

FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT SCHEDULE 4

ORDER FORM/ WORK PACKAGE ORDER

FROM

Authority	Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Address	Defra Group Commercial 3 rd Floor, Mallard House 1-2 Peasholme Green York YO1 7PX
Contact Ref:	Phone: [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]
Order Number	Ref: ecm_53365
Order Date	

TO

Contractor	University of Gloucestershire
For attention of:	Name: [REDACTED] Phone: [REDACTED] E-mail: [REDACTED]
Address	The Park Cheltenham Gloucestershire GL50 2RH

1. SERVICES REQUIREMENTS

(1.1) Services and deliverables required:

Background

Some areas in England are considered so important to the nation's natural heritage that they are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). Over one million hectares of land have been identified as "special" for their habitats, species or geology, representing some of the best examples of natural features throughout England. There are over 4,000 SSSIs in England, covering around 8% of the country

As the government's advisory body on the natural environment, Natural England has a number of statutory duties and general responsibilities in relation to SSSIs. Agri-environment Schemes are one of the key tools for meeting some of these responsibilities, in particular:

- Ensuring the protection of SSSIs and safeguarding their existence into the future, by providing advice to SSSI owners and managers and working together to ensure active management.

- Ensuring SSSIs contribute to government objectives on nature conservation. The Government's 25 Year Environment Plan contains a goal to: restore 75% of our one million hectares of terrestrial and freshwater protected sites to favourable condition, securing their wildlife value for the long term.

Biodiversity has been a priority objective of agri-environment schemes (AES) since their inception. It was a key objective of Environmental Stewardship and is one of the two 'main priorities' of Countryside Stewardship . Therefore, as SSSIs represent some of the best of England's biodiversity sites, it is important that we are able to evaluate the contribution that AES's make in delivering for biodiversity when they occur on SSSIs.

SSSI owners and managers have a different relationship with Natural England as compared to other agri-environment agreement holders. Natural England provides management advice for SSSI farmers and feedback on assessments of their SSSIs. In turn, farmers on SSSI land are required to consult with and obtain approval from Natural England for farming activities that could damage their SSSIs. The policy for agri-environment on SSSIs is that the agreements will support the agricultural management necessary to achieve and maintain favourable condition of the SSSIs. Therefore it is also important to evaluate whether the use of AES on SSSIs is leading to favourable condition.

Objectives

The objectives of this mini-tender are:

- To assess the impact of AES on SSSI condition by reviewing the existing literature to:
 - o assess the extent to which there is evidence of change in condition, across the range of SSSI features and AES options.
 - o assess the extent to which there is evidence of a causal relationship between AES and changes in SSSI condition
- To understand what motivates owners and occupiers to manage their SSSIs appropriately for the interest features, and what factors encourage pro-environmental behaviour change.
- Based on the findings from objectives 1) and 2), to identify which factors influence the success or failure of current AES on SSSIs (tenderers are encouraged to consider a wide range of factors including, but not limited to, environmental, economic and social), providing evidence to feed in to scheme improvements.
- To use these findings to draw conclusions about the extent to which AES is leading to changes in SSSI condition, and where possible, evaluate what sort of effect AES is having, e.g. negative, neutral, conserving or enhancing. It is recognised that there may be more evidence for some habitats/interest features than others and findings may be best reported at the habitat/interest feature rather than whole scheme level. Evidence gaps should be explicitly identified and recommendations made about the evidence required to address those gaps.

Tasks

Carry out a review of the existing literature including:

- Past projects commissioned for the Agri-Environment Monitoring and Evaluation Programme.
- Other reports and studies from the Defra Publications Pages and Natural England Access to Evidence catalogue.
- Published peer-reviewed studies within the social science and conservation literature.

Search by key word(s) and sort results by relevance. Rate the different evidence sources by relevance and quality, and by the direction (and where possible, magnitude) of effect (positive, neutral, negative).

- i) Establish what the existing literature tells us about the relationship between AES and SSSIs,
 - a. To what extent is there evidence of a relationship between AES and SSSI improvement?
 - b. If a relationship is found, to what extent is there evidence that AES is the cause of SSSI improvements?
 - c. Does this vary between different habitats and interest features?
- ii) Establish what the existing literature tells us about the attitude towards and owner/manager motivation for managing protected sites.
 - a. What does the evidence tell us about farmer beliefs and attitudes towards designated site status and the use of AES as a tool for managing those designated sites?
- iii) Identify existing datasets, where data have been collected on SSSI sites, and assess the potential for re-analysis.
- iv) Identify the evidence gaps and make recommendations for potential further work to address these.

Outputs

The outputs of this mini-tender are:

- The successful bidder will be required to provide the NE project manager with written updates of progress on a monthly basis. The form of these updates will be agreed in the inception meeting.
- A summary report of the initial findings for the interim Steering Group Meeting, the format of which will be agreed at the Inception meeting.
- A finalised, externally peer-reviewed project report suitable for publication as a Defra science report, to present the results obtained from the project.
- The format of the presentation of this report will be agreed between the Natural England project manager and contractor project manager. Natural England requires the opportunity to comment on draft Final Reports. Bidders should be aware that Natural England and Defra intend to publish final reports.
- A 2-page summary note detailing key outcomes and conclusions of the project (Natural England will provide a template to the successful bidder)
- A presentation of final results to key Natural England and Defra staff.

The contractor will be responsible for arranging peer-review of the final report by 2 appropriate reviewers, to be agreed with the Project Steering Group. Costs for the peer review should be itemised separately in the tender.

