Request for Quotation

**SSSI Monitoring Access Permissions Contract**

04/10/2024

Request for Quotation

**SSSI Monitoring Access Permissions Contract**

You are invited to submit a quotation for the requirement described in the specification, Section 2.

Please confirm by email, receipt of these documents and whether you intend to submit a quote or not.

Your response should be returned to the following email address by:

Email: ProtectedSites.Contracts@NaturalEngland.org.uk

Date: 04/11/2024

Time: 12:00 GMT

Ensure you include the name of the quotation and ‘Final Submission’ in the subject field to make it clear that it is your response.

Contact Details and Timetable

SME Contracts team will be your contact for any questions linked to the content of the quote or the process. Please submit any clarification questions via email and note that, unless commercially sensitive, both the question and the response will be circulated to all tenderers.

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| Action | Date |
| Date of issue of RFQ | 04/10/2024 at 9:00 BST |
| Deadline for clarifications questions | 30/10/2024 at 9:00 GMT |
| Deadline for receipt of Quotation | 04/11/2024 at 12:00 GMT |
| Intended date of Contract Award | w/c 18/11/2024 |
| Intended Contract Start Date | 25/11/2024 |
| Intended Delivery Date / Contract Duration  | 28/03/2025 |

Section 1: General Information

Glossary

Unless the context otherwise requires, the following words and expressions used within this Request for Quotation shall have the following meanings (to be interpreted in the singular or plural as the context requires):

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| “Authority” | means Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs acting as part of Natural England who is the Contracting Authority.  |
| “Contract” | means the contract to be entered into by the Authority and the successful supplier. |
| “Response” | means the information submitted by a supplier in response to the RFQ. |
| “RFQ” | means this Request for Quotation and all related documents published by the Authority and made available to suppliers. |

Conditions applying to the RFQ

You should examine your Response and related documents ensuring it is complete and in accordance with the stated instructions prior to submission.

Your Response must contain sufficient information to enable the Authority to evaluate it fairly and effectively. You should ensure that you have prepared your Response fully and accurately and that prices quoted are arithmetically correct for the units stated.

By submitting a Response, you, the supplier, are deemed to accept the terms and conditions provided in the RFQ. Confirmation of this is required in Annex 2.

Failure to comply with the instructions set out in the RFQ may result in the supplier’s exclusion from this quotation process.

Acceptance of Quotations

By issuing this RFQ the Authority does not bind itself to accept any quotation and reserves the right not to award a contract to any supplier who submits a quotation.

Costs

The Authority will not reimburse you for any costs and expenses which you incur preparing and submitting your quotation, even if the Authority amends or terminates the procurement process.

Self-Declaration and Mandatory Requirements

The RFQ includes a self-declaration response (Annex 1) which covers basic information about the supplier, as well as any grounds for exclusion. If you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Any mandatory requirements will be set out in Section 2, Specification of Requirements and, if you do not comply with them, your quotation will not be evaluated.

Clarifications

Any request for clarification regarding the RFQ and supporting documentation must be submitted via email no later than the deadline for clarifications set out in the Timetable. The Authority shall be under no obligation to respond to queries raised after the clarification deadline.

The Authority will respond to all reasonable clarifications as soon as possible but cannot guarantee a minimum response time. The Authority will publish all clarifications and its responses to all suppliers via email unless deemed commercially sensitive.

If a supplier believes that a request for clarification is commercially sensitive, it should clearly state this when submitting the clarification request. However, if the Authority considers either that:

* the clarification and response are not commercially sensitive; and
* all suppliers may benefit from its disclosure,

then the Authority will notify the supplier (via email), and the supplier will have an opportunity to withdraw the request for clarification by sending a further message requesting the withdrawal of the clarification request. If not withdrawn by the supplier within 2 working days of the Authority’s notification, the Authority may publish the clarification request and its response to all suppliers and the Authority shall not be liable to the supplier for any consequences of such publication.

The Authority reserves the right to seek clarification of any aspect of a quotation and/or provide additional information during the evaluation phase to carry out a fair evaluation. Where the Authority seeks clarification on any aspect of the quotation, the supplier must respond within the timeframe requested by the Authority.

Amendments

The Authority may amend the RFQ at any time prior to the deadline for receipt. If it amends the RFQ the Authority will notify you via email.

