

Request for Proposal



Request for Proposal (RFP) on behalf of United Kingdom Research and Innovation (UKRI)

Subject: Public Affairs & Political Monitoring

Sourcing Reference Number: PS24138

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Section 1 – About UK Shared Business Services

Putting the business into shared services

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UKSBS) brings a commercial attitude to the public sector; helping Contracting Authorities improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise. It is our vision to become the leading service provider for Contracting Authorities of shared business services in the UK public sector, continuously reducing cost and improving quality of business services for Government and the public sector.

Our broad range of expert services is shared by our Contracting Authorities. This allows our customers the freedom to focus resources on core activities; innovating and transforming their own organisations.

Core services include Procurement, Finance, Grants Admissions, Human Resources, Payroll, ISS, and Property Asset Management all underpinned by our Service Delivery and Contact Centre teams.

UKSBS is a people rather than task focused business. It's what makes us different to the traditional transactional shared services centre. What is more, being a not-for-profit organisation owned by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS), UKSBS' goals are aligned with the public sector and delivering best value for the UK taxpayer.

UK Shared Business Services Ltd changed its name from RCUK Shared Services Centre Ltd in March 2013.

Our Customers

Growing from a foundation of supporting the Research Councils, 2012/13 saw Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) transition their procurement to UKSBS and Crown Commercial Services (CCS – previously Government Procurement Service) agree a Memorandum of Understanding with UKSBS to deliver two major procurement categories (construction and research) across Government.

UKSBS currently manages £700m expenditure for its Contracting Authorities. Our Contracting Authorities who have access to our services and Contracts are detailed [here](#).

Privacy Statement

At UK Shared Business Services (UKSBS) we recognise and understand that your privacy is extremely important, and we want you to know exactly what kind of information we collect about you and how we use it.

This privacy notice link below details what you can expect from UKSBS when we collect your personal information.

- We will keep your data safe and private.
- We will not sell your data to anyone.
- We will only share your data with those you give us permission to share with and only for legitimate service delivery reasons.

<https://www.uksbs.co.uk/use/pages/privacy.aspx>

For details on how the Contracting Authority protect and process your personal data please follow the link below:

<https://www.ukri.org/privacy-notice/>

Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)

Operating across the whole of the UK and with a combined budget of more than £6 billion, UK Research and Innovation represents the largest reform of the research and innovation funding landscape in the last 50 years.

As an independent non-departmental public body UK Research and Innovation brings together the seven Research Councils (AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, STFC) plus Innovate UK and a new organisation, Research England.

UK Research and Innovation ensures the UK maintains its world-leading position in research and innovation. This is done by creating the best environment for research and innovation to flourish.

For more information, please visit: www.ukri.org

Section 3 – Working with the Contracting Authority

| Section 3 – Contact details | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| 3.1. | Contracting Authority Name and address | UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, SN2 1FF |
| 3.2. | Buyer | Liz Vincent |
| 3.3. | Buyer contact details | professionalservices@uksbs.co.uk |
| 3.4. | Estimated value of the Opportunity | The total estimated contract value is £199,355.00 ex VAT. For avoidance of doubt the value of this contract should the full 5 years be utilised would be £199,355.00 which is made up of £119,613.00 for the first 3 years with a further £39,871.00 each for years 4 and 5 subject to budgetary approval. |
| 3.5. | Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids | All correspondence shall be submitted within the Messaging Centre of the Jaggaer eSourcing portal. Guidance on how to obtain support on using the Jaggaer eSourcing portal can be found in Section 7.1.11. Please note submission of a Bid to any email address including the Buyer <u>will</u> result in the Bid <u>not</u> being considered, unless formally advised to do so by UKSBS. |

| Section 3 - Timescales | | |
|------------------------|--|---|
| 3.6. | Date of posting of Contract advert to Find a Tender and Contracts Finder | Tuesday 9 th July 2024 |
| 3.7. | Latest date / time RFP clarification questions shall be received through the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal | Thursday 1 st August 2024 14:00 |
| 3.8. | Latest date / time RFP clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal | Tuesday 6 th August 2024 |
| 3.9. | Latest date and time for Bidder to request access to the RFP documents | Tuesday 13 th August 2024 13:00 |
| 3.10. | Latest date and time RFP Bid shall be submitted through the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal (the Deadline) | Tuesday 13 th August 2024 14:00 |

| | | |
|-------|---|---|
| 3.11. | Date/time Bidders should be available for interview | Week commencing Monday 16 th September 2024 |
| 3.12. | Anticipated notification of proposed Contract award to unsuccessful bidders | Thursday 26 th September 2024 |
| 3.13. | 10 Days standstill | 27 th September – 7 th October 2024 |
| 3.14. | Anticipated Contract Award Date | Tuesday 8 th October 2024 |
| 3.15. | Commencement of Contract | Monday 14 th October 2024 |
| 3.16. | Completion of Contract | 24 th November 2027 with the option to extend for a further 2 years on an annual basis until 24 th November 2029 (1+1) subject to budgetary approval. |
| 3.17. | Bid Validity Period | 90 Days |

Section 4 – Specification and about this Procurement

1. Introduction

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) requires the ability to keep abreast of often fast-paced political developments, and to have access to information and intelligence on crucial policymakers and political stakeholders. This is critical to central UKRI functions such as:

- accountability to Parliament and Government
- engagement with policymakers and Parliamentary stakeholders.

The successful supplier will provide an easy-to-use service that can be tailored to all UKRI Councils and the interests of individual teams. It is expected that the service would be made available to all across UKRI who maintain a public affairs or parliamentary-facing role.

As an overview, we require the successful supplier to provide the following:

- Regular, timely and detailed information and intelligence updates to colleagues across UKRI.
- Access to a database containing information on key political and policy stakeholders.
- Handling of requests for bespoke information, reports and public affairs research.

2. Scope

2.1. Period of the agreement

The contract will run for an initial period of three years, with the option to extend for one more year and then again for a further year, up to a maximum of five years in total. Any extensions will be agreed upon between UKRI and the successful supplier, following an assessment of the service delivered in years three and four of the contract (as applicable). This assessment will take account of activities including but not limited to the:

- quality, frequency and timeliness of regular information updates
- use of any online databases provided by the supplier
- provision of training to use the service provided by the supplier
- handling of bespoke requests for information, reports and public affairs research

2.2. Price and payment

It is expected that throughout the contract payment will be provided annually in advance.

Based on the previous contract, and adjusting for inflation (CPI), the expected annual price for the contracted period is approximately **£39,871 ex VAT (£47,845 inc. VAT)**.

The estimated anticipated price for the full five-year period is **£199,355 ex VAT (£239,225 inc. VAT)**.

2.3. Licencing

It is expected that, as part of the contract, all UKRI staff (and staff in Innovate UK Business Connect, formerly Innovate UK-KTN) who require information should be able to directly receive email reports and information sent by the supplier.

For access to a political intelligence database (see Point 3.3 below), we anticipate that up to 100 UKRI staff members will need to have access. The Bidder should outline in their quotation the number of licences that are provided to use the database (if applicable). If the Bidder has different subscription tiers with differing number of licences, then details of this should be included in the quotation.

