



**UK Research  
and Innovation**

# Invitation to Quote

## Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of UK Research and Innovation

**Subject: Expertise to inform a research programme:  
The Economics of Biodiversity Pre-programme  
Advisory Services**

**Sourcing Reference Number: PS21075**

**UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS)**  
[www.uksbs.co.uk](http://www.uksbs.co.uk)

Registered in England and Wales as a limited company. Company Number 6330639.  
Registered Office Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 1FF  
VAT registration GB618 3673 25  
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Version 5.0

**UKSBS**  
*Shared Business Services*

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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](#).

## **Privacy Statement**

At UK Shared Business Services (UK SBS) we recognise and understand that your privacy is extremely important, and we want you to know exactly what kind of information we collect about you and how we use it.

This privacy notice link below details what you can expect from UK SBS when we collect your personal information.

- We will keep your data safe and private.
- We will not sell your data to anyone.

- We will only share your data with those you give us permission to share with and only for legitimate service delivery reasons.

<https://www.uksbs.co.uk/use/pages/privacy.aspx>

For details on how the Contracting Authority protect and process your personal data please follow the link below:

<https://www.ukri.org/privacy-notice/>

## **Section 2 – About the Contracting Authority**

### **UK Research and Innovation**

Operating across the whole of the UK and with a combined budget of more than £6 billion, UK Research and Innovation represents the largest reform of the research and innovation funding landscape in the last 50 years.

As an independent non-departmental public body UK Research and Innovation brings together the seven Research Councils (AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, STFC) plus Innovate UK and a new organisation, Research England.

UK Research and Innovation ensures the UK maintains its world-leading position in research and innovation. This is done by creating the best environment for research and innovation to flourish.

For more information, please visit: [www.ukri.org](http://www.ukri.org)

### **Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)**

NERC is the driving force of investment in environmental science. Their leading research, skills and infrastructure help solve major issues and bring benefits to the UK, such as affordable clean energy, air pollution, and resilience of our infrastructure.

<https://nerc.ukri.org/>

## 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	UK Research and Innovation, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, SN2 1FF
3.2.	Buyer name	James Medici
3.3.	Buyer contact details	ProfessionalServices@uksbs.co.uk
3.4.	Maximum value of the Opportunity	£40,000.00 Excluding VAT, inclusive of the optional one month extension period
3.5.	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	<b>All correspondence shall be submitted within the Messaging Centre of the e-sourcing. Guidance Notes to support the use of Delta eSourcing is available <a href="#">here</a>. 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.</b>

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6.	Date of Issue of Contract Advert on Contracts Finder	Tuesday, 22 June 2021 Location: Contracts Finder
3.7.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Delta eSourcing messaging system	Monday, 05 July 2021 11:00 am
3.8.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Delta eSourcing Portal	Wednesday, 07 July 2021
3.9.	Latest date and time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Delta eSourcing	Thursday, 15 July 2021 14:00 pm
3.10.	Date/time Bidders should be available if clarifications are required	Friday, 16 July 2021 – Friday, 23rd July 2021
3.11.	Anticipated notification date of successful and unsuccessful Bids	Tuesday, 27 July 2021
3.12.	Anticipated Contract Award date	Thursday, 29 July 2021
3.13.	Anticipated Contract Start date	Monday, 02 August 2021
3.14.	Anticipated Contract End date	Friday, 03 December 2021 with the option to extend for an additional month on a time-only basis for completion of non-time critical deliverables
3.15.	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

## Section 4 – Specification

### Expertise to inform a research programme: The Economics of Biodiversity Pre-programme Adviser

#### Requirement overview

UKRI NERC is seeking an academic or a small academic team in biodiversity/conservation science, environmental economics and/or related interdisciplinary research to provide short-term research and innovation focussed academic expertise to ensure the forthcoming Economics of Biodiversity strategic research programme supports recent developments in the area and is appropriately structured to deliver to these developments as well as its identified goals.

