



Invitation to Quote

**Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of Department for Business,
Energy and Industrial Strategy**

Subject: Review of Agri-tech Innovation Centres

Sourcing Reference Number: CR18110



UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS)
www.uksbs.co.uk

Registered in England and Wales as a limited company. Company Number 6330639.
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Section 1 – About UK Shared Business Services

Putting the business into shared services

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS) brings a commercial attitude to the public sector; helping our Contracting Authorities improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

It is our vision to become the leading service provider for the 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 Contracting Authorities 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.

UK SBS 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), UK SBS' 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, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) transition their procurement to UK SBS and Crown Commercial Services (CCS – previously Government Procurement Service) agree a Memorandum of Understanding with UK SBS to deliver two major procurement categories (construction and research) across Government.

UK SBS currently manages £700m expenditure for its Contracting Authorities.

Our Contracting Authorities who have access to our services and Contracts are detailed [here](#).

Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority

Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) was created as a result of a merger between the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), as part of the Machinery of Government (MoG) changes in July 2016.

The Department is responsible for:

- developing and delivering a comprehensive industrial strategy and leading the government's relationship with business;
- ensuring that the country has secure energy supplies that are reliable, affordable and clean;
- ensuring the UK remains at the leading edge of science, research and innovation; and
- tackling climate change.

BEIS is a ministerial department, supported by 46 agencies and public bodies.

We have around 2,500 staff working for BEIS. Our partner organisations include 9 executive agencies employing around 14,500 staff.

<http://www.beis.gov.uk>

Section 3 - Working with the Contracting Authority.

In this section you will find details of your Procurement contact point and the timescales relating to this opportunity.

Section 3 – Contact details		
3.1	Contracting Authority Name and address	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
3.2	Buyer name	Amelia Stroud
3.3	Buyer contact details	Research@uksbs.co.uk
3.4	Indicative value of the Opportunity	£49,900 (ex vat)
3.5	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	All correspondence shall be submitted within the Emptoris e-sourcing tool. Guidance Notes to support the use of Emptoris is available here. 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.

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6	Date of Issue of Contract Advert and location of original Advert	Friday 27 th July 2018 Contracts Finder
3.7	Latest date/time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Emptoris messaging system	Wednesday 8 th August 2018 14.00pm
3.8	Latest date/time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Emptoris	Thursday 9 th August 2018
3.9	Latest date/time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Emptoris	Wednesday 14 th August 2018 14.00pm
3.10	Date/time Bidders should be available if face to face clarifications are required	Tuesday 21 st August 2018 14.00pm
3.11	Anticipated notification date of successful and unsuccessful Bids	Friday 24 th August 2018
3.12	Anticipated Award date	Friday 24 th August 2018
3.13	Anticipated Contract Start date	Tuesday 28 th August 2018
3.14	Anticipated Contract End date	Thursday 31 st January 2019
3.15	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

Section 4 – Specification

Introduction

The Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) are committed to collecting evidence to understand the impacts of their programmes of support for academic and business innovation. Bids are invited for a review of four government funded Agri-tech Innovation Centres.

BEIS

The Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) is a Ministerial Department that brings together responsibilities for business, industrial strategy, science, innovation, energy, and climate change. BEIS has the vision of an economy that works for everyone – with great places in every part of the UK for people to work and for businesses to invest, innovate and grow. To realise this it will: deliver an ambitious Industrial Strategy; maximise investment opportunities and bolster UK interests; promote competitive markets and responsible business practices; and ensure the UK has a reliable, low cost and clean energy system. In all of this it is supported by 46 agencies and public bodies.

UKRI

UK Research and Innovation brings together the seven Research Councils, Innovate UK and Research England. It is an independent organisation with a strong voice for research and innovation, both to government and internationally, it is supported and challenged by an independent chair and board. UKRI is principally funded through the Science Budget by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). Further information on UKRI's objectives and programmes is available on its website: <https://www.ukri.org/>

Aims and Objectives of the Project

Bids are invited for a review of the work and future plans of the Agri-tech Innovation Centres. Government funding for the Agri-tech Centres ends March 2019. The output from this review will support UKRI with their monitoring and oversight role and help inform the next steps government will take in relation to the Centres; informing the developing case for, and design of, any future policy.