2.4. Transition period

The current contract for political monitoring ends on 24 November 2024, with the new service to begin on 25 November 2024.

However, given the significant level of expected political activity taking place throughout 2024, it is important that UKRI colleagues are ready to and can make use of the new service from the outset. Therefore, it is expected that the successful supplier will agree to support UKRI in a 'transition period', if required.

The transition period is anticipated to begin on 14 October 2024, before the service start date of 25 November 2024.

During this transition period, the successful supplier will provide all and any support required to familiarise UKRI users of the service, including but not limited to:

- presentations and training for users of the service, including databases
- agreeing key terms for email updates for individuals and teams across UKRI

3. Requirement

3.1. Our requirement

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) requires a Public Affairs and Political Monitoring and Intelligence Contract to run for up to five years.

We need a provider who can cover a broad range of issues and provide a wide span of monitoring. This includes:

- all the disciplines covered by the seven [Research Councils, Innovate UK and Research England](#), including Innovate UK Business Connect
- UK research and innovation policy, including devolved nations
- the international landscape
- domestic higher education policy

UKRI needs an easy-to-use service that can be tailored to the different Councils and the interests of individual teams. We expect the supplier to review sources of information including, but not limited to:

- UK Parliament
- HM Government and local government
- Devolved assemblies and administrations
- Other stakeholders, as appropriate including:

- companies
- industry bodies
- learned societies
- interest groups
- campaign groups
- think tanks
- Consultations (government and public body); inquiries (Parliamentary and public); reports (Government, parliamentary); press releases, news and social media (Government and Parliamentary; Parliamentary Questions, debates, Select Committee proceedings, and All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) activities.

The following sections set out the minimum service we would expect.

3.2. Political monitoring

In general, our monitoring requirements encompass two main streams: general activity updates and specific monitoring for priority topics and keywords. We expect monitoring to cover the below as a minimum:

- Instant alerts and summaries of significant announcements in research and innovation policy, including mentions of UKRI.
- Daily summaries of parliamentary activity and other key announcements for internal circulation, tailored to UKRI's needs.
- Timely summaries of set pieces events such as Budgets, Spending Reviews, Elections and Cabinet reshuffles, tailored to UKRI and Council interest areas.
- Summary of relevant parliamentary questions tabled and answered to be delivered weekly.
- Summaries of debates and relevant committee oral evidence sessions as required.
- A weekly forward look of relevant parliamentary activity and other key events.
- At least weekly, a Consultation tracker consisting of opening and closing consultations and inquiries, including select committees.
- Summary of senior people moves, at least monthly.
- Coverage of main party conferences, including a forward look of fringe events and coverage of selected events.

In the transition period ahead of the service start date of 25 November 2024 (see above), the successful supplier will agree with UKRI an exact list of general updates to provide, as well as priority topics and keywords relevant to each part of UKRI for monitoring, if required. This list will be reviewed and updated as required by UKRI.

3.3. Political intelligence database

We require access to a database holding political stakeholder information for:

- Parliamentarians (UK Parliament and devolved nations)
- Key senior civil servants
- Special Advisors (SpAds)
- Local and council political leaders and relevant senior officers

Information available on the database should, as a minimum, include a person's:

- personal biography

- history of parliamentary and ministerial roles
- interest areas
- contact details

An associated customer relationship management system (CRM) to track interactions is not essential but will be taken into consideration.

Due to significant political activity expected in 2024 the successful supplier will need to ensure full access to the database on day one of the contract. Therefore, training for UKRI staff to effectively use the database is essential, before the beginning of the contract (during the transition period) and at regular intervals. Training dates will be agreed before the contract start date.

Licenses: The Bidder should outline in the quotation the number of licences provided to use the database (if applicable). If the Bidder has different subscription tiers with differing number of licences, then details of this should be included in the quotation.

3.4. Bespoke research

The Bidder should have the capacity and capability for UKRI to request up to eight bespoke research projects each quarter (or provide an equivalent number of hours). Example research requests may include:

- 'deep dive' information on MP or Peer interests and background
- mapping of main political stakeholders
- support with briefings for select committee hearings (including biographies)
- bespoke summaries of policy documents and reports as needed
- historic content
- sentiment analysis
- analytics of UKRI mentions, appearances and submissions

Given the broad range of sectors UKRI engages with, the successful supplier must have the expertise available to handle a wide range of research requests.

The Bidder should explain their ability to meet these requirements and be prepared to agree with UKRI early in the Contract how the research capacity will be provided (for example each month or quarter).

3.5. Support and implementation

Given the wide range of UKRI's interests and activities, it is important that we have a:

- team who can support our use of the monitoring service.
- dedicated account manager, who will be the point of contact for UKRI and its councils and will build an understanding of UKRI's needs and monitoring requirements. This account manager should be available to answer regular queries from across UKRI in a reasonable timeframe. Given the breadth and complexity of UKRI's remit and activities, it is important to maintain the same account manager throughout the contracted period, where possible.

The Bidder should explain in their response how they will structure support for UKRI and ensure continuity across the whole contract. They should also outline any expertise in providing support for large organisations with wide ranging interests.

Initially we would expect monthly meetings either in person or via Zoom or Teams to review the service (and its use across UKRI) and share updates on upcoming priorities and monitoring requirements. After three months, assuming we are satisfied with the service provided, we expect these meetings to become quarterly.

Before the service starts on 25 November 2024 (during the transition period) UKRI will require communication with the successful supplier to ensure the service can begin smoothly. This will include:

- discussions around the needs of each Council
- discussion and agreement on training schedule for UKRI staff to fully engage with the service from day one of the contract start
- having draft service overviews in place that capture:
 - who will receive what, and when
 - the key terms
 - the key terms needed for daily and weekly alerts of UKRI mentions.

Bidders are required to provide a detailed explanation of how they would provide support for UKRI and how they would implement the service to be used by UKRI and its varied constituent bodies.

3.6.Format

We are open to the format in which we receive information and updates from the successful supplier. However, we expect the majority will be received via email alerts. We also expect some form of database tool to be provided, as outlined above.

We require all alerts, summaries and round ups of information to be easy to read and navigate. The format should allow us to easily access information without having to scroll through long documents or emails to find the information relevant to the organisation.

Bidders should:

- share examples in their quotation of what UKRI can expect from their regular products (for example how email summaries will look).
- explain, with examples, how they will handle multiple streams of updates on many different subjects across a large organisation such as UKRI.

The frequency of different alerts we require is outlined approximately above (e.g. daily, weekly, monthly), however we expect the exact timings that information is received would be discussed and agreed ahead of the start of the Contract.

4. Measuring performance

As outlined in Point 2.1 (above), the contract will run for an initial period of three years with the option to extend for a further two years, following an assessment of the service delivery.

This assessment will take account of activities including, but not limited to, the:

- quality, frequency and timeliness of regular information updates
- use of any online databases provided by the supplier

- provision of training to use the service provided by the supplier
- handling of bespoke requests for information, reports and public affairs research

The main deliverables throughout the contract are outlined above and include:

- delivery of reports/digests of key political developments (such as cabinet reshuffles, machinery of government changes, budgets and spending reviews, party conferences)
 - instant initial report to be delivered on the day of the development
 - any follow up reports with more detail to be provided within a week of the development
- summaries of general parliamentary activity and UKRI mentions to be delivered daily.
- at least weekly, a Consultation tracker consisting of opening and closing consultations and inquiries, including select committees.
- summary of senior people moves, at least monthly.

