

Request for quotation



Request for Quotation

RFQ131

Debt Collection

Issued 08/06/2020

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CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

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Thank you for your consideration, City College Plymouth.

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OPEN PROCEDURE

The College fully adheres to the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, including for opportunities which are under threshold amounts.

Any Contractor who directly or indirectly canvasses any Member or Officer of the Institution, or advisor concerning the award of the contract for the provision of the services, or who directly or indirectly obtains or attempts to obtain information from any such member or Officer concerning any Tender or proposed Tender for the service will be disqualified from having his/her Tender considered.

SUBMISSION DETAILS

SUBMISSION DEADLINES

All submissions for responding to this Request for Quote must be submitted via email as stated below, no later than:

Friday 19th June 2020

12:00 Noon

Any submissions received after this date will not be considered.

SUBMISSION DELIVERY ADDRESS

All submissions should be submitted electronically as below

SUBMISSION QUESTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

You may contact the following person if you have any questions or require clarification on any topics covered in this Request for Quotation: by 12th June 2020.

Carol Williams

Procurement Officer

Phone: 01752 856 809

Email: tenders@cityplym.ac.uk

All correspondence during the Tender should be channeled via the Procurement Officer using the above details only. Bidders found to have gained an unfair advantage shall be disqualified from the current opportunity and future opportunities with the College for a minimum of four (4) years.

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS

Electronic submissions in response to this Request for Quotation will be accepted as long as they meet the following criteria:

Sent via email to: tenders@cityplym.ac.uk

Document standards:

- Text must be in Microsoft Word format;
- Price tables must be in Microsoft Excel format (using pricing schedule in Appendix A);
- Supportive evidence may additionally be submitted in PDF format;
- Images, Designs, and other supporting evidence may be in either JPEG or PDF format
- Completed Appendix C Suitability Assessment & Selection Questionnaire (Including Mandatory & Discretionary Exclusions) Parts 1, 2 and 3. - *Please note this suitability assessment will not be viewed unless you are the winning tenderer. Failure at this stage may prevent the contract from being awarded.*
- Signed Agreement Acceptance and Declaration.

Please note that the College is able to accept submissions sent in a compressed or ".zip" file format, so long as the files contained meet the standards described above.

WARRANTY:

By submitting your tender bid, you are warranting to the College that you have not breached our canvassing or soliciting clause.

If any successful tenderer awarded a contract is found to have provided an inaccurate warranty, then the College reserves the right to terminate the awarded contract with immediate effect and re-tender the contract from which the successful tenderer will be excluded from re-bidding and shall be disqualified from any future opportunities for a period of four years.

INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This contract is for the supply of debt collection services to the College for an initial contract period of 3 years with 2 possible twelve month extensions.

Annually, the College raises approximately 2600 invoices totalling around £8million.

The value of the total debt referred can be up to £150,000 from 40 debtors.

The College offers no guarantee of any work or any set volume of work throughout the contract period.

The anticipated value of the supply contract will not exceed £25,000. However, in the interests of open competition the opportunity will still be advertised on the government portal 'Contracts Finder'.

BUSINESS OVERVIEW & BACKGROUND

The College operates on two sites within the city, serving 12,897 students and employing 622 staff. The College operates year round, with opening times from 0800-2100 on some days.

OUR VISION ... IS WHERE OUR FUTURE LIES

We are a College with a national reputation for promoting enterprise, employability and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

OUR MISSION ... IS WHAT WE FOCUS ON EACH AND EVERY DAY

To be the South West's leading provider of innovative, technical, professional education and training by supporting partnerships for growth, raising aspirations and fostering wealth creation

BACKGROUND

City College Plymouth is one of the largest providers of innovative, technical and professional, education in the South West with a national reputation for promoting enterprise, employability and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). The College plays a central role in the educational, cultural and economic life of the region and works with strategic partners to facilitate growth, raise aspirations and foster wealth creation.

The College was awarded the Teaching Excellence Framework Gold award for its university-level provision and its most recent Ofsted inspection confirmed that the College continues to be 'Good' with outstanding features. The College was rated first in the South West and second nationally for student satisfaction in the latest FE Choices student satisfaction survey.

City College supports the region's employers with their award-winning Apprenticeship provision, as well as providing a range of courses and bespoke training programmes which enable employees to upskill or retrain to better support their business' requirements. Their successful partnership working with the local business community resulted in a 99.5% satisfaction rate in the Government's national 'FE Choices employer satisfaction survey 2016 to 2017' - placing them first in the country for general further education colleges.

City College Plymouth offers a wide range of academic and vocational courses in a variety of subjects. The total number of students supported by the College is 12,533 – comprising of: 3,569 full-time students, including 765 higher education students and

179 non EU students; 8,964 part-time students; and 1,599 apprentices. The College also employs over 500 staff.

DETAILED REQUIREMENT

The Debt Recovery Policy of the College is to ensure that all debts are collected within the agreed payment terms and in accordance with the Financial Regulations.

Appendix E depicts the flow charts for our procedures to manage both employer and student debt. The College intends to continue to follow these procedures and is looking for a Debt Collection Agency to pick up the debts once we have exhausted our processes.