BEIS internal review

BEIS will be undertaking a short, initial desk-based review of the Centres' business, financial and management documentation to assess:

- How the Agri-tech Centres have performed to date against their original delivery plans and programme objectives and key success measures/KPIs;
- What progress have the centres made towards their goal of financial self-sufficiency to date;
- The quality of the Centres future business and delivery plans for FY 2019/20 including an assessment of:
 - o whether the magnitude and timescale of government support requested is reasonable and realistic, and if not, why not
 - o any implications for value for money

- Whether there is a continued rationale for Government intervention to support the Centres for FY19/20.

This work will inform decisions on funding for financial year 2019/20. The successful bidders will be provided with the output of this internal analysis. This is expected to be available by early September 2018. The successful bidders are expected to review and build on this initial analysis to develop the more detailed evidence which will be necessary to help inform the next steps government will take in relation to the Centres and support any request for a further period of funding beyond 19/20.

Objectives

The aim of this project is to review and build upon BEIS' initial internal analysis and outline economic and business case for the Centres, including:

- Reviewing what impact the Agri-Tech Centre activities have had so far; understanding the contribution made from the Centres to businesses, academia and the wider research community including an assessment of value for money (VFM), and VFM relative to other interventions that support the sector
- Assessing the credibility of the Centres future business and delivery plans post-March 2020 including an assessment of:
 - o how robust their business and delivery plans, market projections and strategies are for i) maximising the potential for impact and ii) achieving self-sufficiency
 - o whether the magnitude and timescale of government support requested is reasonable and realistic, and if not, why not
 - o any implications for VFM
- Assessing whether there is a continued rationale for Government intervention to support the Centres:
 - o are the market failures identified in the original business case still apparent? Are there new ones?
 - o have the centres moved away from their original brief and, if so, is this justified?
- Assessing what additional impact/benefits there would be from further Government funding
- Assessing what level/type of government support offers the best value for money
- Assessing to what extent the Centres are well governed and managed (e.g. effective Boards, management teams and accountability for investment decisions etc) and develop recommendations for improvement if necessary
- Reviewing how the existing model of four separate but coordinated centres fits into the agri-tech and agricultural productivity landscape and make recommendations for improvements if necessary.

Impact of this Review

- This research and analysis will provide external scrutiny and evidence to support important decisions regarding future support for the Agri-tech Innovation Centres, ensuring that BEIS officials and Ministers can make informed decisions that represent value for money. It will also contribute to the ongoing management of

the Centres' work by Innovate UK (now UKRI) and a wider review of the 2013 Agri-tech Strategy that will guide future policy development.

Background to the Requirement

The Agri-Tech Strategy

The Agri-Tech Centres of Innovation were one element of the UK's Agri-Tech Strategy which was published jointly by BEIS (then BIS) and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the Department for International Development (DFID) in July 2013. The UK Strategy for Agriculture Technologies (The 'Strategy') (available here, <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/agricultural-technologies-agri-tech-strategy>) has the clear and ambitious vision set out in its headline message of:

"We want the UK to become a world leader in agricultural technology, innovation and sustainability; exploit opportunities to develop and adopt new and existing technologies, products and services to increase productivity; and contribute to global food security and international development".

The Strategy has five main components:

- The Agri-Tech Catalyst
- Centres for Innovation
- International Development
- Internationalisation, i.e. exports and inward investment
- Overall coordination and influencing activities.

The Agri-tech Innovation Centres

As part of the 2013 Agri-tech Strategy, BEIS announced £90M to establish four centres of agricultural innovation.

- Agrimetrics - to utilise data science and modelling to build a more efficient food system
- Agricultural Engineering Precision Innovation Centre (Agri-EPI) - to exploit opportunities in precision agriculture
- Centre for Crop Health and Protection (CHAP) - to revolutionise how farmers manage crop threats including pests and disease
- Centre for Innovation Excellence in Livestock (CIEL) - to create new livestock technology

The objectives of the centres are to:

- Improve collaboration between academics, businesses and farmers in the sector
- Exploit different strengths in the country's science base to increase pre-competitive research to solve challenges facing the agricultural sector

- Better integrate the UK's expertise in science with Agri-Tech businesses and progressive food and farming businesses, stimulating increases in contract research
- Produce, through pre-competitive and contract research, viable new technologies for commercialisation
- Support the adoption and diffusion of knowledge and innovation throughout the supply chain and sector, resulting in improvements in sector productivity
- Become financially viable through a mixture of attraction of competitive grants, research funding and industry contract research.

