

About this Request for Information (RFI)

UK Space Agency is seeking information and expressions of interest for a planning and delivery partner for its Ignite Space events. **This is not a call for competition.** The intention of this exercise is to warm up the market, identify potential bidders, and collate information that will be considered when putting together a tender for the planning and delivery partner, which will follow this RFI.

If you are interested in this forthcoming opportunity, and/or if you have any information that could help, please provide details as requested in the “Information Requested” section below.

About Ignite Space

Ignite Space is a one-day event delivered by the UK Space Agency Local Growth team aimed at showcasing SMEs (small and medium enterprises) and focused on the support available to help them grow.

The first Ignite Space hosted ~250 delegates in Edinburgh in November 2021 and the second, hosted ~450 at Aerospace Bristol in March 2023. Each event has been evaluated in terms of feedback from attendees and lessons learned as well as stakeholder consultation used to plan and improve the next event.

Approval has been given (subject to business cases) to deliver 2 further Ignite Space events; one in 2024, and the other before 31st March 2025.

Objectives

To showcase UK SME's and Space ecosystem

To create commercialisation opportunities for start-ups and SMEs to engage with customers, collaborators, investors, and link them with the appropriate support they need to thrive.

Planned requirement.

We are considering delivering Ignite Space over 2 days. In the past, the event has started at 09:30 and ended with an evening of networking at around 19:30. This makes it a very long day for the organisers and delegates alike. We are thinking of starting at around 1pm on day one, ending at around 7pm with a more informal evening networking, providing some hot food but not a gala dinner. In the past we have worked with AstroAgency who delivered their SpaceBar live.

Day 2 would commence at 10am and go through until 2-3pm.

Ideas are sought on how this type of event model and agenda could engage the audience through two days. Or how a one-day event could deliver the mix of sessions/workshop, adequate networking time and an evening networking reception without feeling too rushed or exhausting.

At Ignite Space 2023 we introduced Zones - Business, Clusters, Government, and Skills, and engaged volunteer Zone leads to manage their Zones and create sessions based around those zone themes. The zone idea was successful but feedback from zone leads told us that they wanted more direction on what to deliver plus, as they were volunteers, it felt sometimes like they were doing favours and didn't really have the time to develop ideas, and this resulted in the agenda being published late and last-minute amendments to speakers or panellists.

We would like to keep the zone themes and add an Investment Zone. Ideas are sought on how Zones can add value to delegates and a proposal of what this might look like.

We want to engage and add value with keynote speeches, main stage panel sessions, workshops, meeting/roundtables. Ideas are sought on the types of keynote speakers the partner might bring to Ignite space, the value they will bring and why they feel they are relevant SMEs, this should include any new or interesting speakers with different perspectives applicable to the Space sector. A proposed outline agenda should be supplied to demonstrate their understanding of the requirement as well as the partner's credentials to deliver relevant and engaging material. Details of how the partner would engage with UKSA to design and agree the agenda would also be helpful.

We engaged a Master of Ceremonies (MC) at the last Ignite Space, someone with charisma to engage the audience as well as understand the context of the content of the sessions and event. Ideas are sought on how a Master of Ceremonies role could work, who they might bring or if they suggest no additional MC, how they envisage the flow of the event would work. There should not be a presumption that UKSA Staff will be on hand to MC.

We have invited businesses to exhibit at Ignite Space previously. We did not charge for the 2019 Ignite, and charged a nominal fee for the table and printed banner in 2023. The 2023 event looked more professional with uniform printed boards that gave the exhibition space a more professional look and feel. We are seeking ideas on how a partner would approach exhibition stands and how they will ensure there is a regular look and feel in terms of aesthetic and that costs particularly for SME's are not prohibitive.

Evening or 'after conference' networking has been popular at the last two events, and we have previously partnered with AstroAgency to deliver their SpaceBar live. Ideas are sought on proposed evening networking sessions with audience participation/discussion. Ideally, we would need sponsorship for evening networking particularly if alcohol is to be served due to public spending restrictions.

Each event has been evaluated in terms of delegate experience. Further consultation in spring 2022 provided outputs and lessons learned that were fed into the planning of Ignite 2023. We require our partner to conduct an evaluation and ideas are sought as to the metrics proposed to be measured, why and what they will tell us. Particularly in terms of making the case for future events.

We used Eventbrite to 'sell' free tickets at the previous events and engaged a professional ticketing company to produce the delegate badges for Ignite 2023. Ideas are sought on how a partner would approach and deliver ticketing and delegate badge provision efficiently as well as maximising take up of tickets that there is no charge for. One consideration is to partner with a charity, charge a nominal fee for tickets and all proceeds from ticket sales (100%) will be donated to the charity. Any ideas that incorporate or build on this should explain the potential charitable partners and the proposed mechanism for donating.

We want to publicise the event in good time therefore ideas are sought for how the public can engage with Ignite in the months leading up to the event (IT, comms, media etc) and why this is a valuable approach.

Any other considerations such as logistics, how equipment, exhibition materials etc will get to the venue should be outlined.

Scope

Planning on behalf of but in partnership with UK Space Agency

Engaging relevant high-profile guests/ speakers

Agenda creation in partnership with UKSA

Publication/ media/ communication

Ticketing (Eventbrite or other and registration/ badges at the event

Exhibition Stands coordinated to Zones, cost effective for startups (pricing~ £200) but scaled pricing depending on company revenue/size. We want Ignite Space to be accessible

Sponsors/ supporters national/ local specifically for evening networking.

Master of Ceremonies – engaging able to provide links reflections

Evaluation of event in terms of connections / feedback and value

Proposed Timescales

RFI– Early – Mid August 2023

Tender Early September 2023

Evaluation – End September 2023

Contract – Early-Mid October 2023

Planning – End October 2023 – March 2024

Delivery – May/June 2024

Information Requested

Please provide the following information in your response **by midnight on Friday 18th August 2023** to ignite-space@ukspaceagency.gov.uk and commercial@ukspaceagency.gov.uk using the subject heading “**Ignite RFI UKSAC23_0073**”:

RFI Reference Number	UKSAC23_0073
Organisation Name	
Address	
Contact Name	
eMail Address	

Please provide a budgetary estimate of how much you would charge for the services outlined in this EOI (ex VAT)?

What do you think the cost would be to deliver the type of event outlined (excluding VAT)?

What types of interesting and engaging venues would you suggest for maximum impact?

Where would you suggest hosting the event in 2024 and 2025?

How would you plan maximum publicity for the event?

What kind of model for the event would you suggest?

How would you create maximum value for the Agency and for the participants, delegates, exhibitors, speakers?

What specific opportunities would you create and why would this be interesting or engaging for the audience?

What types of speakers could you attract and why would they be interesting or valuable to an SME audience?

How would you evaluate the event, including what metrics would you gather and how. Include how you would report the evaluation.