claim, in any form, that the use of their data by consumer protection organisations signals an endorsement of their services or that their services are supported by Government or certain consumer protection organisations.

Requirement

The requirement is for the ongoing supply of high-quality consumer complaints data. The data should be updated on a weekly basis (or more frequently). The contractor will be responsible for both developing suitable infrastructure to supply the data and for its ongoing supply.

Infrastructure

The Application Programming Interface (API) must:

1. Be secure, with API keys, or some other unique user/password identification, allocated to those seeking to access it.
2. Allow unlimited API calls per user.
3. Be reliable and accessible during normal working hours (09:00 – 18:00; Monday - Friday), with minimal downtime or other disruption in availability.
4. Not fail under normal usage, which should be less than 100 queries an hour.
5. Provide the microdata of case details in a standard format such as JSON or csv.
6. Have clear accompanying documentation for users on the data architecture and how users should interact with it.

In addition to the required API, the contractor must provide a user interface which allows quick and easy manipulation of the data. This interface should show readymade graphics such as: trends in complaints / resolutions / escalations in key sectors (as listed in the 'Data quality requirements section below) over time; graphics of the key complaint issues and sub-issues; trends in timeliness of resolution; trends in value of cases raised; and the fastest growing complaint issues in markets. The interface should also contain customisable graphs and tables for unique multi-criteria breakdowns (e.g. selecting by company and issue type; or plotting timeliness of resolution against complainant satisfaction across sectors), and the facility to download such custom reports. The contractor must provide sufficient electronic guidance to allow users to use the features of the platform (and make this available in other standard assessable formats as required).

The contractor must have the right to provide the intellectual property in the data supplied. Responsibility for compliance with Data Protection laws (including, without limitation, the General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679)) and with the Enterprise Act lies with the contractor.

Data quality requirements

The data supplied must meet the following minimum quality requirements:

1. Good coverage of major consumer markets in the economy, which should include but are not limited to: electricity, gas, telecoms (by type), water, transportation (public and private, by type), financial services (by product), gambling (by type), home improvements, car sales (new and second hand), property services, car repairs/servicing, car hire, domestic appliances, electrical products and digital platforms. The exact list of sectors and subsectors supplied will be agreed with the contractor.
2. The following metrics for all queries: complaint sector and subsector (roughly equivalent in scale to SIC07 divisions and groups respectively), issue, problem description, company involved and date logged. Should the data enable tracking beyond the initial raising of a query, data should also include escalations to ADR and resolution status.
3. The following metrics describing the complainant: age, gender and other socio-demographic information. (Note that bids offering more of this descriptive information will be scored more highly.)
4. The region of the UK where the complainant resides (if possible, at local authority level). (Note that bidders offering more granular geographical information will be scored more highly.)
5. The ability to view and analyse the data by sorting by sector, company, complaint type, location, and any combination of these factors.

6. Minimal data cleaning should be required by users to meaningfully interpret all the key metrics above (e.g. clear and consistent statistics on the percentage of complaints against certain companies).
7. Sufficient volume of cases per month to allow statistically significant analysis by subsector, complaint type, company or region. Complaint volumes should be of a similar magnitude to those recorded and reported on by Citizens Advice (roughly 500,000 helpline calls per year).
8. The facility to sift cases for cross-sector problems such as subscription traps, unfair terms and mis-selling. This may be through, for example, keyword searches of the text supplied by the complainant.
9. Subject to confidentiality and privacy adjustments, the facility to view the text written by the complainant at each stage of the complaint.
10. With prior complainant permission, the facility for enforcement bodies such as NTS to contact complainants for further details of cases.