We expect the supplier to measure the number of the above outputs throughout the contract, as well as vital information including the:

- number of UKRI staff receiving email updates and accessing the political monitoring database
- key terms used for email updates across UKRI
- number of hours used on bespoke research requests, including where the requests come from

We expect the above information to be made available ahead of quarterly meetings, although we may agree with the supplier (as appropriate) to receive some information on a less frequent basis (for example every six months).

The Contract duration shall be for a period of 3 years with optional extensions of a further 2 years on an annual basis from commencement of the Contract.

Terms and Conditions

Bidders are to note that any requested modifications to the Contracting Authority Terms and Conditions on the grounds of statutory and legal matters only, shall be raised as a formal clarification during the permitted clarification period.

Section 5 – Evaluation model

5.1. Introduction

- 5.1.1. The evaluation process will be conducted to ensure that Bids are evaluated fairly to ascertain the bidders who can demonstrate the required skills qualities, technical ability and capacity, commercial stability, and experience to ensure successful performance of the Contract.
- 5.1.2. The evaluation team may comprise staff from UKSBS and the Contracting Authority, and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deem required

5.2. Evaluation of Bids

- 5.2.1. Evaluation of Bids shall be based on a Selection questionnaire and Award criteria as clearly defined in the e-sourcing tool.

5.3. SELECTION questionnaire

- 5.3.1. The Selection questionnaire shall be marked against the following Selection pass / fail and scoring criteria.
- 5.3.2. The selection questionnaire shall be marked against the following Mandatory or discretionary pass / fail criteria.

| Selection Pass/fail criteria | | |
|---|-----------------|--|
| Evaluation Envelope | Q No. | Question subject |
| Qualification Questionnaire Part 1: Potential Supplier Information | | |
| Section 1 | 1.1(a) – p | Contact details and declaration |
| Qualification Questionnaire Part 2: Exclusion Grounds | | |
| Section 1 | 1.2 (a)(i) | Administration, Management, supervisory body convictions |
| | 1.2(a)(ii) | Participation in a criminal organisation |
| Section 1 | 1.2 (a) - (iii) | Corruption |
| Section 1 | 1.2 (a) - (iv) | Terrorist Offences or offences link to terrorist activities |
| Section 1 | 1.2 (a) - (v) | Money laundering or Terrorist financing |
| Section 1 | 1.2 (a) - (vi) | Child Labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings |
| Section 1 | 1.2 (a) - (vii) | Any other offence within the meaning of Article 57(1) of the Directive as defined by the law of any jurisdiction outside England, Wales or Northern Ireland. |
| Section 2 | 2.1(a) | Payment of tax or social security |
| Section 3 | 3.1 | Detailed grounds for exclusion |
| Section 3 | 3.1 (a) | Situations summarised |
| Section 3 | 3.1 (b) | Breach of environmental law obligations |
| Section 3 | 3.1 (c) | Breach of social labour law obligations |
| Section 3 | 3.1 (d) | Breach of labour law obligations |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Section 3 | 3.1(e) | Bankruptcy or subject to Insolvency |
| Section 3 | 3.1(f) | Guilty of grave professional misconduct |
| Section 3 | 3.1(g) | Distorting of competition |
| Section 3 | 3.1(h) | Conflict of Interest |
| Section 3 | 3.1(i) | Involved in preparation of procurement procedure |
| Section 3 | 3.1(j) | Prior performance issues |
| Section 3 | 3.1(k) | Serious Misrepresentation, withholding information, undue influence and undue advantages. |
| Section 3 | 3.1(l) to 3.2 | Modern Slavery |
| Qualification Questionnaire Part 3: Selection Questions | | |
| Section 4 | 4.1(a) | Financial statements filed with Companies House |
| Section 4 | 4.1(b) | Detailed accounts |
| Section 4 | 4.1(c) | Annual Turnover profit and loss accounts etc.. |
| Section 4 | 4.2 | Financial reliance upon others and guarantee |
| Section 6 | 6.1 | Relevant experience and contract examples |
| Section 6 | 6.2 | Subcontracting and healthy supply chains |
| Section 6 | 6.3 | Technical and Professional Ability |
| Section 7 | 7.1 | Insurance |
| Section 8 | 8.1(a) | General Data Protection Regulations |
| Section 8 | 8.1(b) | General Data Protection Regulations – Technical Facilities and Measures |
| Part 3 | SEL1.10 | Information Security |
| Part 3 | SEL2.12 | General Data Protection Regulations and Data Protection Act 2018 |
| Part 3 | SEL2.19 | PPN 01/22 - Contracts with suppliers from Russia or Belarus |
| Part 3 | FOI1.1 – 1.2 | Freedom of Information |
| | In the event of a Bidder failing to meet the requirements of a Mandatory pass / fail criteria, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to disqualify the Bidder and not consider evaluation of the any of the selection stage scoring methodology, nor the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria. | |

- 5.3.3. Each Mandatory pass / fail question includes a clear definition of the requirements of a successful response to the question.
- 5.3.4. The evaluation model below shall be used for this RFP which will be determined to two decimal places.
- 5.3.5. Questions marked 'for information only' do not contribute to the scoring model.
- 5.3.6. During the evaluation stage, the intention is that only Bidders who achieve a Pass of all the Mandatory and Discretionary requirements of the RFP will be considered for award stage evaluation.

5.4. **AWARD questionnaire**

- 5.4.1. The award questionnaire shall be marked against the following Mandatory or discretionary pass / fail criteria. Each Mandatory pass / fail question includes a clear definition of the requirements of a successful response to the question.

Award Pass / Fail criteria

| Evaluation Envelope | Q No. | Question subject |
|--|--------------|--|
| Qualification | AW1.1 | Form of Bid |
| Qualification | AW1.2 | Bid validity period |
| Qualification | AW1.3 | Certificate of bona fide Bid |
| Qualification | AW3.2 | Conflict of Interest Declaration |
| Qualification | AW3.2.1 | Conflict of Interest Declaration Supporting Information |
| Qualification | AW4.1 | Compliance to the Contract Terms |
| Qualification | AW4.2 | Changes to Contract Terms |
| Commercial | AW5.3 | Firm and Fixed Price |
| Commercial | AW5.5 | E Invoicing |
| Technical | AW6.1 | Compliance to the Specification |
| Technical | AW6.2 | Variable Bids |
| - | - | Request for Proposal response – received on time within the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal |
| In the event of a Bidder failing to meet the requirements of a Mandatory pass / fail criteria, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to disqualify the Bidder and not consider evaluation of the any of the selection stage scoring methodology, nor the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria. | | |

- 5.4.2. The Award stage of due process shall be marked against the following Award scoring criteria.
- 5.4.3. The evaluation model below shall be used for this RFP which will be determined to two decimal places.
- 5.4.4. Questions marked 'for information only' do not contribute to the scoring model.