Suppliers may modify their quotation prior to the deadline for Responses. No Responses may be modified after the deadline for Responses.

 Suppliers may withdraw their quotations at any time by submitting a notice via the email to the named contact.

Conditions of Contract

The Authority’s

* Standard Good and Services Terms & Conditions (used for purchases under £50k)

can be located on the [Natural England Website](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about/procurement#terms-and-conditions) and will be applicable to any contract awarded as a result of this quotation process. The Authority will not accept any changes to these terms and conditions proposed by a supplier.

Suppliers should note that the quotation provided by the successful bidder will form part of the Contract.

Prices

Prices must be submitted in £ sterling, exclusive of VAT.

Disclosure

All Central Government Departments, 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 Authority may disclose within Government any details contained in your quotation. The information will not be disclosed outside Government during the procurement.

In addition, the Authority is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, which provide a public right of access to information held by public bodies. In accordance with these two statutes, the Authority may be required to disclose information contained in your quotation to any person who submits a request for information pursuant to those statutes.

Further to the Government’s transparency agenda, all UK Government organisations must advertise on Contract Finder in accordance with the following publication thresholds:

* Central Contracting Authority’s: £12,000
* Sub Central Contracting Authority’s and NHS Trusts: £30,000

For the purpose of this RFQ the Authority is classified as a Central Contracting Authority with a publication threshold of £12,000 inclusive of VAT.

If this opportunity is advertised via Contracts Finder, we are obliged to publish details of the awarded contract including who has won the contract, the contract value, and indicate whether the winning supplier is a small and medium-sized enterprise (“SMEs”) or voluntary organisation or charity. A copy of the contract must also be published with confidential information redacted.

By submitting a Response, you consent to these terms as part of the procurement.

Disclaimers

Whilst the information in this RFQ and any supporting information referred to herein or provided to you by the Authority have been prepared in good faith the Authority does not warrant that this information is comprehensive or that it has been independently verified.

The Authority does not:

* make any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness or completeness of the RFQ;
* accept any liability for the information contained in the RFQ or for the fairness, accuracy or completeness of that information; or
* accept any liability for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation or any other liability which cannot lawfully be excluded) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.

Any supplier considering entering into contractual relationships with the Authority following receipt of the RFQ should make its own investigations and independent assessment of the Authority and its requirements for the goods and/or services and should seek its own professional financial and legal advice.

Protection of Personal Data

In order to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 the supplier must agree to the following:

 You must only process any personal data in strict accordance with instructions from the Authority.

* You must ensure that all the personal data that we disclose to you or you collect on our behalf under this agreement are kept confidential.
* You must take reasonable steps to ensure the reliability of employees who have access to personal data.
* Only employees who may be required to assist in meeting the obligations under this agreement may have access to the personal data.
* Any disclosure of personal data must be made in confidence and extend only so far as that which is specifically necessary for the purposes of this agreement.
* You must ensure that there are appropriate security measures in place to safeguard against any unauthorised access or unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage or disclosure of the personal data.
* On termination of this agreement, for whatever reason, the personal data must be returned to us promptly and safely, together with all copies in your possession or control.

General Data Protection Regulations 2018

For the purposes of the Regulations the Authority is the data processor.

The personal information that we have asked you provide on individuals (data subjects) that will be working for you on this contract will be used in compiling the tender list and in assessing your offer. If you are unsuccessful the information will be held and destroyed within two years of the award of contracts. If you are awarded a contract it will be retained for the duration of the contract and destroyed within seven years of the contract’s expiry.

We may monitor the performance of the individuals during the execution of the contract, and the results of our monitoring, together with the information that you have provided, will be used in determining what work is allocated under the contract, and in any renewal of the contract or in the award of future contracts of a similar nature. The information will not be disclosed to anyone outside the Authority without the consent of the data subject, unless the Authority is required by law to make such disclosures.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)

The Client is striving to create a diverse and inclusive working environment where every individual has equality of opportunity to progress and to apply their unique insights to making the UK a great place for living. The Service Provider is expected to respect this commitment in all dealings with Natural England staff and service users.

