



Invitation to Quote

Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of Low Pay Commission (LPC)

Subject: LPC Open Call for Medium-sized Research Projects on the Impact of the National Minimum Wage, including the National Living Wage

Sourcing Reference Number: CR21035

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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Version 4.0

UKSBS
Shared Business Services

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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 whose 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 contact details of the Contracting Authority Data Protection Officer are:

Low Pay Commission,
8th Floor,
Fleetbank House,
2-6 Salisbury Square,
London,
EC4Y 8JX

Email: fatima.dudhia@lowpay.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) 8th 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	A maximum budget of £60,000.00 Excluding VAT for each contract. (£120,000.00 fund for up to two separate contracts)
3.5.	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	All correspondence shall be submitted within the Messaging Centre of the e-sourcing. Guidance Notes to support the use of Delta eSourcing 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 on Contracts Finder	Thursday, 18 th February 2021 Contracts Finder
3.7.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Delta eSourcing messaging system	Thursday, 25 th February 2021 11:00
3.8.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Delta eSourcing Portal	Monday, 1 st March 2021
3.9.	Latest date and time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Delta eSourcing	Friday, 12 th March 2021 11:00
3.10.	Clarifications IF required	Wednesday, 17 th March 2021
3.11.	Anticipated notification date of successful and unsuccessful Bids	Monday, 22 nd March 2021
3.12.	Anticipated Contract Award date	Monday, 22 nd March 2021
3.13.	Anticipated Contract Start date	Friday, 26 th March 2021
3.14.	Anticipated Contract End date	Friday, 31 st December 2021
3.15.	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

Section 4 – Specification

1. Background

The Low Pay Commission (LPC) invites tenders from researchers with ideas for new or other research in relation to the National Living Wage (NLW) (and the National Minimum Wage (NMW)). We are also keen to understand the impact of the recent unprecedented upheaval in the economy and the labour market caused by measures to control the global pandemic. This has affected some sectors, in particular many low-paying sectors, more than others. It has also disrupted many of the usual data sources upon which much of our standard analysis depends. The pandemic has, however, also led to the development of new data sources. We are therefore keen to consider tenders that can take advantage of these.

In addition to the impacts from the pandemic, the UK began a new trading relationship with the EU on 1 January 2021 that will see significant changes in the way the UK trades. This will have different implications for low-paying sectors and minimum wage workers.

The LPC recognises that there may be areas of investigation worth pursuing that we have not yet identified, or which have not previously been considered in great depth. Researchers who believe that they have a worthwhile proposal that would fall into these categories are welcome to submit it for consideration. We would also encourage proposals from those who wish to extend current research on the impact of the minimum wage, whether that original research was funded by us or another organisation.

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 its effect on workers and businesses. Previous research has found strong evidence of an impact on hourly earnings but suggests that the NMW has had limited adverse effects on employment levels. 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 marked 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, the NLW has increased by 21.1 per cent to £8.72 an hour in April 2020, reaching the Government commitment of 60 per cent of median earnings for those aged 25 and over.

We have now embarked on another Government-set target – to reach two-thirds of median hourly earnings for those aged 21 and over by 2024. As a first step in this goal, the NLW will increase by 2.2 per cent in April 2021 to £8.91, and will cover all those aged 23 and over.

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 achievement of the initial target for the NLW (60 per cent of median hourly earnings) and the announcement of a more ambitious target is an opportunity to assess how firms have coped and workers have been affected by the sharper increases, as well as giving an insight into what mechanisms and adjustments firms might use in the future.

We are also interested in any information that sheds light on the treatment of young workers with regards to pay, employment and hours. We are especially interested in 21-24 year olds, who were covered by the adult rate of the NMW up to 2016 but were not initially entitled to the NLW. They will however become eligible to the NLW by 2024 in two stages – 23-24 year olds in April 2021 and 21-22 year olds by 2024.

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 2024 and on the minimum wages for young workers and apprentices each year. 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

As we noted above, we are looking to commission up to two separate contracts that will complement each other. It should, however, be borne in mind that the maximum budget for all projects commissioned in this tender is limited to £120,000.00 excluding VAT.