#### Introduction and background

##### *The Economics of Biodiversity*

Biodiversity loss is among the top global risks to society and it is currently declining faster than at any time in human history (e.g. [IPBES 2019 Global Assessment Report](#)). This loss undermines human health and well-being (including the emergence of zoonotic diseases), societal resilience and progress towards global targets such as the sustainable development goals. Biodiversity is a critical component of natural assets that support the delivery of ecosystem services, through which humans receive the goods and benefits that are essential for their existence. It is through this conceptual ecosystem service framework that both monetary and non-use values can be quantified and ascribed, and we can start to understand the economic importance of biodiversity, and therefore the impacts of its loss.

However, despite biodiversity and ecosystems being of critical importance to human health, well-being and economic prosperity, they are consistently undervalued in both conventional economic analyses and in decision making. In order that value-based decisions become more informed and robust, it is imperative that the explicit values of biodiversity are determined. Moreover, we need to better understand the types of biodiversity that are required to maintain, restore and enhance ecological function in multi-functional systems in order to support human health, wellbeing and economic prosperity.

Advancing our knowledge in these areas will provide a critical step toward an improved, more holistic valuation of biodiversity, and ensure that it is taken into account in decision making by developing and applying suitable tools and indicators, stimulating market development, and supporting practical evidence-based action. In delivering evidence in a proactive way, there is an opportunity to shape political and economic thinking into the future and influence decision making across scales from individual and local through to national and international, rather than being reactionary to emerging policies and market forces.

Commissioned by the HM Treasury, the [Dasgupta Review on the Economics of Biodiversity](#) shows humanity's demands on nature far exceeds its capacity to supply, and calls for fundamental changes to economics to enable sustainable engagement with

nature including the need for economic and finance decision-making to reflect that humanity and the global economy are embedded within nature, not external to it.

Initial NERC funding has been secured to develop a new interdisciplinary research programme on the economics of biodiversity, which will address critical gaps in our understanding of the economic costs of biodiversity loss (and benefits of conserving and restoring biodiversity) - including multiple values, ecological limits, trade-offs, co-benefits, political economy and just transition - and how this knowledge can be used in more effective management and decision making at local, national and global scales. Three integrated work packages are envisaged:

- 1) Understanding the values of Biodiversity
- 2) Biodiversity, natural capital and resilience
- 3) Management tools and decision-making

### **Detailed requirements**

The Pre-programme Adviser will critically review and revise the existing concept for a new research programme *The Economics of Biodiversity*, which is intended to address key research questions where investment could make a step change in this area. The Pre-programme Adviser will provide expertise to inform NERC planning of programme activities to ensure the programme will deliver its goals. Specifically, the Pre-programme Adviser role will include the following:

1. Building on the initial programme concept (to be shared in full with the successful supplier), develop a clear overarching vision that articulates a new, clearly defined programme bringing together different elements as a cohesive strategic programme of research, underpinned by a robust research case that builds the latest thinking (e.g. post-Dasgupta Review, the UN Biodiversity conference Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) COP15 and UN Climate conference COP26) into the research and innovation landscape.
  - a) Ensure the programme is timely and relevant, which will take forward and add value to the conclusions and recommendations of the Dasgupta Review;
  - b) Articulate how the programme could leave a legacy that deliver to the CBD COP15 (and associated the post-2020 global biodiversity framework) and COP26;
  - c) Build on the advances and thinking from relevant UKRI investments including [Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Sustainability](#) (BESS), [Valuing Nature, Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy](#) (CCCEP) and [Centre for the Understanding of Sustainable Prosperity](#) (CUSP);
  - d) Strengthen programme alignment, and relevance to, other relevant strategic goals of the UK including (but not restricted to): Net zero carbon, Net environmental gain, place/levelling up agenda;
2. Work with NERC staff to develop programme activities including:
  - a) A full announcement of opportunity for main grants call to be launched by end of 2021;
  - b) An outline announcement of opportunity for a knowledge exchange fellowship call to be launched in 2022;
  - c) Define programme coordination and integration function requirements for funded projects that will necessitate the use of additional programme funds;



