

www.gov.uk/naturalengland

**Request for Quotation**

**Community Science: Resources to Survey and Assess Ecosystems and Natural Capital Assets**

**November 2023**

**Community Science: Resources to Survey and Assess Ecosystems and Natural Capital Assets**

You are invited to submit a quotation for the requirement described in the specification (Section 2)

Please confirm by email, receipt of these documents and whether you intend to submit a quote or not. Your response should be returned to the following email address by:

Email:[amy.pilsbury@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:amy.pilsbury@naturalengland.org.uk)

Date: **1st December 2023**

Time: **10:00am**

Ensure you include the name of the quotation and ‘Final Submission’ in the subject field to make it clear that it is your response.

**Contact Details and Timetable**

Amy Pilsbury will be your contact for any questions linked to the content of the quote or the process. Please submit any clarification questions via email and note that, unless commercially sensitive, both the question and the response will be circulated to all tenderers.

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| **Action** | **Date** |
| Date of issue of RFQ | 24th November 2023 |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | 1st December 2023 |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | 11th December 2023 |
| Intended date of Contract Award | 18th December 2023 |
| Intended Contract Start Date | 18th December 2023 |
| Intended Delivery Date / Contract Duration | 31st March 2024 |

**Section 1: General Information**

**Glossary**

Unless the context otherwise requires, the following words and expressions used within this Request for Quotation shall have the following meanings (to be interpreted in the singular or plural as the context requires):

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|  |  |
| “Authority” | means the Natural England acting as part ofDepartment for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs acting as part of Natural England, who is the Contracting Authority. |
| “Contract” | means the contract to be entered into by the Authority and the successful supplier. |
| “Response” | means the information submitted by a supplier in response to the RFQ. |
| “RFQ” | means this Request for Quotation and all related documents published by the Authority and made available to suppliers. |

**Conditions applying to the RFQ.**

You should examine your Response and related documents ensuring it is complete and in accordance with the stated instructions prior to submission.

Your Response must contain sufficient information to enable the Authority to evaluate it fairly and effectively. You should ensure that you have prepared your Response fully and accurately and that prices quoted are arithmetically correct for the units stated.

By submitting a Response, you, the supplier, are deemed to accept the terms and conditions provided in the RFQ. Confirmation of this is required in Annex 2.

Failure to comply with the instructions set out in the RFQ may result in the supplier’s exclusion from this quotation process.

**Acceptance of Quotations**

By issuing this RFQ the Authority does not bind itself to accept any quotation and reserves the right not to award a contract to any supplier who submits a quotation.

**Costs**

The Authority will not reimburse you for any costs and expenses which you incur preparing and submitting your quotation, even if the Authority amends or terminates the procurement process.

**Self-Declaration and Mandatory Requirements**

The RFQ includes a self-declaration response (Annex 1) which covers basic information about the supplier, as well as any grounds for exclusion. If you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Any mandatory requirements will be set out in Section 2, Specification of Requirements and, if you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

**Clarifications**

Any request for clarification regarding the RFQ and supporting documentation must be submitted via email no later than the deadline for clarifications set out in the Timetable. The Authority shall be under no obligation to respond to queries raised after the clarification deadline.

The Authority will respond to all reasonable clarifications as soon as possible but cannot guarantee a minimum response time. The Authority will publish all clarifications and its responses to all suppliers via email unless deemed commercially sensitive.

If a supplier believes that a request for clarification is commercially sensitive, it should clearly state this when submitting the clarification request. However, if the Authority considers either that:

* the clarification and response are not commercially sensitive; and
* all suppliers may benefit from its disclosure,

then the Authority will notify the supplier (via email), and the supplier will have an opportunity to withdraw the request for clarification by sending a further message requesting the withdrawal of the clarification request. If not withdrawn by the supplier within two working days of the Authority’s notification, the Authority may publish the clarification request and its response to all suppliers and the Authority shall not be liable to the supplier for any consequences of such publication.

The Authority reserves the right to seek clarification of any aspect of a quotation and/or provide additional information during the evaluation phase to carry out a fair evaluation. Where the Authority seeks clarification on any aspect of the quotation, the supplier must respond within the timeframe requested by the Authority.

**Amendments**

The Authority may amend the RFQ at any time prior to the deadline for receipt. If it amends the RFQ the Authority will notify you via email.