Suppliers are expected to;

* support Defra group to achieve its Public Sector Equality Duty as defined by the Equality Act 2010, and to support delivery of [Defra group’s Equality & Diversity Strategy](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024/defra-group-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-2020-to-2024).
* meet the standards set out in the [Government’s Supplier Code of Conduct](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supplier-code-of-conduct)
* work with Defra group to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion impacts are addressed (positive and negative) in the goods, services and works we procure, barriers are removed and opportunities realised.

Sustainable Procurement

Addressing global sustainability impacts and realising additional community benefits within commercial activity is core to Defra group’s approach, working with its supply chain is key to achieving sustainable outcomes. In addition to supporting Defra group to meet its outcomes we look to understand and reduce negative sustainability impacts associated with our commercial activity and realise benefits.

The Client encourages its suppliers to share these values, work to address negative impacts and realise opportunities, measure performance and success.

Suppliers are expected to have an understanding of the Sustainable Development Goals, the interconnections between them and the relevance to the Goods, Services and works procured on the Client’s behalf.

Conflicts of Interest

The concept of a conflict of interest includes but is not limited to any situation where an Involved Person or Relevant Body has directly or indirectly, a financial, economic or other personal interest which might be perceived to compromise their impartiality and independence in the context of the procurement procedure and/or affect the integrity of the contract award.

We expect suppliers to mitigate appropriately against any real or perceived conflict of interest through their work with government. A supplier with a position of influence gained through a contract should not use that position to unfairly disadvantage any other supplier or reduce the potential for future competition

Where the supplier is aware of any circumstances giving rise to a conflict of interest or has any indication that a conflict of interest exists or may arise you should inform the Authority of this as soon as possible (whether before or after they have submitted a quotation). Tenderers should remain alert to the possibility of conflicts of interest arising at all stages of the procurement and should update the Authority if any new circumstances or information arises, or there are any changes to information already provided to the Authority. Failure to do so, and/or to properly manage any conflicts of interest may result in a quotation being rejected.

Provided that it has been carried out in an open, fair and transparent manner, routine pre-market engagement carried out by the Authority should not represent a conflict of interest for the supplier.

Section 2: The Invitation

Specification of Requirements

**Natural England's Role**

Natural England (NE) is the government’s advisor on the natural environment (visit [www.gov.uk/natural-england](http://www.gov.uk/natural-england) for more information). We provide practical advice, grounded in science, on how to safeguard England’s natural wealth for the benefit of everyone. Our remit is to ensure sustainable stewardship of the land and sea so that we can deliver our vision of ‘thriving nature for people and planet’.

**Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)**

One of Natural England’s statutory functions is to designate and maintain the condition of protected sites in England. A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is a type of formal protected site designation made based on the presence of specific habitats or species, or sometimes geological or physiological features, which are of particular interest to science.

There are over 4,100 SSSIs in England, representing the entire range of habitat and geology types found in the country. They vary in size from a single barn building to the entire Humber Estuary. Most of the land designated as a SSSI is either privately owned or managed as part of a tenanted farm or estate. The remaining area is owned by conservation organisations, local authorities, government agencies and public utilities.

SSSIs are an important part of the government’s strategy for the natural world: ‘A Green Future – Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment’. This sets out an ambition to restore 75% of our one million hectares of terrestrial and freshwater protected sites to favourable condition.

**The SSSI Monitoring & Evaluation (SME) Programme and Monitoring Targets**

Monitoring and evaluation of SSSIs is an important aspect of Natural England's overall monitoring programme, providing robust evidence that supports delivery of our statutory functions for designated sites. We use this evidence to advise land managers and other stakeholders, supporting them in sustaining SSSIs in favourable condition, or restoring those that are in unfavourable condition.

We are working to tackle the decline in SSSI monitoring frequency over recent years and have recently reformed our programme to collect monitoring data at a more ecologically meaningful scale (whole-feature-assessment or WFA). The current Environmental Improvement Plan ([EIP23](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1133967/environmental-improvement-plan-2023.pdf)) target is to have an up-to-date condition assessment for every SSSI, using the new WFA approach, by 31 January 2028.

Where using remotely sensed data, third-party data or desk-based studies are not appropriate approaches, Natural England uses data from on-site surveys to monitor and assess the condition of SSSI features.

**2.2 Scope of the Contract**

**Arranging Access for SSSI Surveys in 2025/26**

In order to arrange a SSSI monitoring survey, whether by in-house staff or by approved contractors, Natural England contacts all owners of land within the site boundaries and requests permission to access their land where it falls within the SSSI. We also aim to contact all occupiers of land within the SSSI, where we have their contact details, to inform them of our intention to survey and ask for their cooperation.