2. Aims and Objectives of the Project

The aim of these studies is to gain a better understanding of the impact of minimum wages, especially the National Living Wage, and to help fill any gaps in our knowledge. These studies could examine areas that have not been considered in any great depth in the literature; address the 'unknown unknowns'; or enable an extension of previous work, whether that original research was funded by us or another organisation.

The findings will inform LPC deliberations in October 2021 for the uprating of the NLW (and the other age-related minimum wage rates) in April 2022 and subsequent discussions for minimum wage changes beyond 2022. This research will contribute to the understanding of how firms are adjusting to the NLW (and the other age-related minimum wage rates) and how those rates have affected workers.

The LPC has identified a few areas of research that might be particularly interesting. These include:

- Assessing the initial impact of reducing the age eligibility of the NLW to 23;
- Investigating pay settlements and pay structures (focusing on the initial impact of reducing the age eligibility to 23, and use of the new 21-22 Year Old Rate). It could also investigate any move towards paying the NLW to those aged 21-22 in the context of the two-stage change in the NLW age coverage and the commitment to move towards a target of 2/3rds of median earnings for those aged 21 and over by 2024. It could also give further insights into the impact of the pandemic on pay;
- The impact on other (non-hourly pay) aspects of reward, such as overtime, premiums, breaks, annual leave, sick pay and benefits;
- Use of new data sources, such as the ONS Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey (BICS) and HMRC Real Time Information (RTI), to explore the impact of the pandemic on low-paying sector firms and workers;
- Use of new data sources to explore the impact of the minimum wage in the pandemic;
- Qualitative research that looks at the experience of minimum wage workers in furlough and as they leave furlough;
- Qualitative research that looks at the experience of minimum wage employers in the use of furlough; what adjustments were made with partial furloughing; and how they are adjusting as the furlough schemes ends;

- Use of existing but, so far, under-used data sources to explore the impact of the minimum wage, for example the use of age cohort data, which follow a birth cohort over time (the Millennium Birth Cohort will be 21 in 2021);
- Using job flow and vacancy data to assess how low-paid workers have been affected during the pandemic and as the economy recovers;
- An investigation of any evidence that the changes in the NLW have led to any substitution of young and older workers (again useful in the context of the two-stage change in the NLW age coverage);
- Qualitative and/or quantitative research on the Accommodation Offset;
- Analysis looking at the impact of the NMW and the NLW on different groups of workers, such as by gender, ethnicity and disability. This could cover the period prior to the pandemic or it might look at how these groups have been affected during the pandemic and as the economy recovers;
- A spatial assessment of the different impact of the minimum wage across the UK;
- In-depth analysis of specific low-paying sectors, such as social care, in light of Brexit and the pandemic. As well as looking at any impacts during the pandemic and those resulting from the initial stages of leaving the EU, this could also include a detailed outlook about key factors affecting the sector and its workforce going forwards;
- Assessing recent developments in the labour market for apprentices;
- Other longer-term analysis to investigate the impact of the minimum wage on employment and hours using a new data source or a different method;
- Further analysis of the impacts on business, including on productivity, profits, investment, and prices. This could include extensions to the recently conducted research;¹
- The impact of minimum wages on flexible work arrangements. This might build on a recent study looking at this topic;²
- Exploring the possibility of using UK data to replicate the German study of the impact of the minimum wage on reallocation of jobs from low-productivity firms to higher-productivity firms;³
- The impact of Brexit on low-paying sectors and low-paid workers; and
- Impact of the minimum wage on absenteeism, sickness, presenteeism and productivity.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/low-pay-commission-research-2020>.

² Adams-Prassl, Abi and Balgova, Maria and Qian, Matthias, Flexible Work Arrangements in Low Wage Jobs: Evidence from Job Vacancy Data (September 2020). CEPR Discussion Paper No. DP15263, Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3696343>.

³ <http://sarkoups.free.fr/dustmann719.pdf>.

We welcome tenders that address any of these areas of research, combinations of these areas, or indeed any other gaps in our knowledge. The LPC invites tenders for research that will provide findings by September 2021. These findings will inform LPC deliberations in October 2021 for the uprating of the NLW and the other minimum wage rates in April 2022. It will also contribute to the knowledge base that will provide the evidence for Commissioners in deliberations of changes in those minimum wages beyond that time.