Suppliers may modify their quotation prior to the deadline for Responses. No Responses may be modified after the deadline for Responses.

Suppliers may withdraw their quotations at any time by submitting a notice via the email to the named contact.

**Conditions of Contract**

The Authority’s Standard Good and Services Terms & Conditions (used for purchases under £50k) can be located on the [Natural England Website](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about/procurement) and will be applicable to any contract awarded as a result of this quotation process. The Authority will not accept any changes to these terms and conditions proposed by a supplier.

Suppliers should note that the quotation provided by the successful bidder will form part of the Contract.

**Prices**

Prices must be submitted in £ sterling, **exclusive** of VAT.

**Disclosure**

All Central Government Departments, their Executive Agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement, including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice. For these purposes, the Authority may disclose within Government any details contained in your quotation. The information will not be disclosed outside Government during the procurement.

In addition, the Authority is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, which provide a public right of access to information held by public bodies. In accordance with these two statutes, the Authority may be required to disclose information contained in your quotation to any person who submits a request for information pursuant to those statutes.

Further to the Government’s transparency agenda, all UK Government organisations must advertise on Contract Finder in accordance with the following publication thresholds:

* Central Contracting Authority’s: £12,000
* Sub Central Contracting Authority’s and NHS Trusts: £30,000

For the purpose of this RFQ the Authority is classified as a Central Contracting Authoritywith a publication threshold of £12,000inclusive of VAT.

If this opportunity is advertised via Contracts Finder, we are obliged to publish details of the awarded contract including who has won the contract, the contract value, and indicate whether the winning supplier is a small and medium-sized enterprise (“SMEs”) or voluntary organisation or charity. A copy of the contract must also be published with confidential information redacted.

By submitting a Response, you consent to these terms as part of the procurement.

**Disclaimers**

Whilst the information in this RFQ and any supporting information referred to herein or provided to you by the Authority have been prepared in good faith the Authority does not warrant that this information is comprehensive or that it has been independently verified.

The Authority does not:

* make any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness, or completeness of the RFQ.
* accept any liability for the information contained in the RFQ or for the fairness, accuracy, or completeness of that information; or
* accept any liability for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation or any other liability which cannot lawfully be excluded) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.

Any supplier considering entering into contractual relationships with the Authority following receipt of the RFQ should make its own investigations and independent assessment of the Authority and its requirements for the goods and/or services and should seek its own professional financial and legal advice.

**Protection of Personal Data**

In order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018, the supplier must agree to the following:

* You must only process any personal data in strict accordance with instructions from the Authority.
* You must ensure that all the personal data that we disclose to you, or you collect on our behalf under this agreement are kept confidential.
* You must take reasonable steps to ensure the reliability of employees who have access to personal data.
* Only employees who may be required to assist in meeting the obligations under this agreement may have access to the personal data.
* Any disclosure of personal data must be made in confidence and extend only as far as that which is specifically necessary for the purposes of this agreement.
* You must ensure that there are appropriate security measures in place to safeguard against any unauthorised access or unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage or disclosure of the personal data.
* On termination of this agreement, for whatever reason, the personal data must be returned to us promptly and safely, together with all copies in your possession or control.

**General Data Protection Regulations 2018**

For the purposes of the Regulations the Authority is the data processor.

The personal information that we have asked you provide on individuals (data subjects) that will be working for you on this contract will be used in compiling the tender list and in assessing your offer. If you are unsuccessful the information will be held and destroyed within two years of the award of contracts. If you are awarded a contract, it will be retained for the duration of the contract and destroyed within seven years of the contract’s expiry.

We may monitor the performance of the individuals during the execution of the contract, and the results of our monitoring, together with the information that you have provided, will be used in determining what work is allocated under the contract, and in any renewal of the contract or in the award of future contracts of a similar nature. The information will not be disclosed to anyone outside the Authority without the consent of the data subject unless the Authority is required by law to make such disclosures.

**Intellectual Property**

The Intellectual Property Rights resulting from the work shall belong to Natural England.

The cover of all reports or drawings will include a statement © Natural England and the date of creation.

When using existing data the supplier should own, or be licensed to use, all Intellectual Property Rights that are necessary to provide the Services. You should seek advice from Natural England on responsibilities for obtaining a data licence for third party data. Note that Natural England requires to know the lineage of your output (i.e., all the datasets that went into the work) and be able to identify what the licence terms for each of the inputs is to be able to license the output for use.