The four centres were established between August 2015 and March 2016. BEIS funding for the centres ends March 2019. The centres are not yet financially self-sufficient. Financial self-sufficiency remains a policy aim.

For further details on the Centres see www.agritechcentres.com

Related evaluation projects and evaluation recommendations

In July 2016, BEIS (then BIS) published a research report, Agri-Tech industrial strategy: evaluation scoping study and baseline. This report (the 'SQW Report') provided a range of statistics on the UK agri-tech sector, principally to establish a baseline for the sector. It also provided specific recommendations on how to evaluate the success of the Agri-Tech Centres for Innovation, including on methods and providing a timeline for evaluation. The report is available here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agri-tech-industrial-strategy-evaluation-scoping-study-and-baseline>.

A full quantitative evaluation of the centres, as per the recommendations in the baseline report, is not deemed appropriate at this relatively early stage the in the Centres' development. However, as part of this review, we expect the contractor to be familiar with this document.

SQW are currently carrying out a mid-term evaluation of the Agri-tech Catalyst (not Centres) as recommended in the baseline report. Final report to be available March 2019.

BEIS and Defra will also be developing a strategy, building on the work of SQW's 2016 report, to evaluate the impact of the 2013 Agri-tech Strategy in its entirety, in addition to assessing individual elements of the strategy.

Scope

The scope of the work is on identifying what the Agri-tech centres have achieved to date, assessing the credibility of the Centres' future business plans, assessing whether there still a sound rationale for government intervention in the current landscape and if so, whether the existing model and suggested scale and duration of additional government intervention is the best/most efficient model for achieving the identified policy aims.

This work will not be a full process or impact evaluation. This is not deemed appropriate at this relatively early stage the in the Centres' development.

Requirement

Below is a suggested methodology and we would welcome bidders' alternative suggestions providing that they also meet the project aims and objectives.

Suggested methodology

We anticipate this project will include both primary and secondary analysis and will be run in three phases: i) scoping, ii) evidence and analysis and iii) conclusions and recommendations development.

Innovate UK and BEIS will provide a background briefing to the winning bidder to set the context for the Centres. The successful bidder can expect to work closely with the responsible BEIS policy team, who will offer advice and support the work wherever possible.

i) Scoping phase:

Contextual and background reading to understand the Centres and inform approach to evidence gathering and analysis

This should take the form of a review of contextual Agri-Tech Centre policy documentation and a range of the Centres' business, financial and management documentation. These documents will be provided to the successful bidder at the start of the project. The output from BEIS' internal analysis will also be provided by early September.

It is anticipated that it will be necessary for the winning bidder to liaise with the Centres and Innovate UK monitoring officer/s to seek input and clarification during the scoping phase.

ii) Evidence and analysis phase:

Qualitative research

We are keen to ensure that the following stakeholders' views are included in the research through interviews, focus groups and detailed case studies where possible (the latter as a possible route to demonstrating impact):

- Centre management and board members (including CEO, CFO, CTO where appointed)
- Agri-tech Centre beneficiaries / partners / associate partners
- Wider agri-tech stakeholders, including, but not limited to:
 - o Chair of Agri-Food Technology Council and a selection of the members of the Agri-Food Technology Council
 - o National Farmers Union
 - o Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board

BEIS and/or the Centres will provide contacts and introductions to stakeholders. Bidders should set out their proposals on the most appropriate research techniques to be used to best engage with stakeholders and effectively collect their views in the time available. The

wider agri-tech stakeholders could potentially be consulted via half-day workshop/focus group or via other technology enabled collection methods.

There is a risk that demonstrating impact will be difficult at this relatively early stage in the centres' development. Bidders should set out what strategies they will use to manage this risk. We will keep this part of the research under review with the appointed contractors, evolving our approach as it becomes clearer what is possible.

