

Request for Proposal

Disaster Recovery, Business Continuity & Back Up Services

Accent Corporate Services Ltd

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document provides information, instructions and the terms regarding the Request for Proposal phase of this procurement.

1.1 Project Background

We have been providing high quality social housing for rent and sale for over 50 years and we remain firmly committed to providing our residents with the excellent homes and top quality services they have a right to expect. We currently own and manage over 21,500 properties across the country, which over 34,000 residents call home.

Our residents' homes and services are managed by our regional offices in Middlesbrough, Burnley, Bradford, Camberley and Peterborough. Our head office, Charlestown House, is located in Shipley, West Yorkshire. We employ nearly 500 colleagues, about 200 of whom work at Charlestown House.

Our Vision is MAKING A DIFFERENCE...improving homes, communities and lives. The three objectives we have set to help us achieve our vision are:

- Improving homes.
- Improving communities and lives.
- Delivering a personal, modern and better service.

Our core values - respectful, creative, dependable and open and honest - sum up exactly what we stand for. They are relevant to every market we work in. Wherever possible, everyone we work with (including our suppliers and contractors), has similar values.

Accent has changed significantly over the last 3 years. We have brought three federated housing providers into a single organisation with five regional offices. We have also introduced our three strategic ICT systems (MIS ActiveH, Unit4 (Agresso) and AccessHR). The housing sector is changing and we are seeking more ways to improve our value for money for services to residents. We have also introduced a single national contact centre, mobile working for our housing officers / surveyors and a self-service website for use by our residents.

For the past five years, Accent has hosted its own Disaster Recovery and off site back up provision based upon the use of duplicate IT infrastructure and dedicated workplace recovery seats at Jeremy Downs House, a regional office in Bradford.

As a consequence of the consolidation described above, we are reducing the footprint of our office estate, in several cases converting it into homes for rent. As part of this

downsizing exercise, Jeremy Downs House is due to be converted into residential accommodation, with work commencing early in the 2017-18 financial year.

1.2 Summary of the Business Case

We recommend outsourcing the provision of Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity (DR/BC) and back-up services.

The main drivers for this recommendation are as follows:

- There is a hard requirement to vacate Jeremy Downs House by the end June 2017 and preferably sooner.
- There are no Accent properties suitable for the self-delivery of DR and Workplace Recovery.
- The ever-increasing reliance of the organisation upon ICT systems to deliver day to day services to our residents especially our national contact centre based in Shipley, requires 'best of breed' DR/BC provision.
- The IT Infrastructure in use at for DR/BC is very close to the end of its service life, and significant investment would be required to replace it even if suitable hosting premises could be identified.

1.3 Other Accent ICT Projects

Accent is currently undergoing a period of significant investment in ICT infrastructure to ensure that the organisation is fit for the future. Further information will be provided in the supplier engagement workshops but the main projects are:

- SAN replacement (ends Q4 2016)
- Accent Connect unified communications & telephony deployment (ends Q2 2017)
- Accent WAN managed wide area network deployment (ends Q2 2017)

For the avoidance of all doubt, all the above projects have been issued as RFx' under the relevant Crown Commercial Services Framework Agreement, and have now closed to bidding.

1.4 Explanation of the Request for Proposal Process

This procurement is being run as an OJEU compliant "Open" Request for Proposal (RfP). It is open to all suppliers to respond, however please note that Section A of the response document contains 6 questions, each of which is Pass / Fail. Answering

“No” to any one of these questions will result in the RfP response being disregarded from all further consideration.

Your attention is also drawn to Appendix 4 - Confirmation of Intention to Respond to the RfP. Prior receipt of Appendix 4 is not a precondition to submitting a response to this RfP, however please note that until you complete, sign and return this document you will not receive Appendices 2, 5 and 6 which contain sensitive technical information about Accent’s ICT estate. Receipt by Accent of a duly completed Appendix 4 is also the trigger for us to initiate supplier engagement.

