

NCF Monitoring and Evaluation, Scientific Indicators: Pre-Market Engagement Minutes

Tuesday 10th January 2023, Foss House

Post Programme Overview Q & A

Q: Will there be data samples for the market?

A: Yes, we can incorporate this into the specification.

Q: Are there targets being aimed for? Are we trying to quantify the benefit to inform future stages?

A: There no area based targets. We have general hectarage and tree number targets, on basis of existing data translating into anticipated carbon sequestration (but crude way of doing it as we don't know other factors). There is thinking behind which areas to plant (right tree right place, right reason) but we don't have the granular level to translate this.

Q: Regarding intellectual property: are there prior rights?

A: This area is not worked through though the T&Cs will be shared as part of the ITT pack for potential bidders to review.

Breakout Discussions (Defra information given in BOLD)

Q	What is achievable and realistic?
1	<p>The indicators will need to be able to apply to the programme for the 2020-2025. They've got to have some utility. Any work that is being done should be used for the future.</p> <p>Possibly contract will go to October (12-15 months).</p> <p>Historic data over a period of time- this is independent data not generated by Defra.</p> <p>Suppliers might not be able to demonstrate across the whole programme but could be illustrative of how it has worked or what has not worked, could be able to identify WHY something has not worked.</p> <p>Site specific data: it may be that some of the indicator work is around monitoring, need to demonstrate what has happened and this is for us to be used. Scope to ask to report more on current working- is current reporting just this list?</p> <p>Yes, but list needs to be extended to other aspects but not specific to these indicators, could also be about sector capacity, education etc.</p> <p>Hydrological benefits- discussion with water companies and them measuring water quality, also interest in flooding.</p> <p>We've done very little work with the water companies but there is probably appetite that is there.</p> <p>Riparian planting: impacts of shade and how therefore this can remove wasteful processes elsewhere. Picking up information in water temperatures, biological scores, how are the rivers responding to planting? Cooling benefits, less evaporation, shading.</p> <p>EA actively collects this information but only certain sites at limited times of year so Defra would need to identify what data is there.</p> <p>Measures of soil health.</p> <p>We have not engaged with EA to date, we work closely with NE, FC, JNCC for tree planting.</p> <p>Do we work with the National Trust?</p> <p>We do speak to NT but not on this, we have spoken to woodland trust and wildlife trust, they are keen to know about tree survival rates, what are the risks, species mix is what we are looking at and how this changes, avoiding monoculture (70% broadleaf planting).</p>

	<p>Do we have a map of planting sites?</p> <p>Yes we (Defra) do, but question over level of how well developed- possibly not possible to share, but should have a level of data to share.</p>
	<p>Is a multi-lot approach appropriate?</p>
2	<p>What do we mean by indicator? Is it to say that we have achieved this in this time or this is what we can achieve. Outputs and outcomes.</p> <p>We'll need indicators that will be sensitive enough to pick up the change from saplings but have longevity and continue to be useful in the future.</p> <p>Will the indicators be passed over to Defra to use as BAU or will the company keep ownership e.g. do they need to have a web portal? Will there be continued engagement with the developers or is it just a tool for Defra. This will affect IPR.</p> <p>Access to government datasets under government licence. What will be available?</p> <p>These need to be provided in the ITT.</p> <p>What is the ideal period?</p> <p>We're planning on doing a 6 week call for proposals, making sure it's the right magnitude for the ask and money.</p> <p>Information about where the delivery partners are located, sample data of what the projects are and what has been funded, type of projects (future forest site or community orchards) would need to interpret very differently based on scale, composition.</p> <p>Potential to give data about planting for the future. Woodland Creation Partnerships have certain areas of interest about what areas of trees planted, we will have some applications in the pipeline so we will have some information and an idea of what is upcoming, but perhaps not a definitive quantity.</p> <p>Is the lay person element around being able to communicate to HMT or general public?</p> <p>It's about, can you translate this and explain to Defra what it will do and what is the difference to someone with a reasonable level of understanding; it's the TRANSLATION from technical to making it meaningful, what is this telling me that Defra needs.</p> <p>Are there any interim reports if programme started in 2020? This would be useful.</p> <p>Yes, NAO report, IPA (not sure what we (Defra) can share but will find out), infrastructure project data.</p> <p>Narrow range of budget we would want to know. Would we bid within a value range?</p>

	<p>We would give that some thought but would want to retain some flexibility (only applicable if multiple lots). If multiple lots, perhaps prioritisation: carbon sequestration, biodiversity, water quality are key. Tree survival and woodland resilience are lower priority possibly. We'd give weighting around cost. The thinking is how do we make it impartial but flexible- probably via prioritisation, do we rank by biodiversity, carbon for example? Do we have enough cash to award what is left? We will work through this prioritisation (on a multi lot basis only, would not apply to single opportunity). We will have a transparent process to use the overall budget in a fair way.</p> <p>Multiple lots- could there be duplication in bids, is it fine to duplicate information?</p> <p>There will be general questions such as project management that would apply to all indicators: can one response capture for X amount of indicators?</p>
	<p>What will best equip you to submit a detailed good quality proposal that addresses our ask?</p>
3	<p>Do Defra have key sites information?</p> <p>Defra to specify in the proposal how work will interlink with other lots.</p> <p>Suggestion to probably would want post tender interviews? Give people the opportunity to talk through, quite bespoke so would need to ensure understanding, help defra not getting lost in the tender submissions.</p> <p>There will be subject matter experts to address this as part of the Evaluation panel.</p> <p>Are there synergies across multiple lots? Should they be separate bids? You wouldn't need a project manager for both? How is this presented?</p> <p>How to make it fair for those who submit a single bid VS multiple bids. Could you separate PM and admin and technical specialisms and data: find ways to utilise the funding pot and reduce overlap</p> <p>We are clear that we would encourage collaborative bids, therefore achieving some synergies, can you meaningfully collaborate on the areas with overlap?</p> <p>We are already on a tight timeline so the 6 week window should be sufficient. Another option would be to have no lots, suppliers to bid minimum of 1, supplier could choose what indicators they want to cover. If there are multiple lots, possibly difficult to manage delivery for Defra. We want the specialism but we don't want to deter people if they can do something really good, so don't want it (the opportunity) to limit to just large organisations and generalist.</p>