



Crown
Commercial
Service

ATTACHMENT 5A – LETTER OF APPOINTMENT

CONTRACT REFERENCE: CCZZ20A66

**LOT 2 - QUALITATIVE RESEARCH TO INFORM
COMMUNICATIONS - GENERAL PUBLIC AUDIENCES**

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FOR CABINET OFFICE

DPS FRAMEWORK SCHEDULE 4: LETTER OF APPOINTMENT AND CONTRACT TERMS

Part 1: Letter of Appointment

Dear Sirs

Letter of Appointment

This letter of Appointment dated 22 October 2020, is issued in accordance with the provisions of the DPS Agreement (RM6018) between CCS and the Supplier.

Capitalised terms and expressions used in this letter have the same meanings as in the Contract Terms unless the context otherwise requires.

Order Number:	To be confirmed following Contract Commencement
From:	Cabinet Office ("Customer")
To:	Solutions Strategy Research Facilitation Ltd ("Supplier")

Effective Date:	23 October 2020
Expiry Date:	The Contract will be for an initial two (2) year period and will expire on 22 October 2022. The Contract will include the option to extend by two (2) further periods of 12 months. Options to extend the Contract(s) will be at the discretion of the Contracting Authority and will be on a 2 +1 +1 basis. Minimum written notice to Supplier in respect of extension: Thirty (30) Calendar Days

Services required:	Set out in Section 2, Part B (Specification) of the DPS Agreement and refined by: · the Customer's Project Specification attached at Annex A and the Supplier's Proposal attached at Annex B;
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Key Individuals:	Customer: REDACTED
	Supplier REDACTED

Guarantor(s)	Not Applicable
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Contract Charges (including any applicable discount(s), but excluding VAT):

The Maximum Contract Value will be £1,600,000.00 for the duration of the Contract including all extension options.

Each individual research project shall have its costs and pricing structure agreed between the Customer and Supplier prior to any work being undertaken.

Payment can only be made following satisfactory delivery of pre-agreed certified products and deliverables.

Before payment can be considered, each invoice must include a detailed elemental breakdown of work completed and the associated costs.

The Supplier will issue invoices and payments will be made on a project by project basis, following confirmation of deliverables.

All invoices need to include a valid PO number, as provided by the Customer.

Invoices should be submitted to: Newport SSCL, Cabinet Office, PO BOX 405, Newport, NP10 8FZ; apinvoices-CAB-U@gov.sscl.com All individual research project cost pricing shall be in line with Supplier's Rate Card below. The Day Rates are exclusive of VAT but inclusive of Travel and Subsistence:

Rate Card					
Staff Grade	Description	Maximum Charging Threshold (Day Rate)	Your Standard Rate(s)	Your Offered Rate for this Contract	Savings Achieved (Information Only)
Board Level / Chief Executive	As described in Category A roles, with further strategic decision making responsibility and overall accountability of organisation	REDACTED	REDACTED	REDACTED	REDACTED
Category A	Senior member of personnel, e.g. Research Director having assumed responsibilities in his/her profession through the performance of management and supervision roles. Typically, he/ she shall have ten (10) years or more professional experience of which at least four (4) years must be relevant to the type of tasks to be performed under the contract at this level.	REDACTED	REDACTED	REDACTED	REDACTED

Category B	Certified member of personnel e.g. Senior Researcher or Research Manager having received a high-level training in his/her profession and recruited for his/her appreciated skills as regards professional practice. Typically, he/she must have five (5) years professional experience of which at least two (2) years shall be relevant to the type of tasks to be performed under the contract at this level	REDACTED	REDACTED	REDACTED	REDACTED
Category C	Member of personnel such as a researcher. Typically, with two (2) to four (4) years experience, with understanding and grounding in research projects and the type of tasks to be performed under the contract at this level.	REDACTED	REDACTED	REDACTED	REDACTED
Category D	Junior member of research personnel e.g. junior researcher. Typically, with two (2) years experience. A newcomer to the profession but with training related to the type of tasks to be performed under the contract at this level.	REDACTED	REDACTED	REDACTED	REDACTED
Category E	Administrative or general junior personnel (e.g. those involved in ensuring the logistics of the tasks are undertaken).	REDACTED	REDACTED	REDACTED	REDACTED