Data sharing permissions

The organisations with access to the data must be allowed the following permissions in terms of accessing, sharing and publishing the data:


1. Multiple individuals (across and within each organisation) can simultaneously access the data.
2. Organisations with full access must be able to freely share analysis internally, subject to individuals abiding by data confidentiality agreements. The contractor must ensure the data sharing agreements with consumer organisations are compliant with Data Protection laws (including, without limitation, the General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679)) and with the Enterprise Act.
3. It must be possible for analysts in organisations based across different geographical regions to access the data. This could be achieved with access provided on an organisation-by-organisation basis, with each organisation (or member of the organisation) receiving a unique log in.
4. The ability for organisations to disseminate analysis of high-level trends in complaints across sectors to other consumer protection organisations (including Government departments, members of the CPP and economic regulators). Organisations in receipt would be required to sign appropriate data confidentiality and data sharing agreements. As a minimum, the permitted analysis which can be shared would include:
 - a. The number of complaints in the following markets: electricity, gas, water, fixed line services, internet services, mobile phones, pay TV, rail, bank accounts, credit cards, gambling.
 - b. The most common complaint issues in these markets.
 - c. The fastest growing complaint issues in all markets.
 - d. Percent of cases in each of these markets escalated to ADR and the percentage (un)resolved.
 - e. Average estimated value of complaints in each of these markets.
 - f. Satisfaction with outcome in each of these markets.
 - g. If the data permits, the average timeliness of resolution of cases.
 - h. If the data permits, trends in certain cross-sector themes such as subscription traps, unfair terms and mis-selling.

The ability for organisations to publish fully referenced analysis as evidence, subject to reasonable clearance by the contractor (for example, on the basis of confidentiality). The nature of the data that may need to be published will depend on the specifics of the

request. Exact details of the publication permissions will be subject to further discussions with the contractor.

Timetable

The following table sets out key milestones and initial target dates for these to be achieved. These target dates are not absolute and will be finalised upon appointment.

Milestone	Target date	Regular meetings between BEIS, the contractor and core CPP organisations 
1. Contractor appointed and inception meeting	Early December 2017	
2. Agreement of the specific data to be provided, both via the API and through the user interface	January 2018	
3. Commencement of development of digital infrastructure	December 2017	
4. API goes live	March 2018	
5. Agreement of specific content and layout of additional user interface (following iterative development process)	January 2018	
6. Early iteration of interactive user interface goes live (beta launch)	March 2018	
7. Final iteration of interactive user interface goes live (following iterative development process)	April 2018	

The development of an interactive user interface to view the data, separately to the development of the API, will be an iterative process of discussion between the contractor, BEIS and other consumer protection organisations. Ensuring the suitability and effectiveness of the platform is more important than aiming for a specific completion date. Following early discussions with the contractor, BEIS and members of the CPP will set out clear suggestions on what this should usefully contain to minimise the need for repeated redevelopment.

Following development of the API and interactive user interface, there will need to be an ongoing relationship with the contractor to ensure high quality data continues to be supplied and the services still meet the needs of those using the services. Ongoing technical assistance and account management is also likely to be required, which as a minimum should include the ability to raise service requests online or via email. Any service requests should be responded to within 5 working days.

The contract will contain the standard termination clauses found in similar Government procurement contracts (which can be found at section A3 of the accompanying contract). The contract will initially run for three years, with the option to add up to two additional years without retendering (a '3+1+1' format)."

Terms and Conditions

Bidders are to note that any requested modifications to the Contracting Authority Terms and Conditions on the grounds of statutory and legal matters only, shall be raised as a formal clarification during the permitted clarification period.

Section 5 – Evaluation model

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

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

The evaluation team may comprise staff from UK SBS, and the Contracting Authority ----- and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems required. After evaluation the scores will be finalised by performing a calculation to identify (at question level) the mean average of all evaluators (Example – a question is scored by three evaluators and judged as scoring 5, 5 and 6. These scores will be added together and divided by the number of evaluators to produce the final score of 5.33 ($5+5+6=16 \div 3 = 5.33$))

Pass / fail criteria

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	SEL1.2	Employment breaches/ Equality
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information Exemptions
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	AW4.1	Contract Terms
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Commercial	SEL3.11	Compliance to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act
-	-	Invitation to Quote – received on time within e-sourcing tool

Scoring criteria

Evaluation Justification Statement

In consideration of this particular requirement the Contracting Authority has decided to evaluate Potential Providers by adopting the weightings/scoring mechanism detailed within this ITQ. The Contracting Authority considers these weightings to be in line with existing best practice for a requirement of this type.