Total number of Interviews (qualitative)	50 (indicative, depending on how contractor approaches engaging with stakeholders)
Total number of Focus Groups	2 (indicative – depending on how contractor approaches engaging with stakeholders)
Total number of Case Studies	4 (indicative)

Quantitative research

We expect the winning bidder to adopt a quantitative approach to assess the financial status of the Centres' to evaluate the sustainability of their current business model. It is expected that this analysis will take the form of a scenario modelling of how much demand there is for the work of the Centres and how much business the Centres' would need to win to achieve the self-sufficiency goal and to take stock of the progress made towards this objective to date. This will need to include a value for money assessment to date, and what it would take to achieve self-sufficiency.

iii) Conclusions and recommendations development:

We expect the winning bidder to draw together information gathered during the scoping and evidence analysis phase to answer the research questions posed and develop recommendations where necessary.

In case an alternative methodological approach is suggested, bidders should justify why they have suggested it and how it will meet the objectives of the project. Proposals should clearly set out potential issues with any proposed methodology and how the bidder will ensure the validity of the research and its conclusions. All proposals should follow best practice in designing evaluations as set out in HM Treasury's Magenta Book.

Deliverables

Proposals should set out how they will deliver an internal report to inform policy decisions regarding the future of the agri-tech centres.

It is anticipated that the review will be in the following phases:

- **Scoping**

Headline report of findings from scoping phase by end-Sept.

- **Evidence and analysis**

Headline report of findings from evidence and analysis phase by end-October.

- **Conclusions and recommendations development**

Draft final report, synthesising primary and secondary research and developing and testing conclusions by end-November

Final report agreed mid-December.

The output will also inform part of the overall 2013 Agri-tech Strategy evaluation.

The output from this review will be a report to inform the future policy for the Centres and support UKRI with their monitoring and oversight role.

Publication is not considered appropriate due to the interaction with policy development and advice to Ministers. We will consider publishing a summary of the report findings to accompany/support any announcement about future funding of the centres.

The final report should include an executive summary and a PowerPoint version of key points. The report should be concise and clear, and understandable by non-technical readers. Greater detail of analysis carried out, and results found, can be contained in a technical annex. Case studies, if undertaken, should be written up in full, and proposals should set out the number, format and expected length of these case studies.

Data sets, including all data collected and used in the evaluation must be provided alongside the reports.

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

The evaluation model below shall be used for this ITQ, which will be determined to two decimal places.

Where a question is 'for information only' it will not be scored.

The evaluation team may comprise staff from UK SBS and the Contracting Authority and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems required. After evaluation the scores will be finalised by performing a calculation to identify (at question level) the mean average of all evaluators (Example – a question is scored by three evaluators and judged as scoring 5, 5 and 6. These scores will be added together and divided by the number of evaluators to produce the final score of 5.33 ($5+5+6=16 \div 3 = 5.33$))

Pass / fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	SEL1.2	Employment breaches/ Equality
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information Exemptions
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	SEL3.11	Compliance to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act
Commercial	SEL3.12	Cyber Essentials
Commercial	SEL3.13	General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR)
Commercial	AW4.1	Contract Terms Part 1
Commercial	AW4.2	Contract Terms Part 2
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
-	-	Invitation to Quote – received on time within e-sourcing tool

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 ITQ. The Contracting Authority considers these weightings to be in line with existing best practice for a requirement of this type.			
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject	Maximum Marks
Price	AW5.2	Price	20%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Approach/Methodology	30%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Staff to Deliver	20%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Understanding the Project Environment	20%
Quality	PROJ1.4	Risk Management	10%

Evaluation of criteria

Non-Price elements

Each question will be judged 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 selection 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 the final score returned may be different as there may be multiple evaluators and their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score.

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 $(60+60+40+40) \div 4 = 50$

Price elements will be judged 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 price 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.

Section 6 – Evaluation questionnaire

Bidders should note that the evaluation questionnaire is located within the **e-sourcing questionnaire**.