This contract will arrange access for approximately 46 SSSIs 500 associated owner/occupiers from whom access permission should be gained.

There are three types of survey to be undertaken: terrestrial, freshwater and geological. Each have their own set of access requirements. The contract will cover access for an estimated 18 terrestrial sites, 1 freshwater site (rivers), 7 freshwater sites (lakes) and 20 geological sites. Please note these figures are an estimate and are subject to change.

Terrestrial site requirements: access to habitat, potentially on multiple visits. Permission required to take specimens for further analysis.

Freshwater site (rivers) requirements: access to \*up to\* 25% of the river, and adjacent banks up to 50m is required, potentially on multiple visits and potentially by boat. Permission required to take specimens for further analysis.

Freshwater site (lakes) requirements: access to the whole lake, and adjacent banks up to 50m is required, potentially on multiple visits and potentially by boat. Permission required to take specimens for further analysis. One years-worth of water quality samples will be taken monthly from the lake, requiring monthly access permission.

Geological Requirements: access to habitat, typically for only one visit.

**Contract Aims Summary**

The scope of this contract is to:

* Collate and/or obtain up-to-date owner/occupier contact details for approximately 46 SSSIs where monitoring surveys are planned for 2025/26, using NE’s existing database and other sources of information as directed by NE.
* Contact and request access permission from all current owner/occupiers of land falling within these SSSIs
* Track and keep accurate records of permission responses from owner/occupiers, recording contact information changes where appropriate and share these with Natural England at regular intervals.
* Produce an ‘Access Contacts for Surveyors’ spreadsheet for each SSSI being surveyed (and in some cases a related map), summarising the access arrangements for each site.
* Deliver a final collated and updated master contacts spreadsheet to Natural England which can be used to update our current data on owner/occupiers for each SSSI site surveyed.
* At all times adhere to Natural England’s GDPR policies and guidelines (see above) and to use suitable file protection and secure sharing protocols throughout, as agreed with Natural England.

**Sources of information on owner/occupiers of SSSIs available to the contractor**

Natural England holds a contact database of owner/occupiers/stakeholders for SSSIs – the information we hold for the sites to be surveyed in 2025/26 will be supplied to the contractor in the form of a password-protected Excel spreadsheet and will contain phone numbers, email addresses and/or postal addresses but is not necessarily exhaustive. This is the ***primary*** dataset.

This primary dataset may in some cases be supplemented by other contact datasets which would be supplied as separate password-protected Excel spreadsheets.

The data supplied will not always include all the contact details that surveyors require for arranging survey access. The contractor will be expected to obtain this information as part of the process of negotiating access permissions.

Where tenure information or contact details are unclear for all or part of a SSSI, the contractor will be able to request extra tenure information and/or Land Registry searches from Natural England.

**Estimated Size of Data Set**

The initial data set supplied will contain approximately 700 rows of contact details across circa 46 SSSIs. Information about new owner/occupiers is often gathered during the access permissions process and any data of this sort would need to be added to the dataset and logged as new – this is usually a small proportion of the overall dataset.

It is likely that there will be duplicate contact information in the primary dataset. The contractor will be expected to identify these duplicates, collating contact details and selecting the most appropriate for the purposes of arranging permission and subsequent access for surveys. It is estimated that permission will ultimately be required from approximately 500 contacts across all the SSSIs to be surveyed.