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2	Price	20%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Data	50%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Platforms	15%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Service Delivery	15%
Quality	PROJ1.4	Cyber Essentials	0%

Evaluation of criteria

Non-Price elements

Each question will be judged on a score from 0 to 100, which shall be subjected to a multiplier to reflect the percentage of the evaluation criteria allocated to that question.

Where an evaluation criterion is worth 20% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 20%.

Example if a Bidder scores 60 from the available 100 points this will equate to 12% by using the following calculation:

$$\text{Score} = \{\text{weighting percentage}\} \times \{\text{bidder's score}\} = 20\% \times 60 = 12$$

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

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

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

All questions will be scored based on the above mechanism. Please be aware that the final score returned may be different as there may be multiple evaluators and their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score.

Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 40

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 40

Your final score will $(60+60+40+40) \div 4 = 50$

Price elements will be judged on the following criteria.

The lowest price for a response which meets the pass criteria shall score 100.

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

For example - Bid 1 £100,000 scores 100.

Bid 2 £120,000 differential of £20,000 or 20% remove 20% from price scores 80

Bid 3 £150,000 differential £50,000 remove 50% from price scores 50.

Bid 4 £175,000 differential £75,000 remove 75% from price scores 25.

Bid 5 £200,000 differential £100,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.

Bid 6 £300,000 differential £200,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.

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

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

The lowest score possible is 0 even if the price submitted is more than 100% greater than the lowest price.

Section 6 – Evaluation questionnaire

Bidders should note that the evaluation questionnaire is located within the **e-sourcing questionnaire**.

Guidance on completion of the questionnaire is available at <http://www.uksbs.co.uk/services/procure/Pages/supplier.aspx>

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 7 – General Information

What makes a good bid – some simple do's 😊

DO:

- 7.1 Do comply with Procurement document instructions. Failure to do so may lead to disqualification.
- 7.2 Do provide the Bid on time, and in the required format. Remember that the date/time given for a response is the last date that it can be accepted; we are legally bound to disqualify late submissions. Unless formally requested to do so by UK SBS e.g. Emptoris system failure
- 7.3 Do ensure you have read all the training materials to utilise e-sourcing tool prior to responding to this Bid. If you send your Bid by email or post it will be rejected.
- 7.4 Do use Microsoft Word, PowerPoint Excel 97-03 or compatible formats, or PDF unless agreed in writing by the Buyer. If you use another file format without our written permission we may reject your Bid.
- 7.5 Do ensure you utilise the Emptoris messaging system to raise any clarifications to our ITQ. You should note that we will release the answer to the question to all Bidders and where we suspect the question contains confidential information we may modify the content of the question to protect the anonymity of the Bidder or their proposed solution
- 7.6 Do answer the question, it is not enough simply to cross-reference to a 'policy', web page or another part of your Bid, the evaluation team have limited time to assess bids and if they can't find the answer, they can't score it.
- 7.7 Do consider who the Contracting Authority is and what they want – a generic answer does not necessarily meet every Contracting Authority's needs.
- 7.8 Do reference your documents correctly, specifically where supporting documentation is requested e.g. referencing the question/s they apply to.
- 7.9 Do provide clear , concise and ideally generic contact details; telephone numbers, e-mails and fax details.
- 7.10 Do complete all questions in the questionnaire or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.11 Do check and recheck your Bid before dispatch.