Guidance on completion of the questionnaire is available at <http://www.uksbs.co.uk/services/procure/Pages/supplier.aspx>

PLEASE NOTE THE QUESTIONS ARE NOT NUMBERED SEQUENTIALLY

Section 7 – General Information

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

DO:

- 7.1 Do comply with Procurement document instructions. Failure to do so may lead to disqualification.
- 7.2 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 ITQ 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
- 7.3 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.
- 7.4 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.
- 7.5 Do ensure you utilise the Emptoris messaging system to raise any clarifications to our ITQ. 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
- 7.6 Do answer the question, it is not enough simply to cross-reference to a 'policy', web page or another part of your Bid, the evaluation team have limited time to assess bids and if they can't find the answer, they can't score it.
- 7.7 Do consider who the Contracting Authority is and what they want – a generic answer does not necessarily meet every Contracting Authority's needs.
- 7.8 Do reference your documents correctly, specifically where supporting documentation is requested e.g. referencing the question/s they apply to.
- 7.9 Do provide clear, concise and ideally generic contact details; telephone numbers, e-mails and fax details.
- 7.10 Do complete all questions in the questionnaire or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.11 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.
- 7.12 Do check and recheck your Bid before dispatch.

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

DO NOT

- 7.13 Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.14 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.
- 7.15 Do not share the Procurement documents, they are confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission.
- 7.16 Do not seek to influence the procurement process by requesting meetings or contacting UK SBS 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.
- 7.17 Do not contact any UK SBS staff or the Contracting Authority staff without the Buyers written permission or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.18 Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will reject your Bid.
- 7.19 Do not offer UK SBS or the Contracting Authority staff any inducement or we will reject your Bid.
- 7.20 Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed.
- 7.21 Do not cross reference answers to external websites or other parts of your Bid, the cross references and website links will not be considered.
- 7.22 Do not exceed word counts, the additional words will not be considered.
- 7.23 Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.24 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 e-sourcing tool. Responses received by any other method than requested will not be considered for the opportunity.

Some additional guidance notes

- 7.25 All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool must be submitted to Crown Commercial Service (previously Government Procurement Service), Telephone 0345 010 3503.
- 7.26 Bidders will be specifically advised where attachments are permissible to support a question response within the e-sourcing tool. Where they are not permissible any attachments submitted will not be considered as part of the evaluation process.
- 7.27 Question numbering is not sequential and all questions which require submission are included in the Section 6 Evaluation Questionnaire.
- 7.28 Any Contract offered may not guarantee any volume of work or any exclusivity of supply.
- 7.29 We do not guarantee to award any Contract as a result of this procurement
- 7.30 All documents issued or received in relation to this procurement shall be the property of the Contracting Authority. / UKSBS.
- 7.31 We can amend any part of the procurement documents at any time prior to the latest date / time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.32 If you are a Consortium you must provide details of the Consortiums structure.
- 7.33 Bidders will be expected to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.34 Bidders should note the Government's transparency agenda requires your Bid and any Contract entered into to be published on a designated, publicly searchable web site. By submitting a response to this ITQ Bidders are agreeing that their Bid and Contract may be made public
- 7.35 Your bid will be valid for 60 days or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.36 Bidders may only amend the contract terms during the clarification period only, only if you can demonstrate there is a legal or statutory reason why you cannot accept them. If you request changes to the Contract terms without such grounds and the Contracting Authority fail to accept your legal or statutory reason is reasonably justified we may reject your Bid.
- 7.37 We will let you know the outcome of your Bid evaluation and where requested will provide a written debrief of the relative strengths and weaknesses of your Bid.
- 7.38 If you fail mandatory pass / fail criteria we will reject your Bid.
- 7.39 Bidders are required to use IE8, IE9, Chrome or Firefox in order to access the functionality of the Emptoris e-sourcing tool.
- 7.40 Bidders should note that if they are successful with their proposal the Contracting Authority reserves the right to ask additional compliancy checks prior to the award of any Contract. In the event of a Bidder failing to meet one of the compliancy checks

the Contracting Authority may decline to proceed with the award of the Contract to the successful Bidder.

- 7.41 All timescales are set using a 24 hour clock and are based on British Summer Time or Greenwich Mean Time, depending on which applies at the point when Date and Time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.42 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. The information will not be disclosed outside Government. Bidders taking part in this ITQ consent to these terms as part of the competition process.

- 7.43 The Government introduced its new Government Security Classifications (GSC) classification scheme on the 2nd April 2014 to replace the current 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. The link below to the Gov.uk website provides information on the new GSC:

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

The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend any security related term or condition of the draft contract accompanying this ITQ to reflect any changes introduced by the GSC. In particular where this ITQ 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

- [Emptoris Training Guide](#)
- [Emptoris e-sourcing tool](#)
- [Contracts Finder](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)