**2.3 Detailed Requirements**

The Contractor will –

* Collate and rationalise Natural England’s SSSI owner/occupier contacts spreadsheet, along with other data supplied by NE, to create a master spreadsheet of contacts for each SSSI.
* Contact all owners and, where possible, occupiers by email/phone/letter/ to:
	+ Confirm land tenure
	+ Where possible, capture relationships between owners and occupiers and identify a single point of contact
	+ Explain the purpose and process of SSSI monitoring surveys and supply information on survey methodologies
	+ Inform of our intention to survey and request permission to access land within the SSSI
	+ Ask whether they would like to be contacted by surveyors prior to each survey visit
	+ Request and record up-to-date contact details
	+ Request and record any specific information/instructions surveyors will need in order to access the land
	+ Supply supplementary documents including Natural England’s data license agreement
	+ Please note that even if land is classed as ‘Public Right of Way’, access permission is still required.
* Provide a contact phone number and return email/postal address in all communications
* Receive, document and respond appropriately to any email, phone or postal enquiries/replies regarding the SSSI surveys.
* Record permission status data into a master owner/occupier spreadsheet (Excel-compatible) which is securely shared on a regular basis with the SME team.
* Share all owner/occupier correspondence with the SME team on a monthly basis through the use of a shared SharePoint page.
* Forward all documents received from contacts relating to access/tenure to the appropriate person/inbox within the SME team in a suitable format and a secure manner.
* Forward any enquiries or documents received from contacts relating to non-SME areas of NE’s work to the appropriate inbox at Natural England.
* Continue to pursue permissions where a response to initial contact is not received, including: resending emails; making chase phone-calls; sending letters; requesting further information and/or Land Registry searches from Natural England.
* Produce an ‘Access Contacts for Surveyors’ spreadsheet for each SSSI, detailing all contacts who wish to be contacted by surveyors prior to survey visits, their preferred contact details, and any relevant access instructions or other pertinent information.
* For larger or more complex sites, and when requested by an SME team member, produce and securely share a GDPR-compliant, ArcGIS-compatible tenure map of the SSSI which is suitable to be made available to survey staff and can be cross-referenced with the information in the ‘Access Contacts for Surveyors’ spreadsheet
* Provide a written site-by-site summary of access permissions status in advance of each progress meeting
* Throughout the process, attend regular progress meetings with a member of the SME team to:
	+ Feedback on general progress and discuss site-by-site progress
	+ Report any permission refusals received
	+ Report any access restrictions or site hazards that have come to attention
	+ Request further information or input from NE for any sites where tenure information is incomplete or where permissions progress is slow
	+ Coordinate mailshots and Land Registry searches where thought to be required
	+ Provide regular updates of the master owner/occupier spreadsheet
* Return final updated owner/occupier information for each site in an Excel-compatible format and suitable to be used by SME staff to update NE’s contacts database for each site.
* Return all data by agreed deadlines
* At all times to abide by the NE GDPR policy (see above)
* Produce a final summary report at the end of the project with feedback on the data, guidance and resources supplied, the processes, response rates, lessons learnt and opportunities for improvement.

**Resources**

On contract award, in addition to the primary dataset described above, the contractor will be supplied with various other resources:

* Guidance documents describing the overall access permission process
* Guidance documents for collating and rationalising SSSI contacts spreadsheets
* A suggested template for creating ‘Access Permissions Tracking’ spreadsheets in Excel
* Maps of each SSSI
* Email/letter templates and a suggested phone ‘script’
* Information regarding which surveys are planned at each site and how to prioritise accordingly
* Simple summaries of survey methodologies to be sent to owner/occupiers
* Data license agreement document to be sent to owner/occupiers
* A designated contact within the SME team at NE
* All supplied documents and processes can be discussed and amended if appropriate during the contract set-up process.

**2.3 Summary of Outputs**

1. Identify and contact all owners/occupiers of land within the SSSIs to be surveyed and acquire an access permission response from them.
2. Prompt written feedback to the designated NE contact regarding permission refusals.
3. Regular, written site-by-site summaries of progress supplied to the Natural England contact in advance of each planned project meeting.
4. A final ‘Access Contacts for Surveyors’ spreadsheet for each SSSI, detailing all contacts who wish to be contacted by surveyors prior to survey visits, their preferred contact details, and any relevant access instructions or other pertinent information.
5. For those SSSIs where the SME team request it, a securely shared, GDPR-compliant and ArcGIS-compatible labelled tenure map which is suitable to be made available to survey staff, and which can be cross-referenced with the ‘Access Contacts for Surveyors’ spreadsheet for the purposes of arranging survey access.
6. A final master spreadsheet of contacts for all the SSSIs included in the process, which can be cross-referenced to the original contacts data sent to the contractor, including detailed notes, which can be used to update Natural England’s existing SSSI contacts database.
7. Summary report at the end of the project with feedback on the data, guidance and resources supplied, the processes, response rates, lessons learnt and opportunities for improvement.

**2.4 Project Management**

The project will be overseen by a Project Manager within Natural England’s SME team, assisted by other SME team members with experience of contacting owner/occupiers to arrange access for surveys.