What makes a good bid – some simple do not's Ⓜ

DO NOT

- 7.12 Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.13 Do not attach 'glossy' brochures that have not been requested, they will not be read unless we have asked for them. Only send what has been requested and only send supplementary information if we have offered the opportunity so to do.
- 7.14 Do not share the Procurement documents, they are confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission.
- 7.15 Do not seek to influence the procurement process by requesting meetings or contacting UK SBS or the Contracting Authority to discuss your Bid. If your Bid requires clarification the Buyer will contact you. All information secured outside of formal Buyer communications shall have no Legal standing or worth and should not be relied upon.
- 7.16 Do not contact any UK SBS staff or the Contracting Authority staff without the Buyers written permission or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.17 Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will reject your Bid.
- 7.18 Do not offer UK SBS or or the Contracting Authority staff any inducement or we will reject your Bid.
- 7.19 Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed.
- 7.20 Do not cross reference answers to external websites or other parts of your Bid, the cross references and website links will not be considered.
- 7.21 Do not exceed word counts, the additional words will not be considered.
- 7.22 Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be rejected.

Some additional guidance notes

- 7.23 All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool must be submitted to Crown Commercial Service (previously Government Procurement Service), Telephone 0345 010 3503.
- 7.24 Bidders will be specifically advised where attachments are permissible to support a question response within the e-sourcing tool. Where they are not permissible any attachments submitted will not be considered as part of the evaluation process.
- 7.25 Question numbering is not sequential and all questions which require submission are included in the Section 6 Evaluation Questionnaire.
- 7.26 Any Contract offered may not guarantee any volume of work or any exclusivity of supply.
- 7.27 We do not guarantee to award any Contract as a result of this procurement
- 7.28 All documents issued or received in relation to this procurement shall be the property of the Contracting Authority. / UKSBS.
- 7.29 We can amend any part of the procurement documents at any time prior to the latest date / time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.30 If you are a Consortium you must provide details of the Consortiums structure.
- 7.31 Bidders will be expected to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.32 Bidders should note the Government's transparency agenda requires your Bid and any Contract entered into to be published on a designated, publicly searchable web site. By submitting a response to this ITQ Bidders are agreeing that their Bid and Contract may be made public
- 7.33 Your bid will be valid for 60 days or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.34 Bidders may only amend the contract terms during the clarification period only, only if you can demonstrate there is a legal or statutory reason why you cannot accept them. If you request changes to the Contract terms without such grounds and the Contracting Authority fail to accept your legal or statutory reason is reasonably justified we may reject your Bid.
- 7.35 We will let you know the outcome of your Bid evaluation and where requested will provide a written debrief of the relative strengths and weaknesses of your Bid.
- 7.36 If you fail mandatory pass / fail criteria we will reject your Bid.
- 7.37 Bidders are required to use IE8, IE9, Chrome or Firefox in order to access the functionality of the Emptoris e-sourcing tool.
- 7.38 Bidders should note that if they are successful with their proposal the Contracting Authority reserves the right to ask additional compliancy checks prior to the award of

any Contract. In the event of a Bidder failing to meet one of the compliancy checks the Contracting Authority may decline to proceed with the award of the Contract to the successful Bidder.

- 7.39 All timescales are set using a 24 hour clock and are based on British Summer Time or Greenwich Mean Time, depending on which applies at the point when Date and Time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.40 All Central Government Departments and their Executive Agencies and Non Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further, the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement - including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice.

For these purposes, the Contracting Authority may disclose within Government any of the Bidders documentation/information (including any that the Bidder considers to be confidential and/or commercially sensitive such as specific bid information) submitted by the Bidder to the Contracting Authority during this Procurement. The information will not be disclosed outside Government. Bidders taking part in this ITQ consent to these terms as part of the competition process.

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

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

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft contract accompanying this ITQ to reflect any changes introduced by the GSC. In particular where this ITQ is accompanied by any instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as a result of any changes stemming from the new GSC, whether in respect of the applicable protective marking scheme, specific protective markings given, the aspects to which any protective marking applies or otherwise. This may relate to the instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as they apply to the procurement as they apply to the procurement process and/or any contracts awarded to you as a result of the procurement process.

USEFUL INFORMATION LINKS

- [Emptoris Training Guide](#)
- [Emptoris e-sourcing tool](#)
- [Contracts Finder](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)