As we noted above, we are looking to commission up to two separate contracts that will complement each other. It should, however, be borne in mind that the maximum budget for all projects commissioned in this tender is limited to £120,000.00 excluding VAT.

3. Suggested Methodology

The methods and data used will be entirely dependent on the project and these should be specified in detail by the prospective researchers. The research should use up to date, respected, methods, in line with recent studies. It is essential that the methodology and analysis stands up to external scrutiny by professional academics, economists, statisticians and analysts.

Potential contractors should specify the techniques that they intend to employ. These could include: a literature review or a study of existing research evidence; whether the research will use quantitative or qualitative data or both; and whether the contractor will use new or existing data. 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 or proposed data will restrict the analysis in any way.

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 in both Word and pdf format) for the LPC website and internal archive will be required, as will the source data for any charts used in the report. The LPC will make the findings publicly available, and a synopsis of the report will be included in the Low Pay Commission's 2021 Report.

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

- An informal presentation of data sources and methodology to the LPC at an initial meeting;
- A methodology paper;
- Regular updates on emerging findings and project progress;
- An interim report;
- A draft final report;
- A final report incorporating comments from LPC;
- Two presentations of the key aspects of the work (at the research workshops on 22 April 2021 and 2 September 2021); and
- Key datasets and syntax files if appropriate.

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 mid-late March, a presentation on data sources and methodology at the research workshop on 22 April 2021, a detailed methodology paper by 28 May 2021, a draft interim report with initial findings by 20 August 2021, findings for a presentation to the 9th Annual LPC Research Symposium on 2 September 2021 and a draft final report by 24 September 2021. Project management is likely to include attendance at an inception meeting at LPC, and review meetings as required. In the current circumstances these will be held virtually using Microsoft Teams or similar.

In exceptional circumstances, we would be willing to consider changes to the timetable, such as a longer-term project that enabled collection of required information or the co-operation of another organisation, such as ONS or HMRC.

5. Timescales – Project Timescales

Initial meeting	w/c 22 March 2021 (Provisional)
Presentation at research workshop	22 April 2021
Methodology paper	28 May 2021
Draft interim report with initial findings	20 August 2021
Presentation of methodology and emerging findings at the Sixth Annual LPC Research Symposium	2 September 2021
Draft final report	24 September 2021
Agreed final report	29 October 2021
Publication	November/December 2021

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 bids will be the two highest scoring bids, provided that they meet a minimum quality threshold, deemed to be an average of at least 60 for each criteria, and that sufficient funds are available.

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.

The evaluation and if required team may comprise staff from UK SBS and the Contracting Authority and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems required. After evaluation and if required moderation 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	SEL1.3	Compliance to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act
Commercial	SEL2.10	Cyber Essentials
Commercial	SEL2.12	General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) Act and the Data Protection Act 2018
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	AW4.1	Compliance to the Contract Terms
Commercial	AW4.2	Changes to the Contract Terms
Price	AW5.1	Maximum Budget
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Quality	AW6.2	Variable Bids
-	-	Invitation to Quote – received on time within e-sourcing tool
In the event of a Bidder failing to meet the requirements of a Mandatory pass / fail criteria, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to disqualify the Bidder and not consider evaluation of any of the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria.		

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 bids will be the two highest scoring bids, provided that they meet a minimum quality threshold, deemed to be an average of at least 60 for each criteria, and that sufficient funds are available.

Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2	Price	20%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Understanding the requirements and context	20%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Methodology and approach	35%
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 there may be multiple evaluators. If so, their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score as follows:

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 how to register and use the e-sourcing portal is available at <http://www.uksbs.co.uk/services/procure/Pages/supplier.aspx>

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 7 – General Information

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

DO:

- 7.1 Do comply with Procurement document instructions. Failure to do so may lead to disqualification.
- 7.2 Do provide the Bid on time, and in the required format. Remember that the date/time given for a response is the last date that it can be accepted; we are legally bound to disqualify late submissions. 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 Delta eSourcing 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 Delta eSourcing, Telephone 0845 270 7050
- 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 the Delta eSourcing Portal.
- 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 Delta eSourcing Portal.
- 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 the Delta eSourcing Portal.
- 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

- [Contracts Finder](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)