Award Scoring criteria**Evaluation Justification Statement**

In consideration of this particular requirement the Contracting Authority has decided to evaluate Potential Providers by adopting the weightings/scoring mechanism detailed within this RFP. The Contracting Authority considers these weightings to be in line with existing best practice for a requirement of this type.

| Evaluation Envelope | Q No. | Question subject | Maximum Marks | |
|----------------------------|--------------|---|----------------------|------------------|
| | | | Overall | Breakdown |
| Commercial | AW5.1 | Price | 20% | 20% |
| Technical | PROJ1.1 | Methodology and approach for Political Monitoring | 80% | 40% |
| Technical | PROJ1.2 | Bespoke Research | | 10% |
| Technical | PROJ1.3 | Account support and implementation | | 15% |
| Technical | PROJ1.4 | Interview | | 15% |

Award Evaluation of criteria

Non-Commercial Elements

Each question will be evaluated on a score from 0 to 100, which shall be subjected to a multiplier to reflect the percentage of the evaluation criteria allocated to that question.

Where an evaluation criterion is worth 20% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 20%.

Example if a Bidder scores 60 from the available 100 points this will equate to 12% by using the following calculation:

$$\text{Score} = \{\text{weighting percentage}\} \times \{\text{bidder's score}\} = 20\% \times 60 = 12$$

The same logic will be applied to groups of questions which equate to a single evaluation criterion.

The 0-100 score shall be based on (unless otherwise stated within the question):

| | |
|-----|--|
| 0 | The Question is not answered, or the response is completely unacceptable. |
| 10 | Extremely poor response – they have completely missed the point of the question. |
| 20 | Very poor response and not wholly acceptable. Requires major revision to the response to make it acceptable. Only partially answers the requirement, with major deficiencies and little relevant detail proposed. |
| 40 | Poor response only partially satisfying the question requirements with deficiencies apparent. Some useful evidence provided but response falls well short of expectations. Low probability of being a capable supplier. |
| 60 | Response is acceptable but remains basic and could have been expanded upon. Response is sufficient but does not inspire. |
| 80 | Good response which describes their capabilities in detail which provides high levels of assurance consistent with a quality provider. The response includes a full description of techniques and measurements currently employed. |
| 100 | Response is exceptional and clearly demonstrates they are capable of meeting the requirement. No significant weaknesses noted. The response is compelling in its description of techniques and measurements currently employed, providing full assurance consistent with a quality provider. |

All questions will be scored based on the above mechanism. Please be aware that there may be multiple evaluators. If so, their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score as follows:

Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 40

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 40

Your final score will $(60+60+40+40) \div 4 = 50$

Once the above evaluation process has been undertaken and the scores are apportioned by evaluator(s) this will then be subject to an independent commercial review and moderation meeting, if required by the commercial lead, any and all changes will be formally recorded relative to the regulatory obligations associated with this procurement, so as to ensure that the procurement has been undertaken in a robust and transparent way.

Commercial Elements will be evaluated on the following criteria.

The lowest price for a response which meets the pass criteria shall score 100.

All other bids shall be scored on a pro rata basis in relation to the lowest price. The score is then subject to a multiplier to reflect the percentage value of the Commercial criterion.

For example - Bid 1 £100,000 scores 100.

Bid 2 £120,000 differential of £20,000 or 20% remove 20% from price scores 80

Bid 3 £150,000 differential £50,000 remove 50% from price scores 50.

Bid 4 £175,000 differential £75,000 remove 75% from price scores 25.

Bid 5 £200,000 differential £100,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.

Bid 6 £300,000 differential £200,000 remove 100% from price scores 0.

Where the scoring criterion is worth 50% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 50.

In the example if a supplier scores 80 from the available 100 points this will equate to 40% by using the following calculation: Score/Total Points multiplied by 50 ($80/100 \times 50 = 40$)

The lowest score possible is 0 even if the price submitted is more than 100% greater than the lowest price.

This evaluation criteria will therefore not be subject to any averaging, as this is a mathematical scoring criterion, but will still be subject to a commercial review.

5.5. Evaluation process

5.5.1. The evaluation process will feature some, if not all, the following phases

| Stage | Summary of activity |
|---|--|
| Receipt and Opening | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RFP logged upon opening in alignment with UKSBS's procurement procedures. Any RFP Bid received after the closing date will be rejected unless circumstances attributed to UKSBS, the Contracting Authority or the eSourcing Portal beyond the bidder control are responsible for late submission. |
| Compliance check | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check all Mandatory requirements are acceptable to the Contracting Authority. Unacceptable Bids maybe subject to clarification by the Contracting Authority or rejection of the Bid. |
| Scoring of the Bid | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation team will independently score the Bid and provide a commentary of their scoring justification against the criteria. |
| Clarifications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Evaluation team may require written clarification to Bids |
| Re - scoring of the Bid and Clarifications | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following Clarification responses, the Evaluation team reserve the right to independently re-score the Bid and Clarifications and provide a commentary of their re-scoring justification against the Selection and / Award criteria. |
| Moderation meeting (if required to reach an award decision) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review the outcomes of the Commercial review To agree final scoring for each Bid, relative rankings of the Bids To confirm contents of the Standstill letters to provide details of scoring and relative feedback on the unsuccessful Bidders response in comparison with the successful Bidders response |
| Due diligence of the Bid | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Contracting Authority may request the following requirements at any stage of the Procurement: |

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Submission of insurance documents from the Bidder ○ Request for evidence of documents / accreditations referenced in the / Request for Proposal response / Bid and / or Clarifications from the Bidder ○ Taking up of Bidder references from the Bidders Customers. |
| Validation of unsuccessful Bidders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Credit check for the Bidder • To confirm contents of the letters to provide details of scoring and meaningful feedback on the unsuccessful Bidders Bid in comparison with the successful Bidders Bid. |

Section 6 – Evaluation Response Questionnaires

6.1. Qualification / Selection Questionnaire

- 6.1.1 Bidders should note that the Qualification / Selection Questionnaire is located within the **Jaggaer eSourcing Portal**.

Guidance on how to register and use the Jaggaer eSourcing portal is available at

<https://beisgroup.ukp.app.jaggaer.com/>

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

6.2. Technical and Commercial Questionnaire

- 6.2.1 Bidders should note that the Technical and Commercial Questionnaire is located within the **Jaggaer eSourcing Portal**.