Natural England is happy to encourage widespread publication, and welcomes the use of appropriate trade press, peer-reviewed journals and sector-specific journals. The contractor will be responsible for ensuring both the quality of the work as well as the presentation of the material (e.g. proof reading, ensuring clear English). The contractor is also to be aware that Natural England requests that all publication (including oral presentations) of its funded research is notified to the project manager at least two weeks before publication.

Management

- The project leader will be responsible for the management and delivery of the project and will act as the liaison point with the Natural England project manager.
- This project will be overseen by a project steering group (PSG) made up of NE and Defra staff (and others if applicable) A project initiation call between the contractor and the NE project manager will be required within one week of the start of the contract, and a face-to-face project inception meeting between the contractor and the PSG will be required within two weeks of the start of the contract (location to be agreed).
- The PSG and contractor will hold three further meetings by tele call and a final face-to-face meeting in NE/Defra offices. The project officer/successful bidder (as appropriate) will be responsible for setting up these meetings.
- Secretariat and production of minutes from meetings is the responsibility of the successful contractor, who will share meeting minutes with the project team, NE and the steering group, where applicable.
- The successful bidder/project leader will send a short (no more than 1 pg A4) progress update to the project officer once a month. The form of these updates will be agreed in the inception meeting.

Resources

- The project is expected to start on 25th October 2018 and finish no later than 28th February 2019. Bidders are reminded that cost is one of the factors that will be considered when assessing bids.
- Research contracts are let on a firm price basis (excluding VAT). This is an all-inclusive price for the contract and, so long as the scope of the contract remains the same, it is not subject to any review, amendment or alteration.

Milestones

In order to assist the NE project manager to observe the progress we request that you include sufficient milestones within the project that will demonstrate the progress of the research.

Compulsory milestones are as follows:

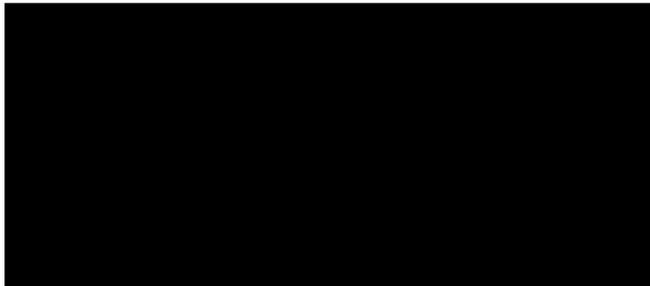
- Outline Project Plan to be submitted following the inception meeting, by Fri 26th Oct 2018
- Submission of draft report by 7th Dec 2018
- Submission of final report by 15th February 2019 (please note, payment will not be released until the report has been reviewed and deemed satisfactory by the project manager)
- Dissemination activities e.g. workshop/presentation to NE/Defra by 15th March 2019

(1.2) Commencement Date: 25 October 2018

(1.4) Completion Date: 15 March 2019

2. PERFORMANCE OF THE SERVICES AND DELIVERABLES

(2.1) Key Personnel of the Contractor to be involved in the Supply of the Services



(2.2) Performance Standards

The report will be peer-reviewed as required in the specification provided as part of the Request for Quotation document.

(2.3) Location(s) at which Services are to be provided:

University of Gloucester premises at The Park, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL50 2RH

(2.4) Standards:

Natural England Standard: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (NESTND010)

(2.5) Contract Monitoring Arrangements

For the avoidance of doubt the services required are being provided under Framework Agreement 22707.

3. PRICE AND PAYMENTS

(3.1) Contract Price payable by the Authority excluding VAT, payment profile and method of payment (e.g. Government Procurement Card (GPC) or BACS))

£28,750.00

For full pricing schedule, see Annex 1

Payable by BACS

(3.2) Invoicing and Payment

This project will be paid by achievement of milestones. However, not all milestones need to be associated with payment; and it may be appropriate to include additional milestones that are not related to payment but are used to indicate progress within the project. The frequency of milestone payments should be determined by the Supplier, however, we request that they are appropriate and not at a frequency greater than every month.

The Supplier shall issue electronic invoices in arrears following completion of appropriate milestones.

4. Invoicing Requirements

All invoices should be sent, quoting a valid purchase order number (PO Number), to: Accounts-Payable.neg@sscl.gov.uk or Shared Services Connected Limited, PO Box 790, Phoenix House, Celtic Springs Business Park, Newport, Gwent, NP10 8FZ. Within 10 Working Days of receipt of your acceptance of this letter via Bravo, we will send you a unique PO Number. You must be in receipt of a valid PO Number before submitting an invoice.

To avoid delay in payment it is important that the invoice is compliant and that it includes a valid PO Number, PO Number item number (if applicable) and the details (name and telephone number) of your Customer contact (i.e. Contract Manager). Non-compliant invoices will be sent back to you, which may lead to a delay in payment. If you have a query regarding an outstanding payment please contact our Accounts Payable section either by email to Accounts-Payable.neg@sscl.gov.uk or by telephone 0845 603 7262 between 09:00-17:00 Monday to Friday.

BY APPROVING THIS ORDER FORM THE CONTRACTOR AGREES to enter a legally binding contract with the Authority to provide to the Authority and natural England the Services specified in this Order Form, incorporating the rights and obligations in the Call-Off Contract that are set out in the Framework Agreement entered into by the Contractor and Defra on 25 October 2018.

Electronic Signature

Acceptance of the award of this Contract will be made by electronic signature carried out in accordance with the 1999 EU Directive 99/93 (Community framework for electronic signatures) and the UK Electronic Communications Act 2000. Acceptance of the offer comprised in this Contract must be made within 7 days and the Agreement is formed on the date on which the Contractor communicates acceptance on the Customer's electronic contract management system ("Bravo"). No other form of acknowledgement will be accepted.

Annex 1: Full Pricing Schedule