Prospective responders are strongly advised to ensure that they can unequivocally respond in the affirmative to all questions in Section A prior to committing the resource necessary to respond to the rest of the RfP.

2 THE OPPORTUNITY

2.1 Background

Accent is currently reviewing its Business Continuity and systems back-up provision to meet the requirements of the Homes and Communities Agency (“HCA”) governance standards and the wider needs of its own business.

We wish to identify any opportunities within the business continuity management services market place for utilising a third party provider that can offer a range of services which deliver against our stated requirement to meet Accent’s internal business recovery objectives in order to minimise and/or mitigate the impact of a serious untoward incident affecting our Head Office, which additionally hosts our National Contact Centre.

To achieve this, Accent is inviting suppliers to participate in this procurement exercise and submit innovative proposals based on their expertise and knowledge of this market place taking into account some minimum requirements as outlined in this document.

2.2 Classification of Systems according to TTR requirements

Accent have approximately 50 systems in the following TTR categories which are eligible for DR, full details are provided in Appendix 6 Server List for DR Services (MS Excel XML workbook).

NB *in the interests of security and commercial confidentiality, Appendix 6 will only be provided to Suppliers who return a duly completed “Confirmation of Intention to Respond to the RfP” (Appendix 4).*

Category 1 Systems (please see Appendix 6 for a list including Cores, RAM and Disk Partitions) to be actively synchronised in real time, and to fail-over to live in the event of an outage of the primary systems. Fail-over to live to be available to either CTH or the WRS (dependent upon the origin of the outage) and all other Accent WAN sites

Category 2 Systems (please see Appendix 6 for a list including Cores, RAM and Disk Partitions) & their associated storage to be presented and available to both the WRS and all other Accent WAN sites with current data presented within 4 hours of invocation

Category 3 Systems (please see Appendix 6 for a list including Cores, RAM and Disk Partitions) & their associated storage to be presented and available to both the WRS and other WAN sites with current data presented within 48 hours of invocation

Category 4 Systems & their associated storage to be presented as backed up data together with adequate hardware upon which to rebuild & restore. Re-build and restoration work to be carried out by Accent Technical Staff. These systems would only be required in the event of an extremely extended invocation. Please price by VM based upon a nominal 4 cores, 8 GB RAM & 2 partitions totaling 350GB disk space per server.

2.3 Business as usual (BAU) Back Up

A full list of systems to be covered under this statement of requirements are provided in Appendix 2, Server List for Back Up Services (MS Excel XML workbook)

NB *in the interests of security and commercial confidentiality, Appendix 2 will only be provided to Suppliers who return a duly completed “Confirmation of Intention to Respond to the RfP” (Appendix 4).*

We require a resilient reliable and simple to operate BAU back up solution which allows both scheduled and ad hoc back-ups of any or all our systems and rapid user friendly restoration at every level from individual file through directory to complete system.

Given the probable size of the proposed data circuit (100MBps) from Accent's MPLS network into the supplier's DR facility you may wish to consider placing a back up device into Accent's head office to both facilitate rapid restorations and de-duplicate data prior to onward transmission to your data vault.

Current back up requirements are between 23 & 33 TB, however over the life of the contract it is inevitable that despite on-going data cleansing activities within Accent this will continue to grow. We are looking for a back-up solution which is scalable without significant additional cost, and especially wish to avoid breaching software pricing break points below 40TB of backed up data.

2.4 Workplace Recovery Requirements

- 40 Workplace Recovery Seats (WRS) located in the same facility as the recovered systems to be available to Accent Staff within 4 hours of invocation.
- The ability, by mutual agreement to increase and decrease the number of contracted WRS at any time during the life of the contract always providing that the number of WRS will not at any time reduce below the original contracted number.
- Each WRS to be presented with an agreed standard desktop PC with dual 21" or greater monitors (minimum PC specification Core-i5 / 8GB RAM / 250GB SSD / Dual video output).
- Each WRS to be presented with an agreed IP Telephone handset / headset (exact specification TBC post Accent Connect Contract Award).