Please note, the following costs were used for evaluation purposes only and have been included within this Letter of Appointment for Benchmarking:

Core Costs	
Activity	Activity Charge
<p>Provision of 2 x 90 minute face to face general public focus groups, conducted in one evening in one location, to include:</p> <p>Screeners Recruitment Discussion guide Fieldwork Topline report covering findings from both groups</p> <p>Costings should be based on the 'Assumptions' outlined in section 6.4.1 and 6.14 of Attachment 3 - Statement of Requirements.</p>	REDACTED
<p>Provision of 2 x 75 minute online general public focus groups, conducted in one evening in one location, to include:</p> <p>Screeners Recruitment Discussion guide Fieldwork Topline report covering findings from both groups</p> <p>Costings should be based on the 'Assumptions' outlined in section 6.4.1 and 6.14 of Attachment 3 - Statement of Requirements.</p>	REDACTED
Total Charges - Firm Price for Evaluation	£ REDACTED

Insurance Requirements	<p>The terms of the RM6018 DPS Agreement will apply in respect of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Liability Insurance • Employer's liability insurance • Professional Indemnity Insurance • Product Liability Insurance <p>Any additional insurance requirements for each Lot will be confirmed on Contract Award.</p>
Liability Requirements	<p>Suppliers limitation of Liability</p> <p>As per Clause 18.2 of the Contract Terms:</p> <p>125% of the Contract Value</p>
Customer billing address for invoicing:	<p>Newport SSCL, Cabinet Office, PO BOX 405, Newport, NP10 8FZ; Email: apinvoices-CAB-U@gov.sscl.com</p>
GDPR	<p>As per Schedule 7 (Processing, Personal Data and Data Subjects)</p>
Alternative and/or additional provisions (including Schedule 8(Additional clauses)):	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonable Handover to be carried out between the Incumbent Supplier and the new Supplier. • Where there is a small amount of overlap between lots and it would be detrimental to the project to be split between two suppliers, the work can be carried out by the supplier on the lot where the majority of the project sits as long it's clear within the Statement of Works.

FORMATION OF CONTRACT

BY SIGNING AND RETURNING THIS LETTER OF APPOINTMENT (which may be done by electronic means) the Supplier agrees to enter a Contract with the Customer to provide the Services in accordance with the terms of this letter and the Contract Terms.

The Parties hereby acknowledge and agree that they have read this letter and the Contract Terms.

The Parties hereby acknowledge and agree that this Contract shall be formed when the Customer acknowledges (which may be done by electronic means) the receipt of the signed copy of this letter from the Supplier within two (2) Working Days from such receipt

For and on behalf of the Supplier:

For and on behalf of the Customer:

Name and Title: REDACTED

Name and Title: REDACTED

Signature: REDACTED

Signature: REDACTED

Date: 23/10/2020

Date: 21/10/2020

ANNEX A

Customer Project Specification

PURPOSE

This Requirement is to deliver qualitative research for the Prime Minister's Office and Cabinet Office Communications Insight and Evaluation Team. Qualitative research is required to inform Government policy making and communications planning, across a range of issues according to need.

BACKGROUND TO REQUIREMENT/OVERVIEW OF REQUIREMENT

The Communications Insight and Evaluation (I&E) team within Cabinet Office commission research on behalf of Number 10, policy and communications teams within Cabinet Office and wider Government, across a range of issues relating to current Government priorities. The research provides crucial insight into audience views and behaviour, to shape policy and communications.

This involves a broad ranging requirement for qualitative research, conducted for the purposes of policy development, narrative testing, creative and communications testing and evaluation of campaign impact (including behaviour change impact).

Due to the large scope of these areas and the capability required, this Procurement has been broken down into three (3) distinct Lots.

The Lots are as follows:

Lot 1 – Qualitative research for policy and narrative development – general public audiences (£500,000 (excluding VAT) maximum budget per year)

Lot 2 – Qualitative research to inform communications - general public audiences: campaign development, creative testing and evaluation of campaign impact (£400,000 (excluding VAT) maximum budget per year)

Lot 3 – Qualitative research to inform communications - business audiences: campaign development, creative testing and evaluation of campaign impact (£250,000 (excluding VAT) maximum budget per year)

The Budget amounts provided per Lot are indicative only and represent maximum spend levels - they are not a guarantee of spend and there is no commitment to spend under the contract. Detailed costings will be required throughout the life of the contract for all scenarios as they are commissioned.