Guidance on how to register and use the Jaggaer eSourcing portal is available at

<https://beisgroup.ukp.app.jaggaer.com/>

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 7 – General information

7.1. Introduction

- 7.1.1. The Contracting Authority wishes to establish a Contract for the provision of Public Affairs & Political Monitoring. The Contracting Authority is managing this procurement process in accordance with Public Procurement (as may be amended from time to time) (the “Regulations”). This is a services Contract being procured under the Open Procedure
- 7.1.2. The Contracting Authority is procuring the Contract for its exclusive use.
- 7.1.3. UKSBS and the Contracting Authority logo, trademarks and other identifying marks are proprietary and may not be incorporated in the Companies response without or the Contracting Authority’s written permission.
- 7.1.4. The Bidder shall indemnify and keep indemnified UKSBS and the Contracting Authority against all actions, claims, demands, proceedings, damages, costs, losses, charges, and expenses whatsoever in respect of any breach by the Bidder of this document.
- 7.1.5. If there is any doubt with regard to the ambiguity of any question or content contained in this questionnaire then PLEASE ASK a clarification question, but please ensure that your question is via the formal clarification process in writing to the UKSBS representative nominated. No approach of any kind in connection with this opportunity should be made to any other person within or associated with UKSBS or the Contracting Authority. All information secured outside of this named contact shall have no legal standing or worth and should not be relied upon.
- 7.1.6. It remains the responsibility of the Bidder to keep UKSBS and the Contracting Authority informed of any matter that may affect continued qualification
- 7.1.7. Prior to commencing formal evaluation, Submitted Responses will be checked to ensure they are fully compliant with the Pass / Fail criteria within the Evaluation model. Non-compliant Submitted Responses may be rejected by the Contracting Authority. Submitted Responses which are deemed by the Contracting Authority to be fully compliant will proceed to evaluation. These will be evaluated using the criteria and scores detailed in the matrix set out in [Section 5](#).
- 7.1.8. Whilst it is the Contracting Authority’s intention to purchase the majority of its services under this Contract Arrangement from the Supplier(s) appointed this does not confer any exclusivity on the appointed Suppliers. The Contracting Authority reserve the right to purchase any services and services (including those similar to the services covered by this procurement) from any Supplier outside of this Contract.
- 7.1.9. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to conclude a Contract as a result of the current procurement process. Bidders should review the contents of Section 7 paragraph 7.8.1 when considering submitting their Response.
- 7.1.10. The services covered by this procurement exercise have NOT been sub-divided into Lots.

- 7.1.11. The Contracting Authority shall utilise the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal available at <https://beisgroup.ukp.app.jaggaer.com/> to conduct this procurement. There will be no electronic auction following the conclusion of the evaluation of the Request for Proposal (RFP) responses. Bidders will be specifically advised where attachments are permissible to support a question response within the Jaggaer eSourcing portal.

All enquiries with respect to access to the eSourcing portal and problems with functionality within the portal must be submitted to Jaggaer eSourcing Helpdesk

Phone 08000 698 632

Email customersupport@jaggaer.com

Please note; Jaggaer is a free self-registration portal. Bidders can complete the online registration at the following link:

<https://beisgroup.ukp.app.jaggaer.com/>

- 7.1.12. Please utilise the messaging system within the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal located at <https://beisgroup.ukp.app.jaggaer.com/> within the timescales detailed in [Section 3](#). If you have any doubt as to what is required or will have difficulty in providing the information requested. Bidders should note that any requests for clarifications may not be considered by the Contracting Authority if they are not articulated by the Bidder within the discussion forum within the Jaggaer eSourcing Portal.
- 7.1.13. Bidders should read this document, and all attachment, messages and the response envelopes located within the Jaggaer eSourcing portal carefully before completing the Response submission. Failure to comply with any of these instructions for completion and submission of the Submitted Response may result in the rejection of the Response. Bidders are advised therefore to acquaint themselves fully with the extent and nature of the services and contractual obligations. These instructions constitute the Conditions of Response. Participation in the RFP process automatically signals that the Bidder accepts these Conditions.
- 7.1.14. All material issued in connection with this RFP shall remain the property of the Contracting Authority and shall be used only for the purpose of this procurement. All Due Diligence Information shall be either returned to the Contracting Authority or securely destroyed by the Bidder (at the Contracting Authority's option) at the conclusion of the procurement.
- 7.1.15. The Bidder shall ensure that each and every sub-contractor, consortium member and adviser abide by the terms of these instructions and the Conditions of Response.
- 7.1.16. The Bidder shall not make contact with any other employee, agent or consultant of UKSBS or the Contracting Authority or Customer who are in any way connected with this procurement during the period of this procurement, unless instructed otherwise by the Contracting Authority.
- 7.1.17. The Contracting Authority shall not be committed to any course of action as a result of:
- 7.1.17.1. issuing this RFP or any invitation to participate in this procurement ;
 - 7.1.17.2. an invitation to submit any Response in respect of this procurement;
 - 7.1.17.3. communicating with a Bidder or a Bidder's representatives or agents in respect of this procurement; or

- 7.1.17.4. any other communication between UKSBS or the Contracting Authority (whether directly or by its agents or representatives) and any other party.
- 7.1.18. Bidders shall accept and acknowledge that by issuing this RFP the Contracting Authority shall not be bound to accept any Response and reserves the right not to conclude a Contract for some or all of the services for which Responses are invited.
- 7.1.19. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend, add to or withdraw all or any part of this RFP at any time during the procurement.
- 7.1.20. Bidders should not include in the Response any extraneous information which has not been specifically requested in the RFP including, for example, any sales literature, standard terms of trading etc. Any such information not requested but provided by the Bidder shall not be considered by the Contracting Authority.
- 7.1.21. If the Bidder is a consortium, the following information must be provided: full details of the consortium; and the information sought in this RFP in respect of each of the consortium's constituent members as part of a single composite response. Potential Providers should provide details of the actual or proposed percentage shareholding of the constituent members within the consortium as indicated in the relevant section of the selection questionnaire SEL1.9 specifically refers. If a consortium is not proposing to form a corporate entity, full details of alternative proposed arrangements should be provided as indicated in the relevant section of the RFP. However, please note the Contracting Authority reserves the right to require a successful consortium to form a single legal entity in accordance with regulation 19(6) of the Regulations. The Contracting Authority recognises that arrangements in relation to consortia may (within limits) be subject to future change. Potential Providers should therefore respond in the light of the arrangements as currently envisaged. Potential Providers are reminded that any future proposed change in relation to consortia must be notified to the Contracting Authority so that it can make a further assessment by applying the selection criteria to the new information provided and consider rejection of the Response if the Contracting Authority reasonably consider the change to have a material impact of the delivery of the viability of the Response.

7.2. Bidder conference

- 7.2.1. A Bidders' Conference will not be held in conjunction with this procurement.

7.3. Confidentiality

- 7.3.1. Subject to the exceptions referred to in paragraph 7.3.2, the contents of this RFP are being made available by the Contracting Authority on condition that:
 - 7.3.1.1. Bidders shall at all times treat the contents of the RFP and any related documents (together called the 'Information') as confidential, save in so far as they are already in the public domain;
 - 7.3.1.2. Bidders shall not disclose, copy, reproduce, distribute, or pass any of the Information to any other person at any time or allow any of these things to happen;
 - 7.3.1.3. Bidders shall not use any of the Information for any purpose other than for the purposes of submitting (or deciding whether to submit) a Response; and
 - 7.3.1.4. Bidders shall not undertake any publicity activity within any section of the media in relation to this procurement

