Office for Product Safety & Standards

Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy

OPSS Research Collaboration Network

Supplier engagement event

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Aims of today's session

Share scope and content of a proposed invitation to tender

Seek feedback on deliverability of the proposed contract

Encourage sign-ups to the new research collaboration network

This supplier event does not commit OPSS to continuing with the proposed invitation to tender and details of the final specification may change.

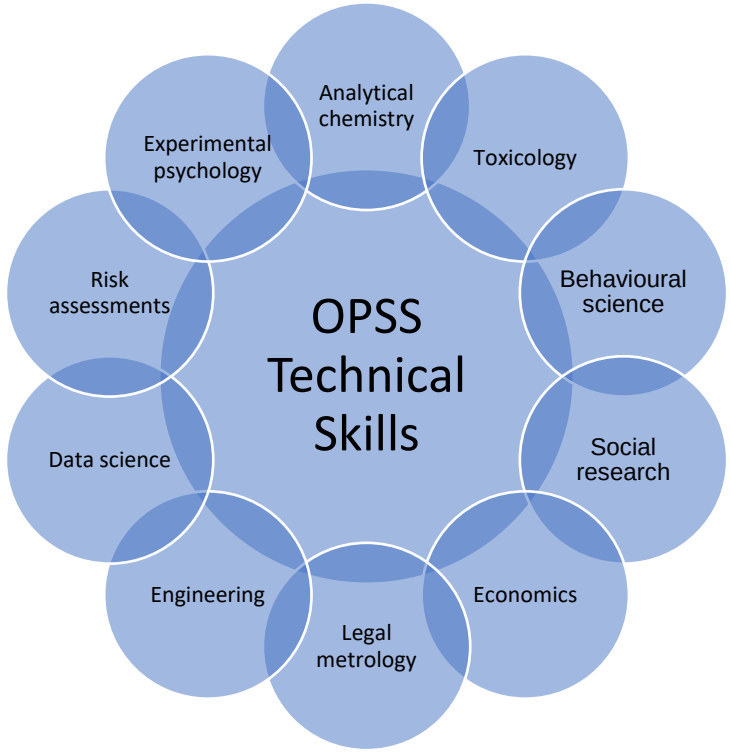
What is the Office for Product Safety & Standards?

- National product regulator, created 2018 to keep UK consumers safe & support businesses
- Policy responsibility for product safety, legal metrology, standards & accreditation
- We regulate most consumer goods across the UK apart from food, vehicles and medicines
- Responsibility for regulation of Construction Products from 2020




Mechanisms for Scientific Support

- Strategic Research Programme
- Research Hub
- Scientific Advisory Group
- Register of Specialists
- Academic Secondees
- Lab capability
- Internal Expertise



Aims of the Research Collaboration Network

- The Research Collaboration Network is a framework within which there will be a number of Lots to which we will appoint successful suppliers.
- Contracts will be awarded on an ad hoc basis – when OPSS has specific research requirements.
- The aim of the Research Collaboration Network is to identify and utilise contractors with skill and expertise to support the aims of the OPSS Strategic Research Programme (SRP):

Support with ad hoc technical advice	Support research commissioning	Support to address evidence gaps in existing evidence bases	Support to review research proposals and reports

What do we mean by “call-off contract”

Award contracts to single or consortium of organisations who provide necessary expertise

Gives OPSS flexibility to commission projects as and when needed, often with rapid turnaround

Does not commit OPSS to any spend until individual project is commissioned

Provides access to consistent and appropriate expertise, building organisational learning within the appointed contractors

It does not replace competitive tendering via other delivery contracts or procurement methods

