

Invitation to Quote

Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of Low Pay Commission
Subject: The impact of the National Living Wage on businesses, particularly prices, productivity, profits, investment, and business creation (start-ups) and destruction (failures)
Sourcing Reference Number: CR19024



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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Version 3.6

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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 our Contracting Authorities improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

It is our vision to become the leading service provider for the Contracting Authorities 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](#).

Privacy Statement

At UK Shared Business Services (UK SBS) we recognise and understand that your privacy is extremely important and we want you to know exactly what kind of information we collect about you and how we use it.

This privacy notice link below details what you can expect from UK SBS when we collect your personal information.

- We will keep your data safe and private.
- We will not sell your data to anyone.
- We will only share your data with those you give us permission to share with and only for legitimate service delivery reasons.

Privacy Notice

This notice sets out how the Contracting Authority will use your personal data, and your rights. It is made under Articles 13 and/or 14 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

YOUR DATA

The Contracting Authority will process the following personal data:

Names and contact details of employees involved in preparing and submitting the bid;
Names and contact details of employees proposed to be involved in delivery of the contract;
Names, contact details, age, qualifications and experience of employees who's CVs are submitted as part of the bid.

Purpose

The Contracting Authority are processing your personal data for the purposes of the tender exercise, or in the event of legal challenge to such tender exercise.

Legal basis of processing

The legal basis for processing your personal data is processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the data controller, such as the exercise of a function of the Crown, a Minister of the Crown, or a government department; the exercise of a function conferred on a person by an enactment; the exercise of a function of either House of Parliament; or the administration of justice.

Recipients

Your personal data will be shared by us with other Government Departments or public authorities where necessary as part of the tender exercise. The Contracting Authority may share your data if required to do so by law, for example by court order or to prevent fraud or other crime.

Retention

All submissions in connection with this tender exercise will be retained for a period of (7) years from the date of contract expiry, unless the contract is entered into as a deed in which case it will be kept for a period of (12) years from the date of contract expiry.

YOUR RIGHTS

You have the right to request information about how your personal data are processed, and to request a copy of that personal data.

You have the right to request that any inaccuracies in your personal data are rectified without delay.

You have the right to request that any incomplete personal data are completed, including by means of a supplementary statement.

You have the right to request that your personal data are erased if there is no longer a justification for them to be processed.

You have the right in certain circumstances (for example, where accuracy is contested) to request that the processing of your personal data is restricted.

You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data where it is processed for direct marketing purposes.

You have the right to object to the processing of your personal data.

INTERNATIONAL TRANSFERS

Your personal data will not be processed outside the European Union

OR

COMPLAINTS

If you consider that your personal data has been misused or mishandled, you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner, who is an independent regulator. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
0303 123 1113
casework@ico.org.uk

Any complaint to the Information Commissioner is without prejudice to your right to seek redress through the courts.

CONTACT DETAILS

The data controller for your personal data is:

The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

You can contact the Data Protection Officer at:

BEIS Data Protection Officer, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET. Email: dataprotection@beis.gov.uk.

Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority

Low Pay Commission (LPC)

The Low Pay Commission (LPC) is an independent public body (sponsored by The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy: BEIS) that advises the Government about the National Minimum Wage. There are 9 Low Pay Commissioners drawn from a range of employee, employer and academic backgrounds. All the commissioners serve in an individual capacity. They are supported by a small secretariat, which has 8 members of staff.

The Low Pay Commission makes evidence-based recommendations based on:

- commissioned and independent research;
- analysis of relevant data regarding the state of the economy and the impact of the minimum wage;
- consultations with employers, workers and their representatives;
- written and oral evidence from a wide range of organisations; and
- fact-finding visits across the UK to meet employers, employees and representative organisations.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/low-pay-commission>