The contract requirement for each Lot is based on the supply of qualitative research for a two (2) year period. The contract term shall commence upon Contract Award and be reviewed after two (2) years with an option to extend for a third one (1) year period and then a fourth one (1) year period.

The individual call off Contracts will vary but the awarded contract term may include periods of regularly scheduled fieldwork and periods of ad-hoc research.

Fast turnaround of research will often be involved with findings providing urgent advice to strategy and communication teams in the Prime Minister’s Office and Cabinet Office. Quality of service as well as flexibility and responsiveness are therefore key requirements, along with a robust understanding of how Government operates and the particular propriety and ethics involved.

The majority of research is expected to be with audiences within the UK including (but not limited to):

The general public

Demographic or life stage sub-audiences

Citizens in the four Nations – England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland

Business audiences e.g. SME senior decision makers, self-employed, business stakeholders, employees (including in the four Nations)

Please note, whilst research outside the UK is unlikely this Contract is required to cover this eventuality should it be required. This will be further discussed at the Inception meeting.

DEFINITIONS

Expression or Acronym	Definition
CO	Means; Cabinet Office
I & E	Insight and Evaluation Team

SCOPE OF REQUIREMENT Lot 1 Qualitative Research for policy and narrative development – general public audiences

Research may cover a broad range of topics centred on Number 10 and Cabinet Office priorities (for instance: citizen engagement with government, the union, EU transition) and wider government policy (for instance health, policing, the economy), potentially involving discussion around more sensitive issues.

Outlined below are typical qualitative requirements including (and not limited to):

Attitudes, knowledge and claimed behaviours to inform policy

Early stage policy development
Policy testing
Narrative testing
Discourse analysis
Desk research

Projects conducted under this lot shall be entirely qualitative in nature

Lot 2 Qualitative Research to inform communications - General public audiences

Research may cover a broad range of topics centred on Number 10 and Cabinet Office priorities (for instance: citizen engagement with government, the union, EU transition) and wider government policy (for instance health, policing, the economy), potentially involving discussion around more sensitive issues.

Outlined below are typical qualitative requirements including (and not limited to):

Attitudes, knowledge and claimed behaviours to inform communication
Campaign message testing
Creative testing / development
Campaign evaluation
Behaviour change, including use of behaviour change models
Audience segmentation

Projects conducted under this lot shall be entirely qualitative in nature

Lot 3 Qualitative Research to inform communications – Business audiences

Research may cover a broad range of topics centred on Number 10 and Cabinet Office priorities (for instance: business engagement with government, the union, EU transition) and wider government policy relevant to business audiences.

Outlined below are typical qualitative requirements including (and not limited to)

Attitudes, knowledge and claimed behaviours to inform communication
Campaign message testing
Creative testing / development
Campaign evaluation
Behaviour change, including use of behaviour change models
Audience segmentation

Projects conducted under this lot shall be entirely qualitative in nature.

THE SCOPE OF THE REQUIREMENT IS FOR:

An Initial Face to face meeting between the Supplier and the Customer to introduce teams, agree ways of working and to discuss any near research requirements.

This meeting will be determined in accordance with COVID guidelines and will be confirmed post Contract Award.

The flexible provision of ad hoc qualitative research delivered by a named and consistent Director-level team

Expert moderation, potentially involving discussion around more sensitive issues. All fieldwork to be moderated and reported on by a Research Director (or equivalent).

Provision of strategic advice and reporting suitable for senior government stakeholders; all reporting to be provided by a Research Director (or equivalent).

As standard, for all focus groups undertaken: next day detailed written top line reporting in Word organised by topic or theme and including a selection of verbatim quotes, with the option for a follow-up telephone call or face-to-face briefing. Further provision of fuller written and verbal briefings as required.