Requirements from policy and enforcement teams in our thematic areas

The right evidence for the future

Construction products

Chemicals and materials in products

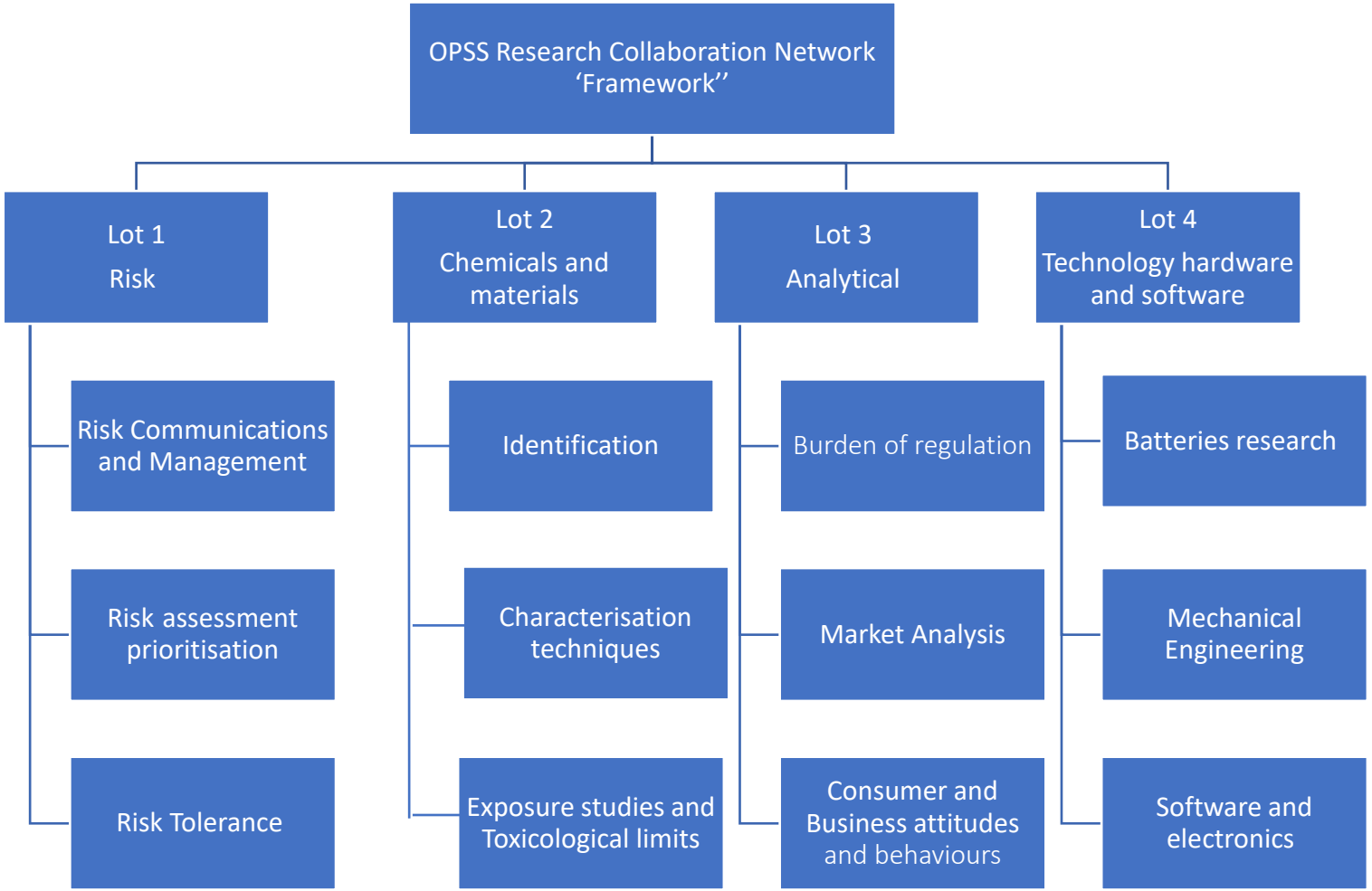
The application of risk

Study of Online marketplaces

Consumers and vulnerability

Making regulation work better

Framework of specialists to support OPSS Research Programme delivery



Activities within scope of the contract

Lot 1-Risk research

Risk Management: Supporting work for the development of a Product Risk Prioritisation decision tool.

Risk Communication: Supporting work that extends current strategies for identifying consumer perceptions of risk (and tolerance of risks) and developing strategies for effective communication of risk.