- 7.3.2. Bidders may disclose, distribute, or pass any of the Information to the Bidder's advisers, sub-contractors or to another person provided that either:
- 7.3.2.1. This is done for the sole purpose of enabling a Response to be submitted and the person receiving the Information undertakes in writing to keep the Information confidential on the same terms as if that person were the Bidder; or
 - 7.3.2.2. The disclosure is made for the sole purpose of obtaining legal advice from external lawyers in relation to the procurement or to any Contract arising from it; or
 - 7.3.2.3. The Bidder is legally required to make such a disclosure
- 7.3.3. In paragraphs 7.3.1 and 7.3.2 above the term 'person' includes but is not limited to any person, firm, body, or association, corporate or incorporate.
- 7.3.4. UKSBS and the Contracting Authority may disclose detailed information relating to Responses to its employees, agents or advisers and they may make any of the Contract documents available for private inspection by its officers, employees, agents, or advisers. UKSBS and the Contracting Authority also reserve the right to disseminate information that is materially relevant to the procurement to all Bidders, even if the information has only been requested by one Bidder, subject to the duty to protect each Bidder's commercial confidentiality in relation to its Response (unless there is a requirement for disclosure as explained in paragraphs 7.4.1 to 7.4.3 below).
- 7.3.5. All Central Government Departments and their Executive Agencies and Non-Departmental Public Bodies are subject to control and reporting within Government. In particular, they report to the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury for all expenditure. Further, the Cabinet Office has a cross-Government role delivering overall Government policy on public procurement - including ensuring value for money and related aspects of good procurement practice.

For these purposes, the Contracting Authority may disclose within Government any of the Bidders documentation/information (including any that the Bidder considers to be confidential and/or commercially sensitive such as specific bid information) submitted by the Bidder to the Contracting Authority during this Procurement. Subject to section 7.4 below, the information will not be disclosed outside Government. Bidders taking part in this RFP consent to these terms as part of the competition process.

- 7.3.6. The Government revised its Government Security Classifications (GSC) classification scheme on the 2nd April 2014 to replace the previous Government Protective Marking System ("GPMS"). A key aspect of this is the reduction in the number of security classifications used. All Bidders are encouraged to make themselves aware of the changes and identify any potential impacts in their Bid, as the protective marking and applicable protection of any material passed to, or generated by, you during the procurement process or pursuant to any Contract awarded to you as a result of this tender process will be subject to the new GSC from 2nd April 2014. The link below to the Gov.uk website provides information on the new GSC:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-security-classifications>

- 7.3.7. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft contract accompanying this RFP to reflect any changes introduced by the GSC. In particular where this RFP is accompanied by any instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as a result of any changes stemming from the new GSC, whether in respect of the applicable protective marking scheme, specific protective markings given, the aspects to which any protective marking applies or otherwise. This may relate to the instructions on safeguarding classified information (e.g. a Security Aspects Letter) as they apply to the procurement as they apply to the procurement process and/or any contracts awarded to you as a result of the procurement process.

USEFUL INFORMATION LINKS

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

7.4. Freedom of information

- 7.4.1. In accordance with the obligations and duties placed upon public authorities by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the 'FoIA') and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (the 'EIR') (each as amended from time to time), UKSBS and the Contracting Authority may be required to disclose information submitted by the Bidder to the to the Contracting Authority.
- 7.4.2. In respect of any information submitted by a Bidder that it considers to be commercially sensitive the Bidder should complete the Freedom of Information declaration question defined in the Question FOI1.2.
- 7.4.3. Where a Bidder identifies information as commercially sensitive, the Contracting Authority will endeavour to maintain confidentiality. Bidders should note, however, that, even where information is identified as commercially sensitive, the Contracting Authority may be required to disclose such information in accordance with the FoIA or the Environmental Information Regulations. In particular, the Contracting Authority is required to form an independent judgment concerning whether the information is exempt from disclosure under the FoIA or the EIR and whether the public interest favours disclosure or not. Accordingly, the Contracting Authority cannot guarantee that any information marked 'confidential' or "commercially sensitive" will not be disclosed.
- 7.4.4. Where a Bidder receives a request for information under the FoIA or the EIR during the procurement, this should be immediately passed on to the Contracting Authority and the Bidder should not attempt to answer the request without first consulting with the Contracting Authority.
- 7.4.5. Bidders are reminded that the Government's transparency agenda requires that sourcing documents, including RFP templates such as this, are published on a designated, publicly searchable web site, and, that the same applies to other sourcing documents issued by the Contracting Authority, and any contract entered into by the Contracting Authority with its preferred supplier once the procurement is complete. By submitting a response to this RFP Bidders are agreeing that their participation and contents of their Response may be made public.

7.5. Response Validity

- 7.5.1. Your Response should remain open for consideration for a period of 90 days. A Response valid for a shorter period may be rejected.

7.6. Timescales

- 7.6.1. [Section 3](#) of the RFP sets out the proposed procurement timetable. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to extend the dates and will advise potential Bidders of any change to the dates.

7.7. The Contracting Authority's Contact Details

- 7.7.1. Unless stated otherwise in these Instructions or in writing from UKSBS or the Contracting Authority, all communications from Bidders (including their sub-contractors, consortium members, consultants, and advisers) during the period of this procurement must be directed through the eSourcing tool to the designated UKSBS contact.
- 7.7.2. Bidders should be mindful that the designated Contact should not under any circumstances be sent a copy of their Response outside of the Jaggaer eSourcing portal. Failure to follow this requirement will result in disqualification of the Response.

7.8. Preparation of a Response

- 7.8.1. Bidders must obtain for themselves at their own responsibility and expense all information necessary for the preparation of Responses. Bidders are solely responsible for all costs, expenses and other liabilities arising in connection with the preparation and submission of their Response and all other stages of the selection and evaluation process. Under no circumstances will UKSBS or the Contracting Authority, or any of their advisers, be liable for any such costs, expenses or liabilities borne by Bidders or their sub-contractors, suppliers or advisers in this process.
- 7.8.2. Bidders are required to complete and provide all information required by the Contracting Authority in accordance with the Conditions of Response and the Request for Proposal. Failure to comply with the Conditions and the Request for Proposal may lead the Contracting Authority to reject a Response.
- 7.8.3. The Contracting Authority relies on Bidders' own analysis and review of information provided. Consequently, Bidders are solely responsible for obtaining the information which they consider is necessary in order to make decisions regarding the content of their Responses and to undertake any investigations they consider necessary in order to verify any information provided to them during the procurement.
- 7.8.4. Bidders must form their own opinions, making such investigations and taking such advice (including professional advice) as is appropriate, regarding their Responses, without reliance upon any opinion or other information provided by the Contracting Authority or their advisers and representatives. Bidders should notify the Contracting Authority promptly of any perceived ambiguity, inconsistency, or omission in this RFP, any of its associated documents and/or any other information issued to them during the procurement.
- 7.8.5. Bidders must ensure that each response to a question is within any specified word count. Any responses with words in excess of the word count will only be consider up

to the point where they meet the word count, any additional words beyond the volume defined in the word count will not be considered by the evaluation panel.

- 7.8.6. Bidders must ensure that each response to a question is not cross referenced to a response to another question. In the event of a Bidder adding a cross reference it will not be considered in evaluation.