The successful contractor will appoint a Project Lead who will be responsible for:

* Being the primary point of contact for Natural England’s SME team
* Overall management and delivery of the project including tracking progress, ensuring methods are followed correctly, quality assurance of outputs and liaising with the Project Manager at NE
* Convening regular project meetings (format and timing to be agreed at inception meeting)

**Reporting & Meetings**

An initial inception meeting will be arranged on contract start-up, during which the contractor will be provided with the resources described above and there will be an opportunity to discuss processes.

The contractor will then be expected to report regularly to NE, providing a clear understanding of permissions progress (given/refused/pending) which allows for cross-referencing with Natural England’s existing SSSI contacts database (i.e. the original contacts spreadsheet supplied to the contractor). See more detail in the Detailed Requirements section.

All meetings will be via MS Teams and progress meetings are likely to be weekly during the contact and response phase.

**Delivery Milestones and Timelines**

More detailed milestones and timeline will be provided at contract start-up.

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| **Milestone** | **Due date** |
| Project startup meeting | Late November 2024 |
| First progress meeting and report due (and weekly thereafter) | Early December 2024 |
| Completion of access permissions process and delivery of ‘Access Contacts Spreadsheets’ (plus maps where applicable) for all first priority sites | Beginning of January 2025 |
| Completion of access permissions process and delivery of ‘Access Contacts Spreadsheets’ (plus maps where applicable) for all second priority sites | End of February 2024 |
| Completion of access permissions process and delivery of ‘Access Contacts Spreadsheets’ (plus maps where applicable) for all third priority sites; delivery of final summary report and final updated contacts spreadsheet | End of March 2024 |

Payment

The Authority will raise purchase orders to cover the cost of the services and will issue to the awarded supplier following contract award.

The Authority’s preference is for all invoices to be sent electronically, quoting a valid Purchase Order number. All payment will be made to the contractor by invoice according to the satisfactory completion of agreed milestones. The payment schedule can be negotiated during contract inception, with the option for one payment on project completion or for interim payments on completion of pre-agreed milestones.

It is anticipated that this contract will be awarded for a period of 5 months to end no later than 28/03/2024. Prices will remain fixed for the duration of the contract award period. We may at our sole discretion extend this contract to include related or further work. Any extension shall be agreed in writing in advance of any work commencing and may be subject to further competition.

Evaluation Methodology

We will award this contract in line with the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) as set out in the following award criteria:

Technical – 50%

Commercial – 50%

Evaluation criteria

Evaluation weightings are 50% technical and 50% commercial, the winning tenderer will be the highest scoring combined score.

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| Award Criteria | Weighting (%) | Evaluation Topic & Weighting | Sub-Criteria | Weighted Question |
| Technical | 50% | Quality Evaluation | GDPR Approaches and Compliance | Q1 (20% of technical score available)**The Tenderer must demonstrate their commitment and ability to manage sensitive tenure information according to GDPR guidelines and in line with Natural England’s policies and best practice.** |
| **Project Plan, Management & Quality Assurance** | Q2 (40% of technical score available)**Tenderers should describe their proposed approaches to the delivery of the tasks and outputs set out in Section 2 above, as well as demonstrating their capacity to do so. Please include details of the proposed workflow and allocated responsibilities and resource, including personnel, hardware, software and data management systems.** |
| **Personnel Skills, Knowledge, Experience and Accreditation** | Q3 (40% of technical score available)**Tenderers should supply pen portraits of current staff proposed to take part in delivery of this contract, including the Project Lead, with details of their skills, knowledge, accreditations and any recent experience relevant to this tender** |
| Commercial | 50% | Whole life cost of the proposed Contract | Commercial Model | Q4 (100% of commercial score available)Tenderers should supply a clear breakdown of cost for each element of the project. |

Technical (50%)

Technical evaluations will be based on responses to specific questions covering key criteria which are outlined below. Scores for questions will be based on the following:

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| Description | Score  | Definition |
| Very good  | 100 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. There are no weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority complete confidence that all the requirements will be met to a high standard.  |
| Good | 70 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains minor weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that all the requirements will be met to a good standard.  |
| Moderate | 50 | Addresses most of the requirements with most of the relevant supporting information set out in the RFQ. The response contains moderate weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that most of the requirements will be met to a suitable standard.  |
| Weak  | 20 | Substantially addresses the requirements but not all and provides supporting information that is of limited or no relevance or a methodology containing significant weaknesses and therefore raises concerns for the Authority that the requirements may not all be met. |
| Unacceptable | 0 | No response or provides a response that gives the Authority no confidence that the requirement will be met.  |

Technical evaluation is assessed using the evaluation topics and sub-criteria stated in the Evaluation Criteria section above.