The Supplier shall indemnify and keep indemnified Natural England against all actions, claims, demands, losses, damages, costs and expenses and other liabilities Natural England may suffer or incur arising from any infringement or alleged infringement of any third-party Intellectual Property Rights except to the extent that they have been caused by or contributed to by Natural England’s acts or omissions.

**Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)**

The Client is striving to create a diverse and inclusive working environment where every individual has equality of opportunity to progress and to apply their unique insights to making the UK a great place for living. The Service Provider is expected to respect this commitment in all dealings with DEFRA and Natural England staff and service users.

Suppliers are expected to.

* support Defra group to achieve its Public Sector Equality Duty as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and to support delivery of [Defra group’s Equality & Diversity Strategy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024).
* meet the standards set out in the [Government’s Supplier Code of Conduct](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supplier-code-of-conduct)
* work with Defra group to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion impacts are addressed (positive and negative) in the goods, services and works we procure, barriers are removed, and opportunities realised.

**Sustainable Procurement**

Addressing global sustainability impacts and realising additional community benefits within commercial activity is core to Defra group’s approach, working with its supply chain is key to achieving sustainable outcomes. In addition to supporting Defra group to meet its outcomes we look to understand and reduce negative sustainability impacts associated with our commercial activity and realise benefits.

The Client encourages its suppliers to share these values, work to address negative impacts and realise opportunities, measure performance and success.

Suppliers are expected to understand the Sustainable Development Goals, the interconnections between them and the relevance to the Goods, Services and works procured on the Client’s behalf.

**Conflicts of Interest**

The concept of a conflict of interest includes but is not limited to any situation where an Involved Person or Relevant Body has directly or indirectly, a financial, economic, or other personal interest which might be perceived to compromise their impartiality and independence in the context of the procurement procedure and/or affect the integrity of the contract award.

We expect suppliers to mitigate appropriately against any real or perceived conflict of interest through their work with government. A supplier with a position of influence gained through a contract should not use that position to unfairly disadvantage any other supplier or reduce the potential for future competition.

Where the supplier is aware of any circumstances giving rise to a conflict of interest or has any indication that a conflict of interest exists or may arise you should inform the Authority of this as soon as possible (whether before or after they have submitted a quotation). Tenderers should remain alert to the possibility of conflicts of interest arising at all stages of the procurement and should update the Authority if any new circumstances or information arises, or there are any changes to information already provided to the Authority. Failure to do so, and/or to properly manage any conflicts of interest may result in a quotation being rejected.

Provided that it has been carried out in an open, fair and transparent manner, routine pre-market engagement carried out by the Authority should not represent a conflict of interest for the supplier.

**Section 2: The Invitation**

**Specification of Requirements**

The Authority is Natural England. The Authority’s priorities are to secure a healthy natural environment; a sustainable, low-carbon economy; a thriving farming sector and a sustainable, healthy, and secure food supply. Further information about the Authority can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england>.

## About Natural England

Natural England (NE) is the government’s advisor on the natural environment. We provide practical advice, grounded in science, on how best to safeguard England’s natural wealth for the benefit of everyone. Our remit is to ensure sustainable stewardship of the land and sea so that people and nature can thrive. It is our responsibility to see that England’s rich natural environment can adapt and survive intact for future generations to enjoy.

## Project Background

## 2.1 Natural Capital and Ecosystems Assessment

The Natural Capital and Ecosystems Assessment (NCEA) programme will transform and innovate the way our evidence-base is captured, analysed, and brought together to ensure science meets the needs of policy/decision makers to embed a natural capital approach, allowing us to leave our environment in a better state than we found it.

The NCEA will provide a holistic, accurate and robust set of evidence and data for Defra, and other arm’s length bodies, to make informed policy decisions about the state of our natural capital assets in high profile policy areas and lead to better outcomes for the environment. It will also identify innovative and transformative ways of collecting, analysing, and distributing the data.

* Better data and evidence are required so that government and society can:
* Understand our natural capital, how and why it is changing.
* Tackle pressures on the environment and the drivers of change.
* Take biodiversity and natural capital into account in decision making.
* Target action where it will be most effective.
* Evaluate policies and interventions to improve their effectiveness across Defra bodies.