3. Stakeholder engagement and wider opportunities:
  - a) Support NERC staff in engaging key stakeholders including Defra and other UKRI research councils through emails and virtual meetings;
  - b) Support the design and delivery of a one-day CBD COP15-themed workshop (to be held in September 2021) including assisting the design of workshop agenda, facilitating at the workshop, synthesising outputs from the workshop to inform the programme;
  - c) Support the design and delivery of a programme webinar supporting the launch of the main grants call in November 2021, and additional webinars as required;
  - d) Identify potential wider opportunities for the programme e.g. with other relevant national and international initiatives such as the [Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures](#) (TNFD).
4. Programme evaluation:
  - a) Develop a programme theory of change with specific deliverables;
  - b) Work with the NERC staff to develop a programme logic model and an outline programme evaluation plan.
5. Programme external communications:
  - a) Identify external communication opportunities for the programme e.g. associated with CBD COP15 and COP26;
  - b) Work with NERC staff and UKRI comms team to produce written content on the programme e.g. blog article, as required.

***Eligibility for future programme funding and confidentiality*** There is potential for conflict of interest due to the role of the Advisor(s) in developing announcement of opportunities. Therefore, applicants should note that the successful Adviser(s) will not be eligible to bid for research grant funding from the programme. The restriction applies only to the Adviser(s) and does not extend to members of their research department or organisation. In addition, Advisor(s) must not disclose any information relating to upcoming announcement of opportunities without prior written permission of UKRI NERC and observe the Supplier's confidentiality obligations detailed in the Contract.

### **Outputs**

All outputs detailed below are essential to the delivery of this contract. However, there are a number of outputs with critical deadlines which must be met by the dates stated. The indicative outputs are target deadlines which UKRI NERC would like the successful supplier to work towards, but these may change based on other dependencies, which will be reviewed regularly as part of regular catch ups.

#### **Outputs with critical deadlines:**

- Final revised programme vision detailing the objectives above by Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021
- Full scope for the main grants call (announcement of opportunity) by Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021

#### **Outputs with indicative deadlines:**

- Support A NERC CBD COP15-themed workshop in September 2021
- Programme Theory of Change by end September 2021

- Programme logic model and outline programme evaluation plan by end October 2021
- Economics of Biodiversity programme webinar in November 2021
- Outline programme coordination and integration function requirements for funded projects by 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021;
- Outline scope for a future knowledge exchange fellowship call by 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021

Throughout all work completed, whether towards critical or indicative deadlines, the successful supplier will be required to engage with UKRI NERC as follows:

- Flash reports via email to NERC of any progress and directions taken
- Regular (initially fortnightly) verbal update to NERC (email update sufficient if schedules do not allow for verbal update) to identify progress and challenges

#### **Key information**

- Anticipated contract start date 02/08/21
- Contract end date 03/12/21 with the option to extend for an additional month on a time-only basis, should the successful supplier need extra time to complete outputs with indicative deadlines (critical deadlines must be completed by dates as detailed above)
- Must have access to Microsoft software and Zoom/MS Teams. Office space and equipment will not be provided.
- Must attend a start-up video conference meeting w/c 02/08/21
- Project will be delivered remotely with no site visits required

#### **Timeline**

- This agreement shall run from the period August 2021 to December 2021 with option to extend;
- A start-up video conference meeting will be scheduled for early August 2021;
- Delivery of outputs according to the deadlines listed in outputs section above.

#### **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.

#### **Payment Schedule**

50% of the total award will be payable to the supplier within 30 days following the delivery of final revised programme vision and full scope of main grants call due at the end of September 2021. The remaining 50% will be payable to the supplier within 30 days after all remaining expected outputs detailed under Provision of Service are delivered, and approval that the outlined specifications have been met.

## 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.

Pass / Fail criteria		
Questionnaire	Q No.	Question subject
Commercial	SEL1.2	Employment breaches/ Equality
Commercial	SEL1.3	Compliance to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act
Commercial	SEL2.10	Cyber Essentials
Commercial	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	AW4.1	Compliance to the Contract Terms
Commercial	AW4.2	Changes to the Contract Terms
Price	AW5.1	Firm and Fixed Price
Price	AW5.4	E Invoicing
Price	AW5.5	Maximum budget
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
Quality	AW6.2	Variable Bids
Quality	AW6.3	Deadlines to deliver
-	-	Invitation to Quote – received on time within e-sourcing tool
In the event of a Bidder failing to meet the requirements of a Mandatory pass / fail criteria, the Contracting Authority reserves the right to disqualify the Bidder and not consider evaluation of any of the Award stage scoring methodology or Mandatory pass / fail criteria.		