7.9. Submission of Responses

- 7.9.1. The Response must be submitted as instructed in this document through the e-sourcing tool. Failure to follow the instruction within each Section of this document, to omit responses to any of the questions or to present your response in alignment with any guidance notes provided may render the Response non-compliant and it may be rejected.
- 7.9.2. The Contracting Authority may at its own absolute discretion extend the closing date and the time for receipt of Responses specified [Section 3](#).
- 7.9.3. Any extension to the RFP response period will apply to all Bidders.
- 7.9.4. Any financial data provided must be submitted in or converted into pounds sterling. Where official documents include financial data in a foreign currency, a sterling equivalent must be provided. Failure to adhere to this requirement will result in the Response not being considered.
- 7.9.5. The Contracting Authority do not accept responsibility for the premature opening or mishandling of Responses that are not submitted in accordance with the instructions of this document.
- 7.9.6. The Response and any documents accompanying it must be in the English language
- 7.9.7. Bidders must submit their response through the e-sourcing tool, unless explicitly requested by the Contracting Authority either in the procurement documents or via a formal clarification from the Contracting Authority. Responses received by any other method than requested will not be considered for the opportunity.
- 7.9.8. Responses will be submitted any time up to the date indicated in [Section 3](#). Responses received before this deadline will be retained in a secure environment, unopened until this deadline has passed.
- 7.9.9. Responses received after the date indicated in [Section 3](#) shall not be considered by the Contracting Authority, unless the Bidder can justify that the reason for the delay is solely attributable to the Contracting Authority
- 7.9.9.1. The Bidder must demonstrate irrefutable evidence in writing they have made best endeavours to ensure the Response was received on time and that the issue was beyond their control.
 - 7.9.9.2. Any request for a late Response to be considered must be emailed to the Buyer in [Section 3](#) in advance of 'the deadline' if a bidder believes their Response will be received late.
 - 7.9.9.3. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any late Response without justification to the affected Bidder and make no guarantee it will consider any request for a late Response to be considered.

- 7.9.10. Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline (date and time) for receipt of responses has passed.

7.10. Canvassing

- 7.10.1. Any Bidder who directly or indirectly canvasses any employee, or agent of UKSBS, the Contracting Authority, or its members or any of its employees concerning the establishment of the Contract or who directly or indirectly obtains or attempts to obtain information from any such officer, member, employee, or agent or concerning any other Bidder, Response or proposed Response will be disqualified.

7.11. Disclaimers

- 7.11.1. Whilst the information in this RFP, Due Diligence Information and supporting documents has been prepared in good faith, it does not purport to be comprehensive, nor has it been independently verified.
- 7.11.2. Neither UKSBS, the Contracting Authority, nor their advisors, nor their respective directors, officers, members, partners, employees, other staff or agents:
- 7.11.2.1. makes any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness, or completeness of the RFP; or
 - 7.11.2.2. accepts any responsibility for the information contained in the RFP or for their fairness, accuracy or completeness of that information nor shall any of them be liable for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.
- 7.11.3. Any persons considering making a decision to enter into contractual relationships with the Contracting Authority following receipt of the RFP should make their own investigations and their own independent assessment of the Contracting Authority and its requirements for the services and should seek their own professional financial and legal advice. For the avoidance of doubt the provision of clarification or further information in relation to the RFP or any other associated documents (including the Schedules) is only authorised to be provided following a query made in accordance with Paragraph 7.15 of this RFP.

7.12. Collusive behaviour

- 7.12.1. Any Bidder who:
- 7.12.1.1. fixes or adjusts the amount of its Response by or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other party; or
 - 7.12.1.2. communicates to any party other than UKSBS, or the Contracting Authority the amount or approximate amount of its proposed Response or information which would enable the amount or approximate amount to be calculated (except where such disclosure is made in confidence in order to obtain quotations necessary for the preparation of the Response or insurance or any necessary security); or
 - 7.12.1.3. enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other party that such other party shall refrain from submitting a Response; or
 - 7.12.1.4. enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other party as to the amount of any Response submitted; or
 - 7.12.1.5. offers or agrees to pay or give or does pay or give any sum or sums of money, inducement or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to

any party for doing or having done or causing or having caused to be done in relation to any other Response or proposed Response, any act or omission, shall (without prejudice to any other civil remedies available to the Contracting Authority and without prejudice to any criminal liability which such conduct by a Bidder may attract) be disqualified.

7.13. No inducement or incentive

- 7.13.1. The RFP is issued on the basis that nothing contained in it shall constitute an inducement or incentive nor shall have in any other way persuaded a Bidder to submit a Response or enter into the Contract or any other contractual agreement.

7.14. Acceptance of the Contract

- 7.14.1. The Bidder in submitting the Response undertakes that in the event of the Response being accepted by the Contracting Authority and the Contracting Authority confirming in writing such acceptance to the Bidder, the Bidder will within 14 days of being called upon to do so by the Contracting Authority execute the Contract in the form set out in the Contract Terms or in such amended form as may subsequently be agreed.
- 7.14.2. The Contracting Authority shall be under no obligation to accept the lowest priced or any Response.

7.15. Queries relating to the Response

- 7.15.1. All requests for clarification about the requirements or the process of this procurement shall be made in through the Jaggaer eSourcing portal unless the Jaggaer eSourcing portal is unavailable due to system maintenance or failure, in this instance all clarifications shall be by email to the contact defined in [Section 3](#).
- 7.15.2. The Contracting Authority will endeavour to answer all questions as quickly as possible but cannot guarantee a minimum response time.
- 7.15.3. In the event of a Bidder requiring assistance uploading a clarification to the Jaggaer eSourcing portal they should use the contact details defined in [Section 3](#).
- 7.15.4. No further requests for clarifications will be accepted after **7** days prior to the date for submission of Responses.
- 7.15.5. In order to ensure equality of treatment of Bidders, the Contracting Authority intends to publish the questions and clarifications raised by Bidders together with the Contracting Authority's responses (but not the source of the questions) to all participants on a regular basis.
- 7.15.6. Bidders should indicate if a query is of a commercially sensitive nature – where disclosure of such query and the answer would or would be likely to prejudice its commercial interests. However, if the Contracting Authority at its sole discretion does not either; consider the query to be of a commercially confidential nature or one which all Bidders would potentially benefit from seeing both the query and the Contracting Authority's response, the Contracting Authority will:
- 7.15.6.1. invite the Bidder submitting the query to either declassify the query and allow the query along with the Contracting Authority's response to be circulated to all Bidders; or

- 7.15.6.2. request the Bidder, if it still considers the query to be of a commercially confidential nature, to withdraw the query prior to the end of the closing date and time for Bidder clarifications.

- 7.15.7. The Contracting Authority reserves the right not to respond to a request for clarification or to circulate such a request where it considers that the answer to that request would or would be likely to prejudice its commercial interests.

7.16. Amendments to Response Documents

- 7.16.1. At any time prior to the deadline for the receipt of Responses, the Contracting Authority may modify the RFP by amendment. Any such amendment will be numbered and dated and issued by the Contracting Authority to all prospective Bidders. In order to give prospective Bidders reasonable time in which to take the amendment into account in preparing their Responses, the Contracting Authority may, at its discretion, extend the time and/or date for receipt of Responses.