We require:

- A reputable debt collection agency which specialises in student debt, for both Higher Education and Further Education fees plus other adhoc student debts, employer fees and other college services which may include nursery fees, staff debts, overpayments etc. Debts would comprise of customers mainly based in the UK.
- Knowledgeable and experienced collections team and account manager
- Personalised service tailored to the College's needs
- Regular monthly meetings with an account manager (in person/by telephone/virtual meet) – timing subject to review during the contract term
- At least 2 visits per annum from the account manager in person
- Direct access to an online portal 24/7
- Individual debtor reports with clear, precise, detailed notes on communications and collections
- Direct communication ability with account manager via email/telephone during office hours Monday to Friday 8.30-5.00
- Regular updates/progress reports including monthly reports on the status of each debt sent via email
- Recommended further actions depending on client status/collection progress
- Template providing ability to upload several debts
- Competitive commission rates with commission/fees for collected debts to be paid on receipt of each monthly report
- Full payment by BACS of debts collected within 2 weeks
- Invoices to be emailed directly to our purchase ledger team
- Categorized debts by, say age of debt, value
- Ability to create bespoke reports as may from time to time be requested
- Timely response to queries
- Transfer of outstanding debt from current collection agency, help with migration

TIMESCALES

The timescale for this tender is as follows:

Action	Date
Tender Issued	08/06/2020
Deadline for Queries	12/06/2020
Tender Response Date	19/06/2020
Award Date	25/06/2020
Implementation Date	29/06/2020

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

We require a written document which details your company offer with particular interest to the following areas. This submitted document will be scored as per the table on page 10. Your document should outline the following:

- Methods and systems used to collect debt
- Arrangements for uploading new debts
- Access to debt collection notes
- Successful collection rates
- Contract Management arrangements, including communication methods
- Management reports/arrangements, including frequency and self-serve facility
- How you will remit payments to the College, including lead time between debt collection and payments made to the College
- How you will help with contract handover from existing debt collection agency
- Details of Agents training programmes
- How you handle any complaints including:
 - The Management level at which complaints are handled.
 - The timeframe in which complaints are handled.
 - The remedy if the complainant is not satisfied.

You will be expected to have membership of the Credit Services Association and confirm your Certification under the Consumer Credit Act. Failure to provide relevant evidence of this requirement will lead to your tender being discounted. The successful company and its agents will be expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct as attached at Appendix F.

We would request that you provide 3 reference contacts particularly those within the education sector.

PRICING

Tenderers should provide details of their pricing using Appendix A. You should specify whether the pricing structure operates on a percentage of debt collected or whether it is a fixed fee or annual membership and state whether the age of debt effects the charging structure. You should make clear any minimum fees to be applied- this can be notated in the comments column. Prices for tracing missing debtors are also required to be specified as well as prices for taking debts through legal action.

Prices should be firm and valid for at least the contract period (36 months) and not subject to increase or escalation of any kind throughout the contract.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The College's normal business terms are 1-2 months from the date of invoice. Payment will become due subject to the above upon the College's full acceptance of the goods/services. This Request for Quotation and any resulting purchase order will be subject to the College's General Terms and Conditions of Purchase of Goods/Services – see Appendix B.

The College reserves the right to request a formal contract for all contracts over 1 year duration in supplement to the terms and conditions and contract acceptance documents. **You must advise the college at tender return if you require any specific terms and conditions within the contract.**

VALIDITY

Bidder's offers should be open and valid for acceptance for a period of no less than ninety [90] days from the date of submission.

SELECTION CRITERIA

The successful supplier will have provided the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) to the college. It should be noted that the bidder with the lowest submitted prices will not necessarily be down-selected. All bidders will be notified via email of the results of the outcome no later than 90 days from the date of submission. The date of contract award will be provided within that email.

The marking criteria follows:

Category	Weight
Membership of Credit Services Association	Pass/Fail
Certification under the Consumer Credit Act	Pass/Fail
Price	50%
Management Reporting	15%
Contract Management arrangements	10%
Remittance arrangements for amounts collected	10%
Complaints Handling	5%
Debt Collection Methods	5%
Agent Training Programmes	5%

Please see table below for more details on the scoring method.

AWARD PRICE

Lowest quote price divided by quote price multiplied by 100

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

Assessment	Score	Interpretation
Excellent	4	<i>Comprehensive response supported by examples Description fully supported by details that demonstrate the applicant's ability to provide the required services.</i>
Good	3	<i>Broad response supported by relevant examples.</i>

		<i>Description well supported by details that demonstrate the applicant's ability to provide the required services.</i>
Satisfactory	2	<i>Reasonable response supported by some evidence. Description adequately supported by details that demonstrate the applicant's ability to provide the required services.</i>
Poor	1	<i>Limited response not well supported by evidence. Description inadequately supported by details that demonstrate the applicant's ability to provide the required services.</i>
Unacceptable	0	<i>No response or insufficient information provided.</i>

ASSESSMENT OF QUOTATIONS

Bidders must ensure that their quotation fully addresses all information requested within this RFQ document. Bidders must ensure that any quotation fully meets the specification required. The College reserves the right to discount any quotation which does not fully meet the specification.

The College reserves the right to seek clarification with bidders upon receipt of quotations.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 the College cannot guarantee that information provided by bidders during the course of this RFQ procedure or any resulting contract will be held a confidential. The College will not routinely release information to interested parties unless required to do so in order to meet our statutory obligations.

GENERAL DATA PROTECTION REGULATION (GDPR) 2018

All bidders must comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018 in respect of using and processing personal information. Bidders must have in place technical and organisational safeguards to protect personal data from unauthorised use, disclosure or loss.

The College reserves the right to request a copy of your privacy statement if you are the successful bidder.

AGREEMENT CONDITIONS ACCEPTANCE AND DECLARATION

Bidders are required to sign and return the attached Agreement Conditions Acceptance and Declaration, Appendix D.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendix A: Pricing Schedule

Appendix B: City College Plymouth Standard Terms & Conditions

Appendix C: Suitability Assessment & Selection Questionnaire

Appendix D: Agreement Conditions Acceptance and Declaration

Appendix E: Current Debt Collection Cycles

Appendix F: Code of Conduct