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	Low Pay Commission (LPC) 8 th Floor Fleetbank House 2-6 Salisbury Square London EC4Y 8JX
3.2	Buyer name	Alexandra Richards
3.3	Buyer contact details	Research@uksbs.co.uk
3.4	Maximum value of the Opportunity	£80,000.00 Excluding VAT
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	Wednesday 27 th February 2019
3.7	Latest date/time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Emptoris messaging system	Wednesday 6 th March 2019 11:00am
3.8	Latest date/time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Emptoris	Monday 11 th March 2019
3.9	Latest date/time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Emptoris	Monday 18 th March 2019 11:00am
3.10	Clarifications if required	Tuesday 19 th March 2019
3.11	Anticipated notification date of successful and unsuccessful Bids	Friday 22 nd March 2019
3.12	Anticipated Award date	Friday 22 nd March 2019
3.13	Anticipated Contract Start date	Monday 25 th March 2019
3.14	Anticipated Contract End date	Thursday 31 st December 2020
3.15	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

Section 4 – Specification

1. Background

The Low Pay Commission (LPC) invites tenders for an econometric study of the impact of the National Living Wage (NLW) (and the National Minimum Wage (NMW)) on businesses, particularly prices, productivity, profits, investment, and business creation (start-ups) and destruction (failures).

The LPC has an ongoing remit to monitor the operation of the UK minimum wage, and to assess the impact of increases in the levels of the NMW and NLW in order to advise the Government on future rates. An important part of assessing the impact of the minimum wage is to examine the effect on businesses and their ability to cope with minimum wage increases. Previous research conducted or commissioned by the Commission (as well as independent research) suggests that the NMW has had limited adverse effects on employment levels but that businesses have coped by using a number of adjustment channels, including: adjusting hours; changing pay structures; reducing non-wage benefits; increasing prices to their customers; and squeezing profit margins.

The introduction of the NLW on 1 April 2016 at £7.20 an hour for those aged 25 and above was a sharp real and relative increase in the level of the minimum wage – 10.8 per cent in nominal terms on the year previously (around four times pay growth at the median). Since then, as part of the Government commitment to move towards 60 per cent of median earnings by 2020, the NLW was further increased by 4.2 per cent to £7.50 an hour in April 2017 and by 4.4 per cent in April 2018 to £7.83. It will increase again (by 4.9 per cent) to £8.21 in April 2019. It is important that the Commission has robust evidence on the effect of the NLW on businesses in order to guide its recommendations.

Previous research has broadly established that incremental increases in the minimum wage can raise pay at the bottom of the pay distribution without large adverse side effects on the labour market or on businesses. However, as we have noted, businesses have adjusted by using a variety of channels. The advent of the NLW is an opportunity to test whether firms are able to cope with sharper and more ambitious increases. There is global interest among policy-makers in the impact of the NLW. The LPC is required to make recommendations to the Government on the path of the rate of the NLW to 2020. The findings from this research will directly inform policy decisions touching the lives of millions

of workers and thousands of businesses as well as contributing to policy formation in the UK and beyond.

2. Aims and Objectives of the Project

The aim of this quantitative study is to gain a better understanding of the impact of minimum wages, especially the National Living Wage, on businesses, particularly prices, productivity, profits, investment, and business creation (start-ups) and destruction (failures).

The Low Pay Commission invites tenders for econometric research that will provide initial evidence by September 2019 and more substantive findings by September 2020. The initial findings will inform LPC deliberations in October 2019 for the uprating of the NLW (and the other age-related minimum wage rates) in April 2020. It will then provide more substantive findings to inform decisions in October 2020 for the minimum wage up ratings in April 2021 and beyond. This research will contribute to our understanding of how firms are adjusting to the NLW. It will complement previous research and the qualitative research that will also be commissioned.

Potential areas of investigation might include the impact of the NLW and how firms are responding/adapting in terms of:

- labour costs;
- profits;
- productivity, capital investment and training;
- prices; and
- sub-contracting and outsourcing.

We are interested in whether firms' approaches in the short-term and the longer-term differ given that the NLW is set to increase to 60 per cent of median earnings by 2020 (which is currently £8.62 based on the latest wage forecasts in our 2018 Report). We are also interested in understanding how the impacts vary by size of firm, industry and geography.