7.17. Modification and withdrawal

- 7.17.1. Bidders may modify their Response where allowable within the Jaggaer eSourcing portal. No Response may be modified after the deadline for submission of Responses.
- 7.17.2. Bidders may withdraw their Response at any time prior the deadline for submission of Responses or any other time prior to accepting the offer of a Contract. The notice to withdraw the Response must be in writing and sent to the Contracting Authority by recorded delivery or equivalent service and delivered to the Head of Policy UKSBS at UK Shared Business Services Ltd, Procurement, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN2 1ET

7.18. Right to disqualify or reject

- 7.18.1. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to reject or disqualify a Bidder where
 - 7.18.1.1. the Bidder fails to comply fully with the requirements of this Request for Proposal or presents the response in a format contrary to the requirements of this document; and/or
 - 7.18.1.2. the Bidder is guilty of serious misrepresentation in relation to its Response; expression of interest; or the Response process; and/or
 - 7.18.1.3. there is a change in identity, control, financial standing or other factor impacting on the selection and/or evaluation process affecting the Bidder.

7.19. Right to cancel, clarify or vary the process

- 7.19.1. The Contracting Authority reserves the right to:
 - 7.19.1.1. cancel the evaluation process at any stage; and/or
 - 7.19.1.2. require the Bidder to clarify its Response in writing and/or provide additional information. (Failure to respond adequately may result in the Bidder not being selected),

7.20. Notification of award

- 7.20.1. The Contracting Authority will notify the successful Bidder of the Contract award in writing and will publish an Award Notice in Find a Tender in accordance with the Regulations within 30 days of the award of the contract.
- 7.20.2. As required by the Regulations all successful and unsuccessful Bidders will be provided with an email advising the outcome of the submission of their RFP response.

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

DO:

- 7.21.1. Do comply with Procurement document instructions. Failure to do so may lead to disqualification.
- 7.21.2. Do provide the Bid on time, and in the required format. Remember that the date/time given for a response is the last date that it can be accepted; we are legally bound to disqualify late submissions. Responses received after the date indicated in the RFP shall not be considered by the Contracting Authority, unless the Bidder can justify that the reason for the delay, is solely attributable to the Contracting Authority.
- 7.21.3. Do ensure you have read all the training materials to utilise e-sourcing tool prior to responding to this Bid. If you send your Bid by email or post it will be rejected.
- 7.21.4. Do use Microsoft Word, PowerPoint Excel 97-03 or compatible formats, or PDF unless agreed in writing by the Buyer. If you use another file format without our written permission, we may reject your Bid.
- 7.21.5. Do ensure you utilise the Jaggaer eSourcing messaging system to raise any clarifications to our RFP. You should note that we will release the answer to the question to all Bidders and where we suspect the question contains confidential information, we may modify the content of the question to protect the anonymity of the Bidder or their proposed solution
- 7.21.6. Do answer the question, it is not enough simply to cross-reference to a 'policy', web page or another part of your Bid (unless the question specifically allows you to do so) the evaluation team have limited time to assess bids and if they can't find the answer, they can't score it.
- 7.21.7. Do consider who the Contracting Authority is and what they want – a generic answer does not necessarily meet every Contracting Authority's needs.
- 7.21.8. Do reference your documents correctly, specifically where supporting documentation is requested e.g. referencing the question/s they apply to.
- 7.21.9. Do provide clear, concise, and ideally generic contact details; telephone numbers, e-mails and fax details.
- 7.21.10. Do complete all questions in the questionnaire or we may reject your Bid.

7.21.11. Do ensure that the Response and any documents accompanying it are in the English Language, the Contracting Authority reserve the right to disqualify any full or part responses that are not in English.

7.21.12. Do check and recheck your Bid before dispatch.

What makes a good bid – some simple do not's Ⓜ

DO NOT

- 7.22.1. Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.22.2. Do not attach 'glossy' brochures that have not been requested, they will not be read unless we have asked for them. Only send what has been requested and only send supplementary information if we have offered the opportunity so to do.
- 7.22.3. Do not share the Procurement documents, they may be confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission.
- 7.22.4. Do not seek to influence the procurement process by requesting meetings or contacting UKSBS or the Contracting Authority to discuss your Bid. If your Bid requires clarification the Buyer will contact you. All information secured outside of formal Buyer communications shall have no Legal standing or worth and should not be relied upon.
- 7.22.5. Do not contact any UKSBS staff or the Contracting Authority staff without the Buyers written permission or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.22.6. Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will reject your Bid.
- 7.22.7. Do not offer UKSBS or the Contracting Authority staff any inducement or we will reject your Bid.
- 7.22.8. Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed.
- 7.22.9. Do not cross reference answers to external websites (unless the question specifically allows you to do so) or other parts of your Bid, the cross references and website links will not be considered.
- 7.22.10. Do not exceed word counts, the additional words will not be considered.
- 7.22.11. Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.22.12. Do not unless explicitly requested by the Contracting Authority either in the procurement documents or via a formal clarification from the Contracting Authority send your response by any way other than via the Jaggaer eSourcing portal. Responses received by any other method than requested will not be considered for the opportunity.

Appendix A – Glossary of Terms

| TERM | MEANING |
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| “UKSBS” | means UK Shared Business Services Ltd herein after referred to as UKSBS. |
| “Bid”, “Response”, “Submitted Bid”, or “RFP Response” | means the Bidders formal offer in response to this Request for Proposal |
| “Bidder(s)” | means the organisations being invited to respond to this Request for Proposal |
| “Central Purchasing Body” | means a duly constituted public sector organisation which procures supplies / services / works for and on behalf of Contracting Authorities |
| “Conditions of Bid” | means the terms and conditions set out in this RFP relating to the submission of a Bid |
| “Contract” | means the agreement to be entered by the Contracting Authority and the Supplier following any award under the procurement |
| “Contracting Bodies” | means the Contracting Authority and any other contracting authorities described in the Find a Tender and Contract Notice |
| “Contracting Authority” | A public body regulated under the Public Procurement Regulations on whose behalf the procurement is being run |
| “Customer” | means the legal entity (or entities) for which any Contract agreed will be made accessible to. |
| “Due Diligence Information” | means the background and supporting documents and information provided by the Contracting Authority for the purpose of better informing the Bidders responses to this Request for Proposal |
| “EIR” | mean the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 together with any guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or relevant Government department in relation to such regulations |
| “Find a Tender” | Means the UK Government Portal that superseded the OJEU as from 1/1/2021 https://www.find-tender.service.gov.uk/Search |
| “FoIA” | means the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and any subordinate legislation made under such Act from time to time together with any guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or relevant Government department in relation to such legislation |
| “Mandatory” | Means a pass / fail criteria which must be met in order for a Bid to be considered, unless otherwise specified. |
| “Named Procurement person ” | means the single point of contact for the Contracting Authority based in UKSBS that will be dealing with the procurement |
| “Order” | means an order for served by any Contracting Body on the Supplier |
| “Request for Proposal” or “RFP” | means this Request for Proposal documentation and all related documents published by the Contracting Authority and made available to Bidders and includes the Due Diligence Information. NOTE: This document is often referred to as an Invitation to Tender within other organisations |
| “Supplier(s)” | means the organisation(s) awarded the Contract |
| “Supplies / Services / Works” | means any supplies/services and supplies or works set out at within Section 4 Specification |