**2.2 NCEA Community Science workstream**

Community Science - often synonymous with the term Citizen Science, but with more inclusive connotations - (CS) is one of the cross-cutting tools we have for collecting data, alongside professional surveys, and earth observation. CS is already essential to environmental policy, forming the majority of current biodiversity monitoring in the UK. It complements and augments standard scientific approaches. Critically it has the potential to contribute even more significant amounts of useful data in places and of a richness that cannot be achieved by other means. The approach also provides an important means for members of the public to connect with nature and the environment, further developing and deepening their appreciation and understanding of its importance and benefit to us.

### 2.2.1 Supporting future community science development.

Community Science provides an important source of environmental evidence informing government policy, programmes, and projects. However, the full value, impact, and potential of Community Science for government, society, communities, and individuals, is limited by several factors, including:

* Insufficient guidance on the form, format and subject of study that enable effective detection, measurement, record making and data integration.
* A limited amount and lack of awareness of opportunities, capacity, and capability of people to participate.
* The extent and coordination of broad, strategic sponsorship, guidance, and support of volunteers.

Government investment in and use of community science data is already extensive and has been effectively developed to suit specific purposes but there is great potential to increase its reach, utility, and value. Public sector policy, programme and project use has focussed more on the acquisition and application of existing/historic data (that is already collected) than the design, support, and collection of new/future data (survey effort). As a result:

* Community science presents a more involved method of data collection than contracted professionals or staff led survey and these approaches are considered exclusive of each other.
* Use of community science data is weighted towards surveillance (detecting general change and trends) as opposed to monitoring impacts (pressures and interventions as drivers of change).
* Data mobilisation issues that impede public sector and open reuse are not identified or addressed early enough in the pathway from collection to end use.
* Environmental community science investment, projects and initiatives remain disparate limiting their collective value, efficiency, and overall benefit.

Within this context, Natural England want to investigate alternative approaches to help the wider community of performers and stakeholders address these issues and opportunities at scale across England. We would like to create the capacity to:

* Explore the current and potential future role of community science - opportunities to further develop and enhance the role of community science studies of nature and the environment across England.
* Coordinate and combine effort and resources: convene sponsors and stakeholders at a regional, strategic operational scale to share why, what, and how we each study nature and the environment
* Better engage, enable, and guide public participants: to explore the impact of more capacity to engage, support and coordinate public participants and sponsors of practice, projects and initiatives that study and generate data on elements of nature and the environment.
* Share priorities, methods, tools, approaches, systems and especially our collective experience and lessons to better inform and evolve common guidance, standards, and resources.

**2.3 Shifting Focus of Nature Conservation Policy & Science**

There is growing recognition and concern for the future availability and capacity of natural resources that provide benefit and sustain our society, our wellbeing, and our livelihoods. This natural capital is underpinned and sustained by natural physical, chemical, and biological processes and systems, which combine and balance within what we recognise as ecosystems. Traditional nature conservation and environmental protection has focussed on distinct qualities and features of ecosystems rather than the processes and functions provided by the whole system. This has, for example, seen government policy and intervention focus on the management of “priority” habitats as well as the “quantity and quality” of water. Monitoring and assessing these qualities and features has, for a considerable time, been the key focus for survey methods developed and deployed by various groups and organisations across the UK. Interest has been exclusive to those that have a direct remit for or impact from these features and qualities.

The natural capital approach provides a more inclusive case for why wider society, business and industry needs to consider the health, function, and resilience of whole ecosystems. It also provides scope to re-examine and potentially expand or otherwise adapt the focus of survey methods that are developed and deployed. The contract offered here is a step towards enabling this fuller consideration. Natural England would like to collate and describe existing survey methods and approaches currently in use or under development. These are likely to mostly address the traditional focus of detecting and measuring distinct qualities and features of the Natural Environment. Some though may offer approaches that have to now been deemed less relevant of useful because they provide more general or different data that may now be useful within a natural capital, ecosystem context.

**2.4 NCEA Programme Earth Observation and Habitat Mapping**

To successfully recover biodiversity and improve the environment it is vital that we understand the location, extent, and condition of natural capital and ecosystem assets across England. The NCEA programme is funding several analysis and mapping projects that aim to improve our ability to derive this knowledge from available data sources. The available data sources largely comprise a) existing data available to use from various past field surveys, and b) new data sourced from earth observation satellites and, so far to a lesser degree, field survey.