3 INSTRUCTIONS AND DETAILS OF THE PROCUREMENT

ITEM	CONTRACT DETAILS
Procurement Method	This procurement will be effected through an OJEU Open Request for Proposal (RfP) process published on Contract Finder and OJEU via TED
Contract Description:	<p>To replace Accent's existing in-house Disaster Recovery, Business Continuity (including Workplace Recovery) and back-up provision with a fully managed service including 40 Workplace Recovery Places.</p> <p>Your proposed solution should leverage new technologies where appropriate to deliver a secure, resilient solution with market leading SLA's and account management arrangements.</p>
Quantity:	This is a single contract solution, to be delivered to a suitable location as defined in this document. It must offer future flexibility to amend the systems included in the solution and / or flex capacity up or down should business requirements change.
Period of Contract:	<p>Following the successful Request for Proposal response, this project will commence in February 2017 with implementation thereafter to be completed before 26/05/2017.</p> <p>The contract being for 3 years with discretion to extend three times i.e. for 1 year in year 3, 1 year in year 4 and again for a final year in year 5. (3+1+1+1)</p>
Project Manager	<p>Chris Cuthell</p> <p>businesscontinuity.rfp@accentgroup.org</p>

Supplier Engagement	<p>In order to maximise all eligible suppliers' ability to provide their best possible response, as an integral part of this RfP, Accent intend to actively engage with all eligible suppliers to ensure that they have:</p> <p>(i) a full understanding of client requirements. This will be achieved by means of a half day workshop at Accent's head office (please see address below) with senior Accent ICT input. These workshops will take place week commencing 14/11/2016.</p> <p>(ii) the opportunity to showcase their infrastructure and facilities by providing the relevant Accent colleagues with a site visit of the supplier DR / BC / Workplace Recovery premises. This visit can be scheduled to take place by mutual agreement at any point between receipt of your completed Appendix 4 - Confirmation of Intention to Respond and 02/12/2016, being one week before the RfP closing date.</p>
Confirmation of Intention to Respond	<p>In order to facilitate Accent's scheduling of Supplier Engagement Activity, and to prevent the unnecessary dissemination of confidential and/or commercially sensitive information, suppliers who intend to respond to this RfP should please complete and return Appendix 4, "Confirmation of Intention to Respond to the RfP", on or before noon on 04/11/2016, being 14 days after the RfP publication date.</p> <p>Failure to submit this documentation to the address listed below by the due date will preclude any further Supplier Engagement.</p> <p>Prior receipt of Appendix 4 is not a precondition to submitting a response to this RfP, however please note that until you complete, sign and return this document you will not receive Appendices 2, 5 and 6 which contain sensitive technical and commercial information about Accent's ICT estate.</p>

Submission instructions:	<p>Your RfP response must be submitted to either the physical or electronic address shown below no later than 12.00 noon on 09/12/2016.</p> <p>Please note that it is your sole responsibility to obtain confirmation of successful delivery of all correspondence.</p> <p>All submissions received after 12.00 noon on the due day will be automatically excluded from further consideration.</p> <p>If submitting electronically please use either Microsoft Office 2007 – 2016, ODF or Portable Document Format (PDF) file types</p>
The Confirmation of Intention to Respond document & your final RfP response must be to be sent to:	<p>email: businesscontinuity.rfp@accentgroup.org</p> <p>Postal Address:</p> <p>DR, BC & Backup Tender Response Accent Corporate Services Ltd Charlestown House Acorn Park Industrial Estate Charlestown Shipley West Yorkshire BD17 7SW</p> <p>Accent reserves the right to reject any RfP that does not fully comply with all the above instructions.</p> <p>NB It is important that this address is used exclusively for RfP responses and NOT clarification questions.</p>
General correspondence, enquiries and clarification questions should be sent to	<p>email: chris.cuthell@accentgroup.org</p> <p>Postal Address:</p> <p>CJ Cuthell Accent Corporate Services Ltd Charlestown House Acorn Park Industrial Estate Charlestown Shipley West Yorkshire BD17 7SW</p>
Date/time for RfP Response return:	12.00 noon on Friday 9 th December 2016.