The LPC invites tenders for research that will provide interim findings by September 2019 and further, fuller, findings by September 2020. The 2019 findings will provide an assessment of the impact of the introduction of the NLW (£7.20) and its subsequent increase to £7.83. The findings on the impact of the NLW will inform LPC deliberations in

October 2019 for the uprating of the NLW in April 2020. The more substantive findings on the impact of the NLW (including an assessment of the increase in April 2019 to £8.21) will inform decisions in October 2020 for the NLW up ratings in April 2021 and beyond.

This study will complement previous quantitative research into the impact of the National Living Wage on businesses, for example, by Riley and Rosazza Bondibene (2015) (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/520380/NIESR_Riley_Rosazza_Report_2015.pdf) and Bernini and Riley (2016)

(https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/520387/Bernini_and_Riley_Report_2016.pdf). That research used two large business data sets – Financial Analysis Made easy (FAME) and the ONS Annual Respondents Database (ARD). Other research that has investigated similar issues using analogous sources and methodologies includes Crawford, Jin and Simpson (2013) and Riley and Rosazza Bondibene (2013). The new study could also update previous research that has looked at the impact on prices, such as Wadsworth (2008). These previous studies can be found at

https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130708092723/http://www.lowpay.gov.uk/lowpay/rep_research_index.shtml.

This study could follow similar lines or address the issue by using alternative data and information sources.

Information about previous LPC research projects is available on our website at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/low-pay-commission-research-2018>

with a summary of that research at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/775220/2018_Report_research_summary_full.pdf

Detailed descriptive analysis of the NLW is available in Chapter 2 of our 2018 Report https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/759271/National_Minimum_Wage_-_Low_Pay_Commission_2018_Report.pdf

3. Suggested Methodology

The research should use up to date, appropriate, econometric techniques, in line with recent studies. Potential contractors are free to use whatever method they consider most appropriate but it is essential that the methodology and analysis stands up to external scrutiny by professional academics, economists, statisticians and analysts.

We are interested in any studies that could provide further insight into the impact of the minimum wage on businesses, especially the impact on small firms. In recent years, for example, commissioned research, such as Riley and Rosazza Bondibene (2015) and Bernini and Riley (2016), used two large business data sets (Financial Analysis Made Easy (FAME) and the Annual Respondents Database (ARD)).

This study could follow similar lines – extending that previous analysis to look at the impact of the introduction of the NLW and its subsequent up ratings. We would also be keen to see researchers use alternative data and information resources to complement the previous analysis. We are interested in the affordability of any increases in the NLW. Thus, we would particularly welcome any insights into the impact of the NMW/NLW on price-setting, profits, productivity, and investment (in capital and in training).

Potential contractors should specify the techniques that they intend to employ. Tenders should also state which data are to be used, and give some indication of their strengths and limitations and in particular whether the available data will restrict the analysis in any way.

Appropriate data sources for this type of analysis might be the Financial Analysis Made Easy (FAME) and/or the Annual Respondents Database (ARD). It is important that the analysis includes as much evidence as possible on the impact of the NLW on businesses, including by size of firm, region, and industry, according to the timelines outlined above. The tender should outline the time period of the data to be analysed.

Any other specific requirements

We will support gaining access to the latest data from the ONS.

4. Deliverables

The initial primary audience for this work will be the LPC. The main output of the study will be a report, detailing the aims and objectives of the research, the methodology adopted and the main findings. The report should include a brief non-technical Executive Summary. An electronic copy (preferably Word and pdf format) for the LPC website will be required. The LPC will make the findings publicly available, and a synopsis of the report will be included in the Low Pay Commission's 2020 Report. A brief summary of the interim report will also be included in the 2019 Report.

In addition, there would be other deliverables expected. Deliverables may vary according to individual projects but will include:

- A methodology paper;
- An informal presentation of data sources and methodology to a small, invited audience
- Regular updates on emerging findings and project progress;
- An interim report;
- A draft final report;
- A final report incorporating comments from LPC;
- Four presentations of the key aspects of the work (at the research workshops in April 2019, September 2019, April 2020 and September 2020); and
- Key datasets and syntax files.