Risk Assessment: Supporting existing work on the development of risk assessment tools

Some recent examples of previous research relating to risk

- Understanding the Psychological and Cultural Factors Underpinning Risk Perception of Products
- A causal Bayesian network approach to consumer product safety and risk assessment
- Attributions of risk and blame in smart product failure

Activities within scope of the contract

Lot 2-Chemicals and materials research

Identification, characterisation techniques, exposure studies and toxicological limits

- **Chemical identification** and quantification method development and testing (e.g. setting action limits for heavy metals in cosmetics).
- **Physicochemical characterisation** to understand potential safety concerns associated with Advanced Materials in consumer and construction products.
- Determination of the effect of chemical **exposure** in consumer and construction products (inclusive of method development for **setting toxicology limits**).

Chemical identification and quantification method development and testing

The Office requires further evidence (literature-based and experimental) that elucidates target analytes. Homing in on priority chemicals – whether these are ingredients, contaminants or in-situ reaction products – to inform our understanding of the chemical risks posed by products. This piece is inclusive of analytical method development and testing, or more investigatory engagement with stakeholders around chemicals present in products of interest. Outcomes of this area may include development of new legislation and regulatory approaches.

Previously commissioned project example: "*Feasibility study for setting 'action limits' for heavy metals in cosmetics.*"

- Aimed to develop methods for determining concentrations of key heavy metals in a range of cosmetic product matrices.
- Outputs included validated methods for identifying/quantifying a range of heavy metals in a variety of cosmetic product types. OPSS can use these outputs to establish future approaches to producing guidance on 'action limits' for heavy metals in cosmetic products.

Physicochemical characterisation to understand potential safety concerns associated with Advanced Materials in consumer and construction products

Given that Advanced Materials constitute a novel category of materials, the physical and/or chemical characterisation of these entities (such as nanomaterials, and functionalised bulk materials) in consumer and construction products is not always well defined. Future areas of testing and research could include producing AdMat prevalence testing data, characterisation method development and validation, literature research and stakeholder interviews.

Previously commissioned project example: "*The use of nanomaterials in consumer products and potential safety concerns.*"

- A baselining literature review piece to better understand the prevalence of nanomaterials available in consumer products on the UK market, associated safety concerns and characterisation evidence gaps.
- Outputs will include a literature review report, a journal article and presentation to shape the Office's nanomaterials testing/research.

Determination of the effect of chemical exposure in consumer and construction products

In OPSS we want to understand the extent and limits around a chemical's use in consumer and construction products. Specifically, work around understanding the extent of a selected chemical's exposure to consumers in chosen product areas is of importance. Further opportunity is centered around selecting or developing methods for improvements in identification of acceptable levels of specific chemicals in products.

Current project example: "*Consumer cosmetic usage survey*."

- This research aims to assess the usage of selected cosmetics via a consumer usage survey. Demographic data will also be recorded to understand usage trends. Correlations will be drawn between actual usage data and historical figures to identify potential changes in product usage.
- Outputs will include an up to date and representative data set examining the patterns of use for cosmetic products in the UK across demographic groups, which may inform future work towards an exposure modelling tool/framework.

Activities within scope of the contract

Lot 3-Analysis

Burden of regulation

- identify and gather evidence on the impacts of a new policy/intervention, particularly costs falling on businesses

Market analysis

- Mapping the size, structure and features OPSS regulated product markets, including identifying market failures
- access to market data in order to support analysis

Consumer and business attitudes and behaviours

- Primary research and rapid evidence reviews to support design of behavioural interventions with specific audiences
- Trialling methods to engage specific audiences, including robust measurement of behavioural change

Examples of Lot 3 activities

Lot 3-Analysis – Burden of Regulation

Burden of regulation
OPSS is required to conduct impact assessments and businesses for new policy and regulatory activities. Modelling the impacts of regulation is an important part of this and helps to shape the design and delivery of the activities

OPSS currently rely on a mixed evidence base, but evidence specifically related to issues relating to product safety are limited. For example, what costs fall to businesses involved in the manufacture of a product in order to comply with regulatory changes.