Field survey data focussed on surveying and recording habitats has been varied and infrequent largely due to its complexity. Surveys in the ‘90s provided baseline data for many local wildlife sites. However, existing field data for priority habitats is somewhat limited to protected areas (SSSI’s, SACs) and some data from existing schemes (e.g., NPMS), agri-environment applications and management plans. Availability of past survey data also limits the evidence available to inform and underpin national mapping.

Earth observation (EO) offers comprehensive data collection across the UK. However, the data has limited resolution and must be interpreted to derive the ecological and environmental nature of land cover and may not be sufficient to provide meaningful local scale information. EO is being used to map Green/Blue infrastructure (GI), national forest inventory (NFI), derive habitat probability maps for England (Living England) and other significant natural environments. The analytical models used to achieve this need to be tested and refined to tune their accuracy and reliability. Testing and tuning requires field visits at scale by people to ground truth the interpretations and provide additional data to affirm or correct the models and results.

Professional survey offers a limited source of field data, but community science has potential to provide additional capability and capacity to more frequently survey and update maps. The below illustration demonstrates the potential for these various data sources to contribute to different aspects of Natural Capital asset mapping.

A diagram of a map

Description automatically generated

**2.5 Potential for community science to contribute to NCEA models and maps**

Modern data sources and analytical techniques are changing the opportunities for field surveys to meaningfully inform the location, extent, and condition of natural capital and ecosystem assets across England. More varied and simplified survey effort is increasing the potential for community scientists to contribute to our understanding and provide ground truthing capacity.

However, engaging and making use of community science can be difficult and involved. The NCEA community science project aims to provide Defra group capacity to meaningfully consider or harness community science as a source of data. We have engaged local pilot groups which will offer an experimental means for Defra group to engage, influence, direct and co-create community science survey effort at scale. We need to ensure we can guide and enable that effort by providing guidelines, tools, protocols, and resources.

## 2.6 Existing work and support

This work will gain insight from and build on existing experience of CS, EO and habitat mapping from within NCEA and beyond. This includes, but is not limited to:

* Living England
* Priority Habitats
* Habitat Probability Map
* National Forest Inventory
* Green / Blue infrastructure
* Work conducted by NE habitat specialists
* Volunteer based species surveillance schemes coordinated by JNCC
* NCEA work on a Community Survey Resource Library to share, and consistently describe existing tools.
* NCEA (NE/BSBI) Botanical Heatmap and potential expansion
* National Plant Monitoring Scheme protocols being used to ascribe habitat
* The practice of using land management data to ascribe habitat
* The Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust volunteer based Habimap project
* The Biodiversity Metric accounting tool
* Common Standards Monitoring
* NE Protected Site Assessment methodology

## Vision / Ambition

The NCEA programme is interested in better understanding the current state of ecosystem and asset survey methods (habitat field survey (both employed and volunteer), remote sensing and earth observation methods) in use across England. This will help us explore how Defra group might better coordinate survey effort that is sponsored and enabled by a diverse range of groups and organisations across England.

A community science approach has the potential to better close the loop between the survey and assessment of ecosystems and natural capital assets. We believe achieving this will enable and stimulate more active update, improvement and wider user community acceptance of evidence products and statistics.

### 3.1 Project Aims and Objectives

This contract aims to identify and collate information on existing stakeholders, methods, tools, and data (in terms of attributes / metrics) that aim to better understand ecosystems and habitats that are or could be used across England. It will also provide an assessment of their individual and collective strengths, weaknesses, and any gaps.

* Collate and describe current approaches and methods
* Review strengths, weaknesses, and gaps across these

Traditionally, habitat monitoring has focussed on determining their presence, extent, and condition. Increasingly we also want to understand how these things are changing and what is driving these changes (pressures/interventions).

* Presence (identification)
* Extent (location and spatial distribution)
* Condition (definition, health, function, resilience, pressures)
* Change Detection (Structure, Function, Management)
* Drivers (Land Management / Pressures)

The objectives of the contract are listed below, along with the associated outputs.