The timescale for delivery of the research is flexible according to the needs of the project, but we would be looking in the first instance for an outline of the project at an inception meeting in March/April, a presentation on data sources and methodology at the research workshop on 1 April, a detailed methodology paper by 28 June 2019, some initial findings for a presentation to the 7th Annual LPC Research Symposium on 5 September 2019 and a draft interim report by 27 September 2019. We would then expect more detailed findings for the LPC research workshop in spring 2020 and the 8th Annual LPC Research Symposium in September 2020. A final paper would be required by 25 September 2020. Project management is likely to include attendance at an inception meeting at LPC, and review meetings as required.

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.

The winning bid will be the highest scoring bid, provided that it meets a minimum quality threshold, deemed to be an average of at least 60 for each criterion.

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	SEL3.11	Compliance to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act
Commercial	SEL3.12	Cyber Essentials
Commercial	SEL3.13	General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
Commercial	AW4.1	Contract Terms Part 1
Commercial	AW4.2	Contract Terms Part 2
Price	AW5.1	Maximum Budget
Price	AW5.5	E Invoicing
Price	AW5.6	Implementation of E-Invoicing
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Quality	AW6.2	Variable Bids
-	-	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.

The winning bid will be the highest scoring bid, provided that it meets a minimum quality threshold, deemed to be an average of at least 60 for each criterion.

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2	Price	20%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Understanding the requirements and context	25%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Methodology and approach	30%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Ability to deliver (including project planning, resource and risk management and expertise)	25%

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: $\text{Score/Total Points multiplied by 50}$ ($80/100 \times 50 = 40$)

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.ukpbs.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. Responses received after the date indicated in the ITQ shall not be considered by the Contracting Authority, unless the Bidder can justify that the reason for the delay, is solely attributable to the Contracting Authority
- 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 ensure that the Response and any documents accompanying it are in the English Language, the Contracting Authority reserve the right to disqualify any full or part responses that are not in English.
- 7.12 Do check and recheck your Bid before dispatch.

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

DO NOT

- 7.13 Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.14 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.
- 7.15 Do not share the Procurement documents, they are confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission.
- 7.16 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.
- 7.17 Do not contact any UK SBS staff or the Contracting Authority staff without the Buyers written permission or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.18 Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will reject your Bid.
- 7.19 Do not offer UK SBS or the Contracting Authority staff any inducement or we will reject your Bid.
- 7.20 Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed.
- 7.21 Do not cross reference answers to external websites or other parts of your Bid, the cross references and website links will not be considered.
- 7.22 Do not exceed word counts, the additional words will not be considered.
- 7.23 Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.24 Do not unless explicitly requested by the Contracting Authority either in the procurement documents or via a formal clarification from the Contracting Authority send your response by any way other than via e-sourcing tool. Responses received by any other method than requested will not be considered for the opportunity.

Some additional guidance notes

- 7.25 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.
- 7.26 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.
- 7.27 Question numbering is not sequential and all questions which require submission are included in the Section 6 Evaluation Questionnaire.
- 7.28 Any Contract offered may not guarantee any volume of work or any exclusivity of supply.
- 7.29 We do not guarantee to award any Contract as a result of this procurement
- 7.30 All documents issued or received in relation to this procurement shall be the property of the Contracting Authority. / UKSBS.
- 7.31 We can amend any part of the procurement documents at any time prior to the latest date / time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.32 If you are a Consortium you must provide details of the Consortiums structure.
- 7.33 Bidders will be expected to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.34 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
- 7.35 Your bid will be valid for 60 days or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.36 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.
- 7.37 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.
- 7.38 If you fail mandatory pass / fail criteria we will reject your Bid.
- 7.39 Bidders are required to use IE8, IE9, Chrome or Firefox in order to access the functionality of the Emptoris e-sourcing tool.
- 7.40 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.

- 7.41 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.
- 7.42 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.

- 7.43 The Government introduced 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](#)
- [Tenders Electronic Daily](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)