Future work under this lot would require primary evidence collection, secondary analysis or modelling to provide estimates of the impact on affected stakeholders.

Examples of Lot 3 activities

Lot 3-Analysis – Market analysis

For OPSS to effectively regulate new product safety issues, it needs to understand the market in which it is intervening. This forms a key part of shaping appropriate and effective interventions. This ensure consumers are protected and businesses are not unnecessarily burdened.

The products and markets that OPSS regulate are diverse and complex, each requiring a unique set of data and insight. Understanding the size of the market, by sales and participating businesses, as well how the market operates is important. Access to data that targets specific product markets adds the most value.

Examples of Lot 3 activities

Lot 3-Analysis – **Consumer and business attitudes and behaviours**

To inform design of intervention, OPSS currently relies on a general evidence base as it relies to consumer and business behaviour, rather than evidence that specifically targets product safety and regulatory behaviours. OPSS already has access to general service research contractors, what is sought under this collaboration network is experts in the product safety subject area.

Primary research projects are likely needed where longer term, or cross-cutting evidence needs are identified, however to respond to the fast-paced nature of OPSS's work rapid evidence reviews are often necessary. Input from those who have experience in this evidence base would provide OPSS confidence in the relevance and comprehensiveness of these reviews.

Activities within scope of the contract

Lot 4-Technology

Current Products
- Understanding safety issues with existing technologies

Safety Solutions
- Evaluating new solutions for improving product safety

Technology Foresight
- Identifying safety issues with future and emerging technologies

Regulatory Compliance
- Techniques to improve regulatory compliance

Research methods include:
- Desk based: literature reviews, market analysis, standards analysis
- Futures techniques / horizon scanning
- Stakeholder/expert consultation, including workshops
- Testing e.g. electrical, battery, mechanical, cyber

Example – Artificial Intelligence

Lot 4-Technology

A study on the impact of AI on product safety (CSES: £66,400)
The aim of this study was to examine the current and forecasted future impacts of AI in consumer products, and what this means for product safety.

- **Objective 1:** Analyse the current and likely future applications of AI in the home, highlighting the advantages and disadvantages for consumers and product safety implications / risks.
- **Objective 2:** Assess whether the current product safety framework is sufficient for a new generation of products that incorporate AI.
- **Objective 3:** Examine what factors Regulators should consider when responding to these new challenges to ensure consumer safety and foster product innovation.

Methodology

- Market analysis
- Literature review
- 48 stakeholders interviewed + workshop

Example – EVSCP

Lot 4-Technology

Developing Options for Assessing Compliance with The Electric Vehicles (Smart Charge Points) Regulations 2021 (TUV SUD: £88,000)
The aim of this research was to develop options for assessing compliance of EVSCPs against the regulations.

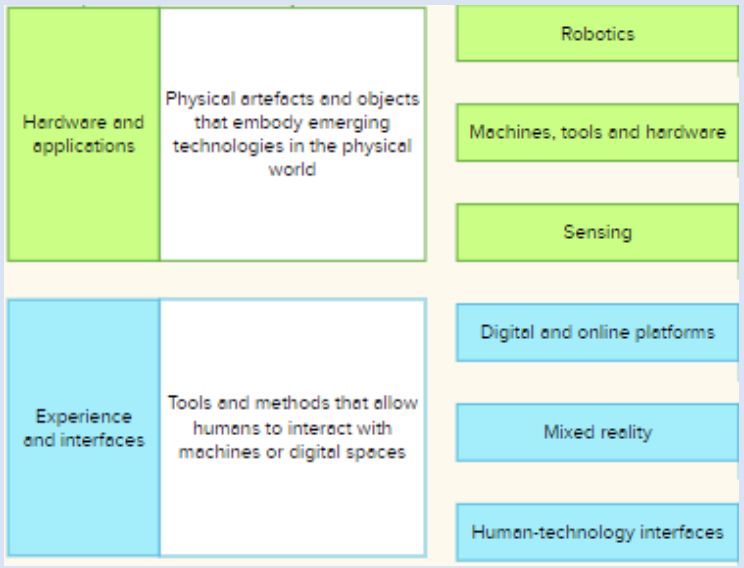
- To develop an assessment process based on the requirements from existing, developing and/or comparable standards applicable to EVSCPs or, where there are gaps, based on principles already normalised within design, manufacturing, and testing.
- To assess and evaluate the various options identified, including associated costs, resource and capability
- To test and validate the assessment process.