**1A. Collate and review**

* Identify practitioners.
  + **What** stakeholders are currently trying to map in terms of land cover, natural capital/environment systems, assets, features.
  + **Why** stakeholders are mapping these - Existing purposes and reasoning for these survey
  + **How** the information is being used and shared
  + **Who** is, and could, undertake the work
* Identify existing technology, protocols, tools, models, and data (both internally and externally) which are being used to describe and monitor habitats, land cover and naturalness (location, extent, condition) across England.
* Use a common structure to describe these

**Project output** – An analysis of the current practitioners and methodologies in the habitat mapping space, defining what, why and how stakeholders are currently recording habitats.

**1B. Review strengths and gaps**

* Highlight any strengths or gaps in current habitat monitoring practice – this could include, but is not limited to: function/focus of activity, Accessibility (who can use it), availability, skill levels and training required, how active/broad is the data use?

**Project output** – An assessment of the collective strengths, weaknesses and gaps including a summary of opportunities and limitations.

1. **Detect change and drivers of change**

* Determine **how** stakeholders are detecting, measuring, and recording presence, extent, condition.
* Identify **what** these efforts tell us (if anything) about pressures or interventions - the drivers of change.

**Project output** – An assimilation of research into existing methods, tools, data, and technologies which are deployed to describe and monitor habitats, including how they relate to change detection.

### 3.2 Project Deliverables

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1. **Catalogue of current practitioners and their existing methods**
2. **A common description of each methodology (in line with NE resource library work) including detecting change**
3. **An assessment of the collective strengths, weaknesses and gaps including a summary of opportunities and limitations**
4. **Project Report**

A summarising report containing the following:

* Executive Summary
* Introduction
* Methods
* A summary of what and why stakeholders are mapping in terms of habitats
* A summary of existing tools and methodologies
* A summary of strengths and gaps in current habitat monitoring activities
* An overview of how pressures/interventions may be driving change
* Case studies and examples as appropriate

The report is to be provided as two electronic copies in MS Word and Adobe PDF formats.

## Project Timeline

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Event** | **Date** |
| Intended Contract Start Date | 18th December 2023 |
| Draft Report and Data Provided | 18th March 2024 |
| Final Report and Data Provided | 27th March 2024 |
| Presentation | 28th March 2024 |
| Contract Completion Date | 31st March 2024 |

It is requested that the Tenderer provide an indicative timescale for delivery of all deliverables within their Tender proposal, including whether it meets the Project Timeline outlined above.

## 5. Quotation Submission

## 5.1 Format

Tenders must be submitted in either MS Word or Adobe PDF file formats to the contact named in this RFQ, by the deadline provided.

The following must be included within the tender proposal.

* Project Schedule stating the timescales you will be able to execute and deliver the products specified above.
* Proposed Methodology (including data sources to be utilised)
* Details of your Capability and Expertise (including anonymised CVs of key personnel who will be directly involved with this contract, examples of relevant projects, and relevant peer reviewed work)

## 5.2 Payment

The Authority will raise purchase orders to cover the cost of the services and will issue to the awarded supplier following contract award.

The Authority’s preference is for all invoices to be sent electronically, quoting a valid Purchase Order number. Invoices can be sent after completion of all deliverables, received, and approved by Natural England.

It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded for a period of **15 weeks** to end no later than **31/03/2024.** Prices will remain fixed for the duration of the contract award period. We may at our sole discretion extend this contract to include related or further work. Any extension shall be agreed in writing in advance of any work commencing and may be subject to further competition.

## 5.3 Contract Management

Natural England will nominate a Project Officer who will manage the project and serve as the principle point of contact from Natural England. They will be responsible for the day-to-day management of this contract and will coordinate regular meetings to review the work and ensure it meets the projects aims and objectives.

This contract shall be managed on behalf of the Authority by Amy Pilsbury

Email: amy.pilsbury@naturalengland.org.uk

The contractor will be expected to appoint a Project Manager who will act as the principle point of contact and will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the project. The contractor will be required to regularly update the Natural England Project Officer on project progress via regular progress meetings (held on MS Teams) arranged by the contractor, and when there are any significant issues.

Contact by email and phone will be expected from the contractor to update NE project manager on project schedules, plans and any issues that may arise.

## 5.4 Evaluation Methodology

Tenders will be disqualified if they do not meet the following requirements.

