**Market Engagement Notice -**

**Digitisation of historic census statistical publications**

**About the Office for National Statistics (ONS)**

ONS is the UK's largest independent producer of official statistics and is the National Statistical Institute for the UK. Formally, it is the executive office of the UK Statistics Authority, a non-Ministerial Department established by the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007. It is responsible for collecting and publishing statistics related to the economy, population, and society at national, regional, and local levels. ONS plays a leading role in national and international good practice in the production of official statistics.

**Introduction**

ONS currently has a contract with a commercial provider for the provision of digitising statistics from the 1921, 1931, 1951 and 1961 Census published county and topic reports to improve accessibility and thereby make better use of the data. This procurement intends to fulfil requirements with a single supplier that will enable the authority to provide access to all users of population statistics and enable further analysis to aid understanding of social change at national and a range of lower level geographies. The proposal is for the expected delivery of digitized data for two censuses per year for two years – Year 1 1921 and 1931, Year 2 1951 and 1961

ONS is seeking to establish a contract with an organisation that can provide a service to digitize the statistics and convert to structured data that can be exported and subsequently hosted on the Nomis system.

Because of time constraints (two censuses per year) and the volume of data extraction that involves, the requirements are that the procured service must include, at a minimum:

* An already existing automated system or tool for extraction of the data from the images taken from the census volumes which is capable of performing the following:-
  + Identification of errors created in the original publications.
  + Error correction and quality assurance to validate extracted data prior to delivery.
  + Creation of a system to assign missing values.
  + The ability to handle both ‘fixed’ (standard rows and columns) and ‘complex’ (variable row counts and multi-dimensional combinations) tables and supplementary information pages such as classifications and commentary.
  + Production of a data model to extract information from complex historical census geography hierarchy that varies between censuses to allow for time-series analysis
  + Supply structured data in .csv format to facilitate potential use with an API.

Additionally, data extraction, presentation and delivery methods must be well-defined and of high quality with an enhanced level of quality assurance to meet our statistical requirement.

**Questions for potential data providers**

1. What is your experience of historical census statistics and geographies?
2. Can you provide information about the data extraction model and quality assurance process that you will use?
3. Can you confirm feasibility of data transfer to ONS via a secure platform?
4. Can you provide information on timescales to produce and deliver the data?
5. If errors are identified in the data delivery, how quickly can you respond, correct errors and re-deliver corrected data to ONS?

**How to register**

Please register on ONS's e-tendering portal - https://in-tendhost.co.uk/ons/aspx/Home . You will then be able to 'express an interest' in this project (all current projects can be found under 'Current Tenders').

When you have expressed an interest, please reply using the correspondence function, within the message please give a brief synopsis of what your organisation can offer in terms of the minimum requirements detailed above. We will then schedule follow-up one-to-one sessions where we can discuss further.

**Additional Information**

This Exercise is NOT a pre-qualification or selection exercise and is NOT part of any pre-qualification or selection process that may apply to any future potential procurement. It is intended to act as an awareness and information gathering exercise offering an opportunity for suppliers to advise the extent to which they potentially can provide some or all the services that ONS may require, in order to help ONS with its future intentions.