Scoring criteria			
<b>Evaluation Justification Statement</b>  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	10%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Approach and Methodology	30%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Expertise and capacity to deliver	30%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Project plan and risk management	30%

## 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 there will be multiple evaluators. All bid responses will be assessed and scored individually before a moderation meeting is held to reach a consensus score which will be the final score awarded for each question. For absolute clarity, the final score awarded to the bidder will reflect the consensus score agreed by the evaluation panel. In the event there is not a common consensus, the individual scores will be averaged to give a 'mean' score for the response.

If average (mean) scoring is required to determine your final score, this will be calculated as per the following example:

**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 how to register and use the e-sourcing portal 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 Delta eSourcing 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 Delta eSourcing, Telephone 0845 270 7050
- 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 the Delta eSourcing Portal.
- 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 Delta eSourcing Portal.
- 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 the Delta eSourcing Portal.
- 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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**

- [Contracts Finder](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)

## **8.0 Freedom of information**

8.4.1 In accordance with the obligations and duties placed upon public authorities by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (the 'FoIA') and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (the 'EIR') (each as amended from time to time), UK SBS or the Contracting Authority may be required to disclose information submitted by the Bidder to the Contracting Authority.

8.4.2 In respect of any information submitted by a Bidder that it considers to be commercially sensitive the Bidder should complete the Freedom of Information declaration question defined in the Question FOI1.2.

8.4.3 Where a Bidder identifies information as commercially sensitive, the Contracting Authority will endeavour to maintain confidentiality. Bidders should note, however, that, even where information is identified as commercially sensitive, the Contracting Authority may be required to disclose such information in accordance with the FoIA or the Environmental Information Regulations. In particular, the Contracting Authority is required to form an independent judgment concerning whether the information is exempt from disclosure under the FoIA or the EIR and whether the public interest favours disclosure or not. Accordingly, the Contracting Authority cannot guarantee that any information marked 'confidential' or "commercially sensitive" will not be disclosed.

8.4.4 Where a Bidder receives a request for information under the FoIA or the EIR during the procurement, this should be immediately passed on to UK SBS or the Contracting Authority and the Bidder should not attempt to answer the request without first consulting with the Contracting Authority.

8.4.5 Bidders are reminded that the Government's transparency agenda requires that sourcing documents, including ITQ templates such as this, are published on a designated, publicly searchable web site, and, that the same applies to other sourcing documents issued by UK SBS or the Contracting Authority, and any contract entered into by the Contracting Authority with its preferred supplier once the procurement is complete. By submitting a response to this ITQ Bidders are agreeing that their participation and contents of their Response may be made public.

## **8.5. Response Validity**

8.5.1 Your Response should remain open for consideration for a period of 60 days. A Response valid for a shorter period may be rejected.

## **8.6. Timescales**

8.6.1 [Section 3](#) of the ITQ sets out the proposed procurement timetable. the Contracting Authority reserves the right to extend the dates and will advise potential Bidders of any change to the dates.

## **8.7. The Contracting Authority's Contact Details**

8.7.1 Unless stated otherwise in these Instructions or in writing from UK SBS or the Contracting Authority, all communications from Bidders (including their sub-contractors, consortium members, consultants and advisers) during the period of this procurement must be directed through the e-sourcing tool to the designated UK SBS contact.

#### 8.7.2

All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool may be submitted to Delta eSourcing on 0845 270 7050 please note this is a free self-registration website and this can be done by completing the online questionnaire at <https://uksbs.delta-esourcing.com/>

8.7.3 Bidders should be mindful that the designated Contact should not under any circumstances be sent a copy of their Response outside of the e-sourcing tool. Failure to follow this requirement will result in disqualification of the Response.