Ability to recruit and moderate ad hoc general public groups within one week of briefing and business audience groups within two weeks (with next-day topline reporting, as above)

Capability to provide on request, within a month's notice or sooner, a programme of twice weekly focus groups, all with Research Director moderation and written next working day topline reporting. Fieldwork locations to cover urban and non-urban locations in the four nations with no duplication in locations during the programme (in so far as this is reasonable within the programme time frame)

All research to be conducted in accordance with MRS Code of Conduct and following MRS best practice guidance for qualitative research

THE REQUIREMENT

The contract is based on the supply of ad hoc qualitative research (focus groups or other methods) as and when requested by the Cabinet Office Insight & Evaluation team for a two year period. The contract term shall commence upon Contract Award and be reviewed after two years with an option to extend for a third one (1) year period and then a fourth one (1) year period.

With the exception of recruitment, and where agreed for specialist audiences as outlined in sections 6.10-13, the Authority's expectation is that this requirement will be delivered in-house without sub-contracting.

As indicated, the Authority will appoint a separate Supplier for each Lot of the work. In the event discrete work packages arise and it's not clear which Lot best encompasses the work, the Authority retains an option to simultaneously issue details of such work to all three Suppliers. This will be with a view to obtaining pricing and proposals from the appointed Suppliers. It will be at the Authority's discretion as to which Supplier is asked to undertake the work and this will be determined on a MEAT (Most Economically Advantageous Tender) basis.

Each qualitative research project requires a response to a specific brief outlining approach, recruitment, optimal sample, timings and costs.

The supplier's response to each specific brief will include:

Provision and pricing to include: recruitment of respondents to an agreed specification, incentives, development of discussion guide from a verbal or email briefing, venue hire, fieldwork, audio recording of groups and written reporting including next day top lines as outlined.

Provision of Supplier project documentation to include: written outline of approach with costs based on a verbal or email brief, recruitment specification, recruitment screener, discussion guide, top line report.

Requirements for additional deliverables will be agreed on a project by project basis but will likely involve detailed reporting of findings to an agreed format (Microsoft Word or PowerPoint slides) drawing together insights with strategic recommendations.

Retrospective analysis pieces may also be requested, involving the ability to draw on past ad hoc projects to build strategic insight about audience groups, evolving trends or thematic learnings and identify the implication.

The primary research method is expected to be focus groups, conducted online or face to face. Depth interviews are also likely to be required, conducted online, face to face or by telephone. Capability to conduct research face to face, via telephone or online dependent on project need is required.

Other qualitative research methods and techniques will be considered where recommended by the Supplier as a means to strengthen the quality of insight provided against a specific objective - such as to understand behaviour change, to aid the effective exploration of sensitive issues or to overcome unreliability in self-reporting. The Supplier's response to each Call Off Brief is required to detail any other qualitative research methods and techniques proposed.

The majority of research is expected to be with audiences within the UK including the audiences outlined above. There may also be a requirement for research among more targeted or hard-to-reach audiences. These audiences may include (but are not limited to):

Ethnic or faith-based communities (Lots 1 and 2 only)

Young people e.g. Those aged 16-19 or 16-24

Other specialist audiences e.g. EU citizens resident in the UK

Employers and employees in specific sectors / occupations e.g. Haulage, seasonal agriculture, factories

Capability to effectively research these audiences is required using either in-house expertise or where agreed through use of trusted specialist research partners.

Lots 1 and 2: Research with ethnic or faith-based communities may include (but is not limited to):

British South Asian communities (e.g. Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Indian)

Black African communities

Black Caribbean

Eastern European communities e.g. Polish or Romanian residents in the UK

Faith based communities such as British Hindus, Sikhs or Muslims

Research within specific communities may involve a need to consider and include those living in multi-generational households, first and second generations, those with English as a second language, length of time in the UK and other relevant sub-audiences.

Capability to design and conduct research with these audiences is required. Suppliers will have the capability to advise on sample design, specification and recruitment to meet research objectives. There is also the need for Supplier to have access to specialist recruiters and moderators for fieldwork (including use of other languages as needed). This may be in-house expertise or through sub-contraction with trusted specialist research partners.