* Delivery prior to deadline
* Acceptance of the Terms and Conditions Provided
* Agreement to the Protection of Personal Data
* Provision of Environmental and Quality Assurance

Please ensure you provide agreement / sufficient evidence within your proposal for each of these.

We will award this contract in line with the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) as set out in the following award criteria table. Please ensure you provide sufficient evidence within your proposal to answer each of these comprehensively.

### 5.4.1 Evaluation criteria

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

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Award Criteria** | **Weighting (%)** | **Sub-Criteria** |  |
| **Technical** | **60%** | **Methodology (30%)** | Please provide a detailed methodology, describing the approach you will follow in order to deliver the objectives and outputs detailed in the specification.  Please provide detailed of how you intend to quality assure work undertaken as part of this contract and outputs, so that deliverables are provided efficiently, to a high standard and on time. |
| **Project Management (25%)** | Please set out your project management arrangements appropriate to the scale and duration of the project. Please include any consortium or sub-contracting arrangements  Please provide a detailed project plan with resource allocation for each task, including Gantt chart.  Please provide a summary of all the risks you have identified that would impact the project, including how you intend to manage these risks and mitigate the impact on the project. |
| **Capability and Expertise (5%)** | Please provide detailed of your team member’s expertise, previous experience and, if applicable, examples of similar projects delivered relevant to this requirement.  Please include abridged CVs of proposed members of the team. |
| **Commercial** | **40%** | **Price** | See attachment 1 |
| **Total** | | | **100%** |

**Technical (60%)**

Technical evaluations will be based on responses to specific questions covering key criteria which are outlined below. Scores for questions will be based on the following:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Description | Score | Definition |
| Very good | 100 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. There are no weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority complete confidence that all the requirements will be met to a high standard. |
| Good | 70 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains minor weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that all the requirements will be met to a good standard. |
| Moderate | 50 | Addresses most of the requirements with most of the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains moderate weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that most of the requirements will be met to a suitable standard. |
| Weak | 20 | Substantially addresses the requirements but not all and provides supporting information that is of limited or no relevance or a methodology containing significant weaknesses and therefore raises concerns for the Authority that the requirements may not all be met. |
| Unacceptable | 0 | No response or provides a response that gives the Authority no confidence that the requirement will be met. |

**Commercial (40%)**

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

Suppliers are required to submit a total cost to provide the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements. In addition to this the Commercial Response template must be completed to provide a breakdown of the whole life costs against each deliverableused in the delivery of this requirement.

### 5.4.2 Calculation Method

The method for calculating the weighted scores is as follows:

**Commercial**

Score = (Lowest Quotation Price / Supplier’s Quotation Price) x **[40%]** (Maximum available marks)

**Technical**

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

The total score (weighted) (TWS) is then calculated by adding the total weighted commercial score (WC) to the total weighted technical score (WT): WC + WT = TWS.

**5.4.3 Information to be returned.**

Please note, the following information requested must be provided. Incomplete tender submissions may be discounted.

Please complete and return the following information:

* Completed Commercial Response (Attachment 1)
* Completed Mandatory Requirements (Attachment 2)
* Completed Acceptance of Terms and Conditions (Attachment 3)

**5.4.4 Award**

Once the evaluation of the Response(s) is complete all suppliers will be notified of the outcome via email. The successful supplier will be issued the contract, incorporating their Response, for signature. The Authority will then counter sign.

**Attachment 1: Commercial Response**

**Tenderer Agreement**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Agreed Y/N** |
| Acceptance of the Terms and Conditions Provided |  |
| Agreement to the Protection of Personal Data |  |
| Provision of Environmental and Quality Assurance Information |  |

**Technical Proposal Checklist – Quality Weighting 60%**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Provided in Tender Submission Y/N** |
| 1. Proposed Schedule |  |
| 2. Proposed Method Statement |  |
| 3. Details of your Capability and Expertise |  |

**Commercial Pricing Schedule – Price Weighting 40%**

Please note, prices must be submitted excluding VAT.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Staff Grade / day rate** | **Number of days** | **Total £GBP** |
| Project Virtual Meetings and Presentation |  |  |  |
| Data Collection and Analysis |  |  |  |
| Report Production |  |  |  |
| Project Management |  |  |  |
| Other (*if required please detail)* |  |  |  |
| **Total (excluding VAT)** |  |  |  |
| **VAT** |  |  |  |
| **TOTAL (including VAT)** |  |  |  |

**Submission Details**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Tenderer Organisation Name |  |
| Tenderer Contact Name |  |
| Address |  |
| Email |  |
| Telephone |  |
| Signature |  |
| Date |  |

**Attachment 2: Mandatory Requirements**

**Part 1 Potential Supplier Information**

Please answer the following self-declaration questions in full and include this Annex in your quotation response.