4 RFP DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

This RfP comprises the following:

Document Name	Description
Accent Business Continuity RfP Final v1.0	Provides an overview of this RfP, instructions, timeline and the evaluation methodology.
Appendix 1 – Supplier RfP Response	For the bidders to complete in order to formally respond to this RfP.
Appendix 2 – Backup Server Lists	<p>This spreadsheet contains lists of all servers to be included in the requirements detailed at section 2.3 above, “Business as Usual Back Up”</p> <p>NB this file will only be provided upon receipt of a duly completed “Confirmation of Intention to Respond to the RfP” (Appendix 4)</p>
Appendix 3 – Scoring calculation	<p>This spreadsheet shows bidders the weighting of questions within each section. This spreadsheet will be used by Accent during evaluation.</p>
Appendix 4 - Confirmation of Intention to Respond to the RfP	<p>This document must be completed and returned to the delivery addresses listed above by noon 04/11/2016, being 14 days after the RfP publication date.</p> <p>Failure to submit this documentation by the due date will preclude any further Supplier Engagement.</p>

Appendix 5 – ICT Systems Overview	<p>General Information for bidders on Accent's ICT systems and architecture.</p> <p>NB this file will only be provided upon receipt of a duly completed "Confirmation of Intention to Respond to the RfP" (Appendix 4)</p>
Appendix 6 - Server List for DR Services	<p>This spreadsheet contains lists of all servers to be included in the requirements detailed at section 2.2 above, "Business as Usual Back Up"</p> <p>NB this file will only be provided upon receipt of a duly completed "Confirmation of Intention to Respond to the RfP" (Appendix 4)</p>

5 OVERVIEW OF THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROCESS

The following sections outline the processes that will be used to shortlist suppliers and the process by which we will then determine the best supplier for our needs.

5.1 The Request for Proposal process

The timeline is detailed below.

Dates	Description
21/10/2016	Request for Proposal issued via Contracts Finder & OJEU
04/11/2016	Cut-off for Confirmation of Intention to Respond to RfP & Start of Supplier Engagement period
14/11/2016 – 18/11/2016	Supplier Engagement Workshops hosted at Accent Head Office
02/12/2016	Cut-off for Supplier Site Visits
09/12/2016	RfP Responses received
12/12/2016 – 16/12/2016	Evaluation & Scoring
22/12/2016	Notification of outcome to suppliers
04/01/2017	Alcatel Standstill Period ends
02/02/2017	Due Diligence Completed
03/02/2017	Contract Signature
06/02/2017	Project start
26/05/2017	Project completion

5.2 How we will evaluate

Evaluation will be conducted in a single stage and comprises the following:

RfP Response

Suppliers are required to complete and return Appendix 1 as the basis for their RfPs.

The first section contains pass/fail questions. Failure to answer **any one** of them in the affirmative will result in the response being discounted from all further consideration or scoring.

The table below shows the weighting between the offer and price sections.

Criteria	Section	Weighting
Gateway Questions	Part A	Pass or Fail
Service Offer Specification	Part B	30%
Implementation & Service Management	Part C	15%
Transition	Part D	10%
Price	Part E	45%

Presentation of Proposal

Upon receipt of a confirmation on intention to respond by the cut off of noon 04/11/2016, Accent will invite qualifying bidders to our head office in Shipley for supplier engagement workshops week commencing 14/11/2016.

We will also provide suppliers with three alternate dates on which Accent colleagues would be available for a site visit.

The workshops and site visits will not be scored in their own right, rather they will be used to support the overall scoring of the response.

Price

We will evaluate costs submitted in Appendix A.