Recruitment of broad mainstream audiences is expected to primarily take place through approved traditional qualitative recruitment methods (i.e. through a recruiter network/partner/database using screener questionnaires developed by the Supplier to meet an agreed specification and signed off by the Customer). Where any alternative methods of recruitment are required, for example for more targeted audiences outlined above, these will be discussed and approved on a project-by-project basis.

Fieldwork will be required across a wide UK geographical spread, covering urban and nonurban locations, to ensure representation of views from all areas of the UK. This will include fieldwork in multiple locations in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Knowledge of the governmental and political context in each of the nations is therefore required, as is experience moderating in each of the four nations within the named research team. For Northern Ireland particularly, capability to conduct fieldwork using expert local moderation is also beneficial.

Due to COVID-19, there is a requirement for focus groups and other research that might otherwise typically be conducted face to face to be conducted online. This is anticipated to continue in the short term but will be reviewed and agreed with the appointed Supplier dependent on latest events. Briefing, project meetings and reporting of results may also take place online in the short term, dependent on circumstances, also to be reviewed.

Should Face to Face focus groups or other research take place, these will be undertaken using the latest COVID-19 and social distancing guidelines.

ASSUMPTIONS

In the case of face to face focus groups, general public focus groups recruited to achieve 8 respondents per group. Business audience focus groups, recruited to achieve 6 respondents per focus group from a mix of sectors or specified sectors, mix of business size and turnover.

In the case of face to face focus groups, non-viewing venues as standard (e.g. Hotels) with audio recording of all groups. Option for viewing facility venues and/or video

recording and live streaming as required. 90 minute focus groups as standard, typically two focus groups per evening/location.

In the case of online focus groups, general public focus groups recruited to achieve 6 respondents per group, with the option for remote listening-in and recording as required. In the case of business audience focus groups, recruited to achieve 6 respondents per focus group from a mix of sectors or specified sectors, mix of business size and turnover

In the case of face to face depth interviews, general public and business audiences recruited to achieve 1 per interview. In the case of telephone depth interviews, general public and business audiences recruited to achieve 1 per interview.

KEY MILESTONES AND DELIVERABLES

The following Contract milestones/deliverables shall apply:

Milestone /Deliverable	Description	Timeframe or Delivery Date
1	Contract to be signed	Within 2 days of Contract Award
2	Initial meeting (either face to face or via video conferencing as agreed) between the Supplier and the Customer to introduce teams, agree ways of working and discuss any near research requirements	Within 2 weeks of Contract Award
3	Fieldwork to be carried out at agreed dates	Throughout the 2 year Contract term
4	Agency initial response to specific project brief (informal brief received from the Customer by email / telephone outlining requirements) provided as an email outline with viable field options	Same or next working day following brief
5	Agency fully costed response to brief	Within 5 working days of brief (sooner if required)
6	Commencement of programme of work	Within 1-2 weeks of brief (sooner if required)
7	Written top line reporting	Next working day following each day of fieldwork
8	Verbal top line reporting, via video conferencing, telephone or Face to Face as agreed	Within 1-2 days of fieldwork

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION/REPORTING

The Supplier will ensure the results are communicated to the Authority rapidly, with next day written top line reporting in an agreed format, including on weekends and public holidays if agreed.

For further details on reporting, please see above- 'The Requirement' in this document for anticipated standard reporting requirements.

There may be a requirement for specific reporting requirements on each individual project will be agreed on a project by project basis with the Supplier.

VOLUMES

As with the potential contract value there are no guarantees on volume of work. Based on estimate from previous years average volumes can range between

Lot 1 policy and narrative development research: 4 - 10 focus groups per month on average

Lot 2: communications research – public audiences: 4 - 10 focus groups per month

Lot 3: communications research – business audiences: 2 – 4 focus groups per month; and 10 x depth interview every two months

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

The Supplier will be expected to continually improve the way in which the required Services are to be delivered throughout the Contract duration.

The Supplier should present new ways of working that maximise efficiency to the Authority as they arise.

Changes to the way in which the Services are to be delivered must be brought to the Authority's attention and agreed prior to any changes being implemented.

SUSTAINABILITY

No specific sustainability requirements.

QUALITY

Results from the research will be used to shape communications and marketing or inform policy making. Therefore it is critical that the project runs to time, with all assumptions and caveats clearly highlighted, and that all reporting is checked for accuracy and quality prior to sending.