Separate submissions for each technical question should be provided and will be evaluated in isolation. Tenderers should provide answers that meet the criteria of each technical question.

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| GDPR Approaches and Compliance | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q1 **The Tenderer must demonstrate their commitment and ability to manage sensitive tenure information according to GDPR guidelines and in line with Natural England’s policies and best practice.** Technical weighting 20% minimum score 70 | **Describe your track record in this area, detail your existing policies, systems and processes with regard to data privacy and security and explain how these would be implemented in the delivery of this contract. Tenderers should demonstrate that all staff likely to be involved in this contract already have, or would receive, training in GDPR and its implications for dealing with sensitive tenure information in a public-facing environment using both written (emails and letters) and verbal (telephone calls) communication.** |

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| **Project Plan, Management & Quality Assurance** | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q2 **Tenderers should describe their proposed approaches to the delivery of the tasks and outputs set out in Section 2 above, as well as demonstrating their capacity to do so. Please include details of the proposed workflow and allocated responsibilities and resource, including personnel, hardware, software and data management systems.** Technical weighting 40% minimum score 50 | * Describe existing systems, procedures and training opportunities you have in place that would apply to the management of this project
* Detail how you intend to manage and deliver this project, including any consortium or sub-contracting arrangements, to ensure the project tasks and timescales are achieved.
* Provide a work plan/Gantt chart for the work, including deliverables and critical pathways
* Provide details of a quality control and assurance plan
* Identify potential problems/risks and explain how these will be managed if you are successful in being awarded the contract.
* Demonstrate adequacy of resource in terms of personnel, systems and hardware.
* The management plan for issues surrounding GDPR should be fully described in the relevant evaluation criteria section (above) but can be referred to here as well
* A pen portrait of the proposed Project Lead should be included in the Personnel evaluation criteria section (below).
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| **Personnel Skills, Knowledge, Experience and Accreditation** | Detailed Evaluation Criteria |
| Q3 **Tenderers should supply pen portraits of current staff proposed to take part in delivery of this contract, including the Project Lead, with details of their skills, knowledge, accreditations and any recent experience relevant to this tender.** Technical weighting 40% minimum score 50  | * **The ability to contact and consult high numbers of stakeholders using varied methods.**
* **Understanding of issues surrounding tenure, land management and access permission, particularly in rural settings.**
* **Capabilities in sensitive data management and GDPR compliance.**
* **Understanding of spatial mapping.**
* **Proven track record of good customer communication and service, especially with land managers.**
* **Capabilities in tracking processes and progress with good record keeping.**
* **Experience working on similar projects**
 |

Commercial (50%)

The Contract is to be awarded as a fixed price which will be paid according to the completion of the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements.

Suppliers are required to submit a total cost to provide the deliverables stated in the Specification of Requirements. In addition to this the Commercial Response template must be completed to provide a breakdown of the whole life costs against each deliverable used in the delivery of this requirement.

Calculation Method

The method for calculating the weighted scores is as follows:

* Commercial

Score = (Lowest Quotation Price / Supplier’s Quotation Price ) x 50% (Maximum available marks)

* Technical

Score = (Bidder’s Total Technical Score / Highest Technical Score) x 50% (Maximum available marks)

The total score (weighted) (TWS) is then calculated by adding the total weighted commercial score (WC) to the total weighted technical score (WT): WC + WT = TWS.

Information to be returned

Please note, the following information requested must be provided. Incomplete tender submissions may be discounted.

Please complete and return the following information:

* completed Commercial Response template
* separate response submission for each technical question (in accordance with the response instructions)
* completed Mandatory Requirements (Annex 1)
* completed Acceptance of Terms and Conditions (Annex 2)

Award

Once the evaluation of the Response(s) is complete all suppliers will be notified of the outcome via email.