Scoring

5.2.1 Scoring quality

To ensure consistency and to remove any risk of bias the scoring of responses against our scoring system will be done individually by members of the RfP Evaluation Team (this is particularly important for requirements where there is an element of judgement required to assess the response).

A score will be awarded for the response to each question.

The following scoring system will be adopted

Score	Description
1	Unacceptable – poor response – poor indication of understanding of requirements, Little detail and no evidence provided.
2	Weak – below average response – concerns over full understanding of requirements, some detail and evidence provided, but poor quality
3	Satisfactory – average response – satisfactory demonstration of requirements is provided but the information is not fully detailed or backed up with evidence.
4	Good – above average response – meets expectations, relevant information provided and backed up with evidence indicating good understanding of requirements
5	Excellent – fully meets expectations, high level of relevant information provided demonstrating robust and coherent understanding of requirements.

Each suppliers score will be calculated as follows:

- Each question will have a weighting 1-10 (10 being most important) within each section.
- Each question will be marked 1-5 as per the table above (and averaged by the number of evaluators)
- The average mark will be multiplied by the weighting
- Total score will be converted into a % score per section (see 4.2)

See Appendix 11 – Scoring calculations

5.2.2 Methodology for scoring price

A price score will be calculated for each RfP by reference to the lowest RfP response, which is given a point's score of 100. One point shall be deducted from each of the other RfP responses for each percentage point above the lowest in accordance with the following formula:

$$(a/b) \times 100$$

where a = price of lowest Bidder
 b = price of RfP response being evaluated

A maximum price ratio score of 40% shall be given to the lowest Supplier Partner / Bidder scoring 100 points. The price ratio score shall then be calculated for each other RfP response according to the points score they achieve as a proportion of 100.

Bidders should note that RfP responses considered to be priced very low will be scrutinised to ensure that this is not as a result of a failure to understand our requirements or non transparent pricing.

Accent reserves the incontestable right to entirely disregard any RfP response where it considers the price to be abnormally low or abnormally high.

5.3 Request for Proposal outcome

The bidder with the highest total score or combinations of total scores will be recommended for contract award, although as stated elsewhere in the document there is no contractual obligation given, implied or intended to procure as a result this RfP

It is also important to note that the actual solution chosen will be subject to the Accent's available budget.

6 HOW TO RESPOND TO THE RFP

We have provided a template for your response in **Appendix 1**, which, through the answers you supply to our questions, we will use to evaluate your offer.

Suppliers are advised to keep their responses as concise and specific as possible. The use of diagrams and schematics with industry-standard iconography and Key is strongly encouraged.

The submission of verbatim standard marketing content as all or part of an answer could be disregarded and may not, at Accent's sole discretion, count towards scoring.

You may also be required to provide additional information as requested. Clarifications to questions and responses will be taken into account in the scoring.

You are strongly encouraged to make your pricing model as clear as possible. Over complicated, unclear pricing may impact upon your score if it is difficult to understand and mark against the schema.

6.1 Communication

This Request for Proposal is a collaborative process, our objective is to assist eligible suppliers to prepare and submit a fit for purpose high quality response.

In order to maintain a credible audit trail we ask that all communication is confirmed via the dedicated email address and we will do the same, but we welcome all appropriate engagement.

7 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This section aims to provide bidders with additional relevant information about the Request for Proposal requirements.

7.1 Key principles

Our key objectives for the project are:

1. Longevity
2. Reliability
3. Scalability
 - sufficient capacity for future growth within the successful respondent's core infrastructure is a key consideration to support the following scenarios:
 - The possibility of merging with or acquiring another HA, thus potentially growing by up to 10K properties and increasing the user base to over 1000.
4. High quality proactive Account Management
5. To deliver a superior service with realised cost savings.

7.2 What we are looking for in a supplier

It is important to Accent that we find a supplier who not only has experience in the above solution provision but also one that, like Accent, is innovative in their outlook and is willing to work with us in the future to progressively develop and deliver solutions that will improve our service delivery to our customers and operate as efficiently as possible.