All researchers will be Market Research Society (MRS) members and all research processes must adhere to the Market Research Society Code of Conduct.

STAFF AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

The Supplier shall provide a sufficient level of resource throughout the duration of the Contract in order to consistently deliver a quality service to all Parties. Note that there are likely to be periods of high demand, at short notice, therefore the Supplier will have an ability to scale up / down on demand.

The Supplier's staff assigned to the Contract shall have the relevant qualifications and experience to deliver the Contract to the required standard. This includes Research Director level moderation of all focus groups and Research Director level delivery of all reporting.

The Supplier shall ensure that staff understand the Authority's vision and objectives and will provide excellent customer service to the Authority throughout the duration of the Contract.

SERVICE LEVELS AND PERFORMANCE

The Authority will measure the quality of the Supplier's delivery by:

KPI/SLA	Service Area	KPI/SLA description	Target
1	Response timescales	Timescale for provision of research options following a briefing of requirement for research	To be provided within 2 working days after receipt of brief
2	Recruitment of sample	Sample reflects brief requirements	Sample recruited to pre agreed requirements through an approved method within specified time
3	Delivery timescales	Written topline findings from fieldwork/focus groups	To be provided on next working day after fieldwork or within otherwise agreed timescales
4	Delivery timescales	Supplier to provide final deliverables for each project as agreed on a case by case basis	Deliverables to be provided within agreed timescales
5	Reporting	Reporting answers research questions	To pre-agreed standards and within agreed timing
6	Evidence of impact	Provide evidence to support Cabinet Office Insight & Evaluation team demonstrate impact / benefits of work delivered	To be provided in line with criteria / timings agreed with agency upon commission of each project
7	Issue resolution	Suppliers must demonstrate how they seek to rectify mistakes or issues with data or reporting	Any issues to be notified within 12 hours; timings for resolution plan to be agreed on a case by case basis
8	Account management	The Supplier must attend an annual review meeting to review performance and identify and implement improvements.	Dedicated account lead must attend meetings or arrange appropriate cover accordingly
9	Account Management	Response to complaints and issues with appropriate and robust resolutions within 5 working days.	Within 5 working days of complaint
10	Account management	Maintaining contact on project matters	Response to all telephone calls and emails within 24 hours.

Authority will maintain a record of Supplier adherence to the agreed service level and performance timelines. Any non-adherence will result in performance review meetings

between the Authority and the Supplier, to provide explanation as to why the service level agreement was not met. Improvement plans will also be established here.

Where the Supplier fails to provide a Service Improvement Plan or fails to deliver the agreed Service Improvement Plan to the required standard, the Authority reserves the right to seek early termination of the contract in accordance with the procedures set out in the Terms and Conditions

SECURITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENTS

Any research will be conducted to MRS Code of Conduct standards, especially any regarding young or vulnerable audiences, which include adhering to the Data Protection Act with regards to the collection and storage of respondent details.

All suppliers must be GDPR compliant.

PAYMENT AND INVOICING

Each individual research project shall have its costs and pricing structure agreed between the Customer and Supplier prior to any work being undertaken.

Payment can only be made following satisfactory delivery of pre-agreed certified products and deliverables.

Before payment can be considered, each invoice must include a detailed elemental breakdown of work completed and the associated costs.

The Supplier will issue invoices and payments will be made on a project by project basis, following confirmation of deliverables.

All invoices need to include a valid PO number, as provided by the Customer.

Invoices should be submitted to: Newport SSCL, Cabinet Office, PO BOX 405, Newport, NP10 8FZ; apinvoices-CAB-U@gov.sscl.com

CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

The Supplier must attend an annual review meeting to review performance and to identify and discuss implementation of improvements.

Attendance at Contract Review meetings shall be at the Supplier's own expense.

Location

The location of the Services will be carried out in the field or at the offices of the Supplier. Briefings, reporting and debriefs will be held at the offices of the Customer at:

Cabinet Office,
70 Whitehall,
Westminster,
London,
SW1A 2AS (or other Cabinet Office central London office)

ANNEX B

Supplier Proposal

REDACTED

Stage 2

APPENDIX 1 - REMOVED