The successful supplier will be issued the contract, incorporating their Response, for signature. The Authority will then counter sign

Annex 1 Mandatory Requirements

Part 1 Potential Supplier Information

Please answer the following self-declaration questions in full and include this Annex in your quotation response.

Part 1.1 Potential Supplier Information:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no. | Question | Response |
| 1.1(a) | Full name of the potential supplier submitting the information |  |
| 1.1(b)  | Registered office address (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(c) | Company registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(d) | Charity registration number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(e) | Head office DUNS number (if applicable) |  |
| 1.1(f) | Registered VAT number  |  |
| 1.1(g) | Are you a Small, Medium or Micro Enterprise (SME)? | (Yes / No) |

Note: See EU definition of SME <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_en>

Part 1.2 Contact details and declaration

By submitting a quotation to this RFQ I declare that to the best of my knowledge the answers submitted and information contained in this document are correct and accurate.

I declare that, upon request and without delay you will provide the certificates or documentary evidence referred to in this document.

I understand that the information will be used in the selection process to assess my organisation’s suitability to be invited to participate further in this procurement.

I understand that the authority may reject this submission in its entirety if there is a failure to answer all the relevant questions fully, or if false/misleading information or content is provided in any section.

I am aware of the consequences of serious misrepresentation.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no.  | Question | Response |
| 1.2(a) | Contact name |  |
| 1.2(b) | Name of organisation |  |
| 1.2(c) | Role in organisation |  |
| 1.2(d) | Phone number |  |
| 1.2(e) | E-mail address  |  |
| 1.2(f) | Postal address |  |
| 1.2(g) | Signature (electronic is acceptable) |  |
| 1.2(h) | Date |  |

Part 2 Exclusion Grounds

Part 2.1 Grounds for mandatory exclusion

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no.  | Question | Response |
| 2.1(a) | Please indicate if, within the past five years you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation been convicted anywhere in the world of any of the offences within the summary below. |
|  | Participation in a criminal organisation.  | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Corruption.  | ((Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Fraud.  | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Terrorist offences or offences linked to terrorist activities | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Money laundering or terrorist financing | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
|  | Child labour and other forms of trafficking in human beings | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.1 (b) |
| 2.1(b) | If you have answered yes to question 2.1(a), please provide further details.Date of conviction, specify which of the grounds listed the conviction was for, and the reasons for conviction.Identity of who has been convictedIf the relevant documentation is available electronically please provide the web address, issuing authority, precise reference of the documents. |  |
| 2.1 (c) | If you have answered Yes to any of the points above have measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (i.e. Self-Cleaning) | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(d) | Has it been established, for your organisation by a judicial or administrative decision having final and binding effect in accordance with the legal provisions of any part of the United Kingdom or the legal provisions of the country in which the organisation is established (if outside the UK), that the organisation is in breach of obligations related to the payment of tax or social security contributions? | (Yes / No) |
| 2.1(e) | If you have answered yes to question 2.3(a), please provide further details. Please also confirm you have paid or have entered into a binding arrangement with a view to paying, the outstanding sum including where applicable any accrued interest and/or fines. |  |

Part 2.2 Grounds for discretionary exclusion

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Question no.  | Question | Response |
| 2.2(a) | The detailed grounds for discretionary exclusion of an organisation are set out on this [webpage](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551130/List_of_Mandatory_and_Discretionary_Exclusions.pdf), which should be referred to before completing these questions. Please indicate if, within the past three years, anywhere in the world any of the following situations have applied to you, your organisation or any other person who has powers of representation, decision or control in the organisation |
| 2.2(b) | Breach of environmental obligations?  | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(c) | Breach of social obligations?  | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(d) | Breach of labour law obligations?  | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2(e) | Shown significant or persistent deficiencies in the performance of a substantive requirement under a prior public contract, a prior contract with a contracting entity, or a prior concession contract, which led to early termination of that prior contract, damages or other comparable sanctions? | (Yes / No)If yes please provide details at 2.2 (f) |
| 2.2 (f) | If you have answered Yes to any of the above, explain what measures been taken to demonstrate the reliability of the organisation despite the existence of a relevant ground for exclusion? (Self Cleaning) |  |

Annex 2 Acceptance of Terms and Conditions

I/We accept in full the terms and conditions appended to this Request for Quote document.

Company \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Position \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