8 NOTICE TO BIDDERS

8.1 Information

- Whilst the information in this RfP is believed to be correct at the time of issue, neither Accent nor its advisers accepts any liability for its accuracy, adequacy or completeness, nor is any warranty (express or implied) given as to its accuracy, adequacy or completeness.
- The above exclusion extends to liability in relation to any statement, opinion or conclusion contained in, or any omission from this RfP and in respect of any other written or oral communication transmitted or otherwise made available to any Bidder, and no representations or warranties are made in relation to such opinions, statements or conclusions.
- Despite the above, Accent do not exclude liability for fraud.
- Bidders must ensure that they read and understand this RfP. This RfP does not purport to provide all of the information which may be necessary or desirable to enable a Bidder to determine whether or not to submit a response to this RfP.
- Other than if Accent becomes aware of any fraudulent misrepresentation, Accent is not under, and does not assume, any obligation to update or supplement this RfP or to correct any inaccuracies or misrepresentations contained in or any omissions from this RfP, which may exist either at the date of this RfP or subsequently. Information contained in this RfP may change from time to time.
- The timeframes specified in this RfP are indicative only and may be revised by Accent from time to time. If they are revised, Accent shall notify the Bidders accordingly.
- Bidders are solely responsible for obtaining the information which they consider is necessary in order to make all decisions relating to their responses and to undertake any investigations they consider necessary in order to verify any information provided to them during this procurement exercise. Bidders must form their own opinions, making such investigations and taking such advice as is appropriate, regarding the information contained in the appendices and their responses without reliance upon any opinion or other information provided by Accent or any of its advisors.

8.2 Variations and other reserved rights

Accent reserves the right:

- not to award any contract(s) as a result of this procurement exercise;
- to vary the bid timetable as it considers appropriate at any time. Any material changes shall be notified to the person each Bidder has nominated for contact purposes;
- to withdraw this RfP at any time or to re-invite responses on the same or any alternative basis;

- to seek clarification in relation to the information submitted by the Bidders. The Bidders must respond promptly in writing.

8.3 Costs to be borne by bidders

Any expenditure, costs, liability, work or effort undertaken or incurred in proceeding and/or participating in this procurement exercise (including, without limitation, responding to this RfP) ("Bidder Costs") is a matter solely for the commercial judgement of Bidders, and Accent shall not be liable to reimburse or compensate the Bidders in respect of any Bidder Costs.

8.4 Language

English shall be the official language for all means of communications between Bidders and Accent on all matters relating to this procurement exercise (including, without limitation, responding to this RfP).

8.5 Governing law

English law shall govern this RfP. The Bidders agree to submit to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of England and Wales.

8.6 Security and confidentiality

- Bidders shall comply with the instructions regarding communication with Accent as described in this RfP.
- Bidders are also reminded that Accent's invitation to submit responses to this RfP is conditional upon the Bidder's continued compliance with the terms of this RfP.
- This RfP is made available to Bidders on the condition that it is used only in connection with the preparation and submission of responses and/or negotiations in relation to this RfP.
- This RfP must not be disclosed to or seen by any unauthorised persons nor be used for any purpose other than responding to this RfP. RfP related material must be returned to Accent upon request, either on completion of the further procurement exercise or earlier if Accent so requires or immediately should a Bidder decide not to submit a response.
- Bidders shall not make any announcement, and shall procure that their employees, sub-contractors, agents and advisors do not make any announcement (including, without limitation, any communication to the public, to any clients or suppliers of either Accent or each Bidder, to all or any employees of either Accent or each Bidder, and to representatives of the press, radio, television or any other media), regarding the

existence, provisions or subject matter of this RfP or containing any information about Accent without the prior written approval of Accent.