Methodology

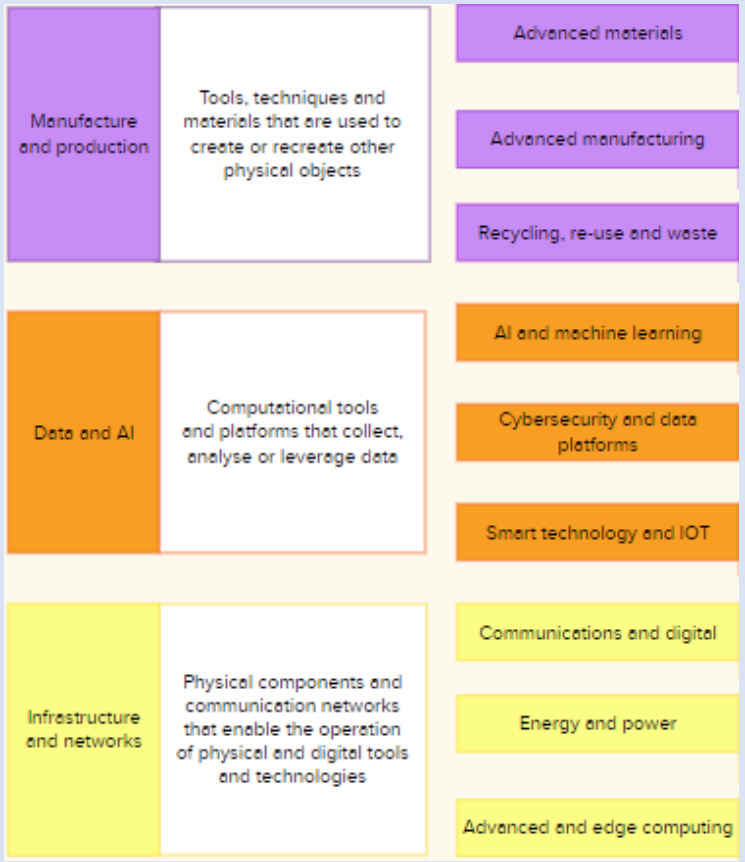
- Standards analysis and literature review
- Development of assessment methodology
- Testing 2x EVSCP
- 10 manufacturers interviewed + workshop