**Part 1.1 Potential Supplier Information:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 1.1(a) | Full name of the potential supplier submitting the information |  |
| 1.1(b) | Registered office address (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(c) | Company registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(d) | Charity registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(e) | Head office DUNS number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(f) | Registered VAT number |  |
| 1.1(g) | Are you a Small, Medium or Micro Enterprise (SME)? | (Yes / No) |

Note: See EU definition of SME <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en>

**Part 1.2 Contact details and declaration**

By submitting a quotation to this RFQ I declare that to the best of my knowledge the answers submitted, and information contained in this document are correct and accurate.

I declare that, upon request and without delay you will provide the certificates or documentary evidence referred to in this document.

I understand that the information will be used in the selection process to assess my organisation’s suitability to be invited to participate further in this procurement.

I understand that the authority may reject this submission in its entirety if there is a failure to answer all the relevant questions fully, or if false/misleading information or content is provided in any section.

I am aware of the consequences of serious misrepresentation.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 1.2(a) | Contact name |  |
| 1.2(b) | Name of organisation |  |
| 1.2(c) | Role in organisation |  |
| 1.2(d) | Phone number |  |
| 1.2(e) | E-mail address |  |
| 1.2(f) | Postal address |  |
| 1.2(g) | Signature (electronic is acceptable) |  |
| 1.2(h) | Date |  |

**Part 2 Exclusion Grounds**

**Part 2.1 Grounds for mandatory exclusion**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 2.1(a) | Please indicate if, within the past five years you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation been convicted anywhere in the world of any of the offences within the summary below. | |
|  | Participation in a criminal organisation. | (Yes / No)  If yes, please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Corruption. | ((Yes / No)  If yes, please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Fraud. | (Yes / No)  If yes, please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities | (Yes / No)  If yes, please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Money laundering or terrorist financing | (Yes / No)  If yes, please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Child labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings | (Yes / No)  If yes, please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
| 2.1(b) | If you have answered yes to question 2.1(a), please provide further details.  Date of conviction, specify which of the grounds listed the conviction was for, and the reasons for conviction.  Identity of who has been convicted.  If the relevant documentation is available electronically, please provide the web address, issuing authority, precise reference of the documents. |  |
| 2.1 (c) | If you have answered Yes to any of the points above have measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (i.e., Self-Cleaning) | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(d) | Has it been established, for your organisation by a judicial or administrative decision having final and binding effect in accordance with the legal provisions of any part of the United Kingdom or the legal provisions of the country in which the organisation is established (if outside the UK), that the organisation is in breach of obligations related to the payment of tax or social security contributions? | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(e) | If you have answered yes to question 2.3(a), please provide further details. Please also confirm you have paid or have entered into a binding arrangement with a view to paying, the outstanding sum including where applicable any accrued interest and/or fines. |  |

**Part 2.2 Grounds for discretionary exclusion**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 2.2(a) | The detailed grounds for discretionary exclusion of an organisation are set out on this [webpage](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551130/List_of_Mandatory_and_Discretionary_Exclusions.pdf), which should be referred to before completing these questions.  Please indicate if, within the past three years, anywhere in the world any of the following situations have applied to you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision, or control in the organisation | |
| 2.2(b) | Breach of environmental obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes, please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(c) | Breach of social obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes, please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(d) | Breach of labour law obligations? | (Yes / No)  If yes, please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(e) | Shown significant or persistent deficiencies in the performance of a substantive requirement under a prior public contract, a prior contract with a contracting entity, or a prior concession contract, which led to early termination of that prior contract, damages, or other comparable sanctions? | (Yes / No)  If yes, please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2 (f) | If you have answered Yes to any of the above, explain what measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (Self-Cleaning) |  |

**Attachment 3: Acceptance of Terms and Conditions**

I/We accept in full the terms and conditions appended to this Request for Quote document.

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

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

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

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

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