8.7 Good faith

- In submitted a response to this RfP, each Bidder undertakes to provide its response in good faith. The Bidder acknowledges that it shall not at any time communicate to any person (other than Accent or its advisers or third parties directly concerned with the preparation or submission of its response) the amount (or approximate amount) of any arrangements or contracts to be entered into in relation to its response or provision of the RfP requirements.
- Bidders are required to confirm in a covering letter to their response that the principles described above have been brought to the attention of all persons (including subcontractors and associated companies) involved in the preparation of a response to this RfP.

8.8 Accuracy of information

- The Bidders must ensure that the covering letter referred to in section 8.7 above also confirms that:
- all information provided in their response or subsequently provided to Accent in the course of this procurement exercise (including, without limitation, responding to this RfP) is true, complete, accurate and not misleading;
- opinions stated in any part of their response are honestly held and reasonable grounds exist for holding such opinion;
- any suggestions made during any clarification sessions may be incorporated into Accent's requirements; and
- any change in the status of such information shall be brought to the attention of Accent immediately.
- Bidders who do not provide the above confirmation statement in the covering letter referred to in section 8.7 above may be excluded from participating in this procurement exercise.

8.9 Intellectual property rights

- All intellectual property rights in this RfP (and all other material issued to Bidders by Accent or on its behalf or to which the Bidder has been given access for the purposes of this RfP) shall remain the property of Accent or the relevant owner/licensor. Bidders shall not obtain any right, title or interest to such documentation.
- Each Bidder licenses Accent and its officers, employees, agents, solicitors and advisers to copy, adapt, amend, disclose or do anything else necessary (in Accent's sole

discretion) to any material contained in its response (including material in which intellectual property rights of the Bidder or other persons subsist) for the purposes of:

- engaging in clarifications with the Bidder;
 - evaluating its response;
 - evaluating any subsequent offer made by the Bidder;
 - concluding any resultant contract(s) with the Bidder;
 - reference during management of the resultant contract(s); and
 - anything else related to the above purposes, including governmental and parliamentary reporting purposes.
-
- By submitting its response and such supporting information each Bidder shall be deemed to have given consent and licence for such copying and use as set out in section above. It is each Bidder's responsibility to ensure that, prior to submitting the relevant information to Accent, it has obtained all necessary third party consents to enable it to provide the consent and licence set out above.
 - Notwithstanding the above, ownership of all intellectual property rights in the material contained in the response shall remain unchanged.

8.10 Acceptance of this RfP

By participating in this Request for Proposal, Bidders shall be deemed to have agreed to be bound by the rules, notices and disclaimers contained in this RfP and any further documents issued by Accent during the procurement exercise and no purported rejection, variation or addition to the provisions of this RfP made by Bidders shall have any effect.

8.11 Status of this RfP

This RfP is not and shall not be construed as an offer to any of the Bidders or the basis for a contract.

8.12 Additional information, clarifications and information documents

Notwithstanding any other requirements of this RfP, Accent may require the Bidder to submit additional information and may require it to make a formal presentation for the purpose of explaining its response and to allow further consideration of its response.

8.13 Exclusion of bidder for breach

If a Bidder breaches any requirement or condition of this RfP then Accent may, at its sole discretion, exclude that Bidder from any further involvement in the process by written notice to that Bidder.

8.14 Notification and debriefing

- Accent will inform all Bidders in writing of any intention to award a contract. Following a minimum standstill period of ten calendar days, subject to there being no substantive challenge to that intention, a contract will be formally awarded to the successful Bidder.
- All unsuccessful Bidders will be afforded the opportunity of a debriefing. Unsuccessful Bidders should notify Accent in writing that they wish to be debriefed. Accent will seek to debrief the unsuccessful Bidder within 20 days of receiving such a request.
- Where an unsuccessful Bidder requests, in writing and no later than midnight on the second working day after being informed of the outcome of the procurement, the reasons why that Bidder was unsuccessful, Accent will provide details of the characteristics and relative advantages of the successful bid.

End of document