Forward look

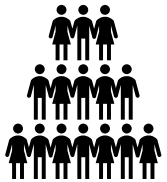
Lot 4-Technology



OPSS Horizon scanning taxonomy



Key features of the specification

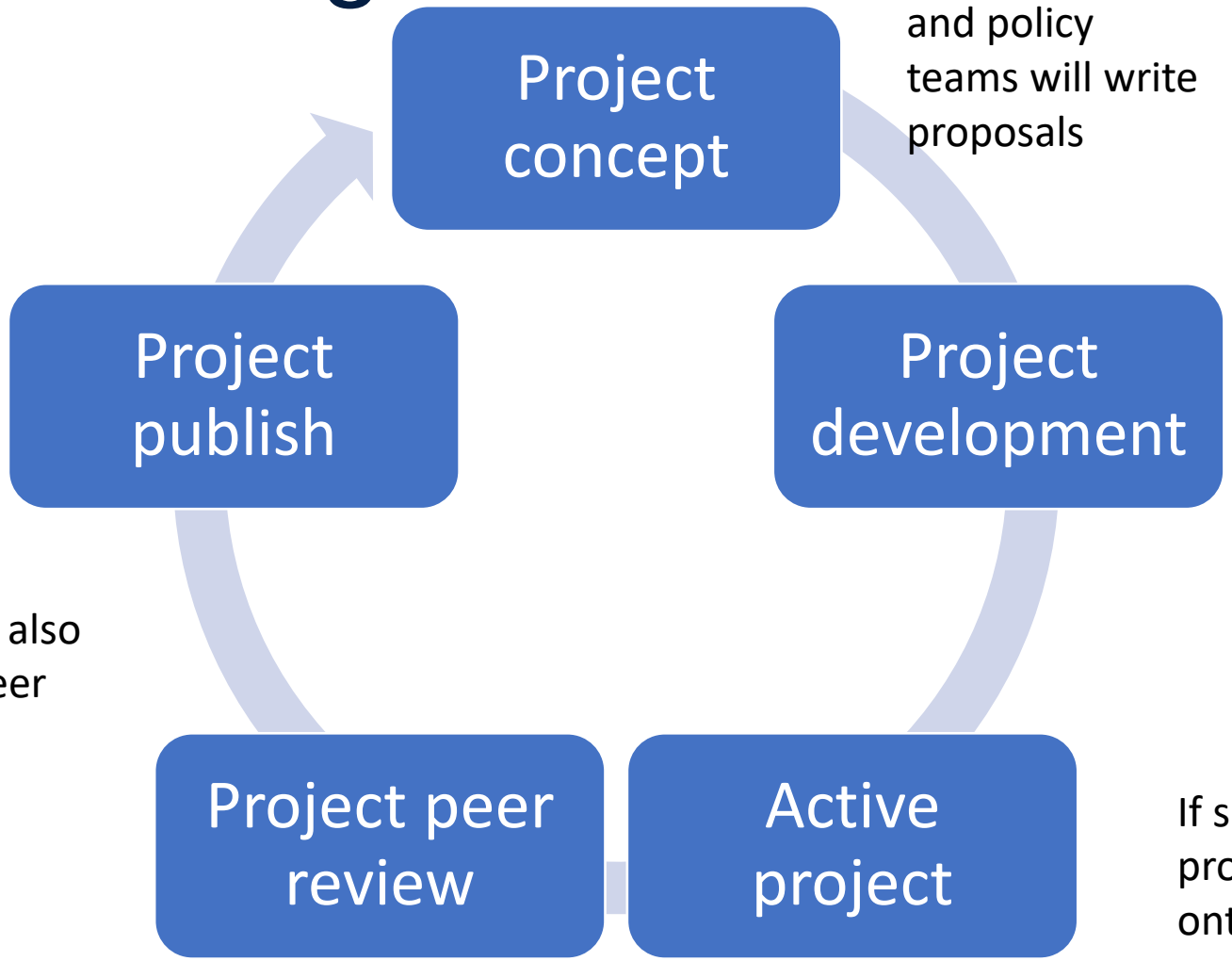


The scope is broad – in terms of methods and policy areas. We are very open to consortium bids, or sub-contractor relationships.

Evaluating quality and cost is hard when we have such a broad scope, so we plan to use example projects.

- We will set out a hypothetical project
- We will ask you to set out a basic project plan
- We don't want you to actually solve the problem but tell us how you would go about it.

Contract management



Technical leads and policy teams will write proposals

Suppliers may be invited to develop project ideas or peer review proposals

Suppliers will be invited to bid for projects through the framework. ~ 7days

Small project bid submissions will be reviewed by technical lead and award the research

If suppliers are not delivering a project, they maybe invited onto steering groups

Suppliers may also be asked to peer review work

Proposed Procurement Process

- **UK SBS –** Please direct all queries to UK SBS via the tendering platform during the procurement process.
- **Anticipated tender go live date-** in March subject to all approvals being in place
- **Budget –** £4m excluding VAT over 4 year period
- **Route to Market –** Find a Tender and Contracts finder
- **Jaggaer–** Bid submissions should be submitted through Jaggaer bid platform

Feedback and questions

- Does the structure of the call-off contract suit what you know about OPSS and the type of support you could deliver?
- Any feedback from participation in similar contracts in the past?
- Have we missed anything?
- For further questions please contact

professionalservices@uksbs.co.uk marking the email FAO Victoria Clewer and our reference number PS22407 Research Collaboration Hub