

**NMRN
Guidance and
Frequently Asked Questions
(FAQs) – Open ITT**

Market Research and Audience Development Project

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Section 1

Introduction

- 1.1. This document is designed to assist tenderers in understanding how to complete an Invitation to Tender (ITT) document response and to answer any questions regarding the process related to public sector procurement.

Instructions

- 1.2. The 'Open' Invitation to Tender (ITT) document includes three parts for the supplier to complete.
- 1.3. Parts 1 and 2 are mandatory parts which are required under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and include supplier information and exclusions grounds. Part 3 is the evaluation criteria for the procurement being sought by the NMRN and is used for scoring and placing the contract with the winning tenderer.
- 1.4. The template that you have received from the NMRN must not be amended as it must remain compliant with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Any amendments gaps, omissions, misrepresentations, errors, uncompleted sections, or changes to the format of the tender documentation provided will result in your disqualification from the tender process.
- 1.5. Potential tenderers must be explicit and comprehensive in their responses to this questionnaire as this will be the single source of information on which responses will be assessed. Potential tenderers are advised neither to make any assumptions about their past or current supplier relationships with the NMRN nor to assume that such prior business relationships will be taken into account in the evaluation procedure.
- 1.6. Supporting documents should be provided in English and should be clearly marked with the name of your organisation and the number of the question to which they refer.
- 1.7. If you have any queries regarding how to complete this document please address them through the questions and answers stage of the tender. Failure to provide the required information, make a satisfactory response to any question, or supply documentation referred to in responses within the specified timescale may lead to your tender being judged to be non-compliant.

Consequences of Misrepresentation

- 1.8. If you seriously misrepresent any factual information in filling in the ITT, and so induce the NMRN to enter into a contract, there may be significant consequences. You may be excluded from the procurement procedure, and from bidding for other contracts for three years. If a contract has been entered into you may be sued for damages and the contract may be rescinded. If fraud, or fraudulent intent, can be proved, you or your responsible officers may be prosecuted and convicted of the offence of fraud by false representation, and you must be excluded from further procurements for five years.

Principles of Scoring

- 1.9. In assessing the answers to the questions in Part 1 and Part 2, the NMRN will be seeking evidence of the Potential tenderers suitability to “perform the services / deliver the requirements of the contract” in terms of economic and financial standing, technical and professional ability. Qualification criteria will be a combination of factors and will be in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015.
- 1.10. Responses to the questions in Part 3 will be evaluated in accordance with the Evaluation Approach detailed in the ITT. In the event that none of the responses are deemed satisfactory, the NMRN reserves the right to consider alternative procurement options.

Parts 1 and 2: Selection Criteria

Scoring			
Section		Scoring	Requirements
1	Supplier Information 1.1 Potential supplier information 1.2 Bidding model 1.3 Contact detail and declaration	Required Data	The data provided is for information only and will not be scored or assessed; however if the information requested is not provided your bid will be judged to be non-compliant unless there is an acceptable reason for its omission.
2	Grounds for mandatory exclusion	Pass / Fail	The NMRN will exclude from the procurement process any supplier where there is evidence of conviction relating to the criminal offence detailed in section (in accordance with the criteria set out in the Public Contract Regulation 2015).
3	Grounds For Discretionary Rejection	Pass / Fail	The NMRN may exclude from the procurement process any supplier who answers ‘Yes’ in any of the situations set out in section 3 (in accordance with the criteria set out in the Public Contract Regulation 2015).
4	Economic and Financial Standing	Pass / Fail	An assessment of the information / evidence provided will be used to ensure organisations have sufficient financial capacity to perform the contract <u>Minimum financial threshold</u> Your annual turnover, as calculated against the latest years accounts submitted, should be a minimum of twice the estimated annual contract value. <u>Minimum financial threshold</u> If requested by the NMRN, your annual turnover, as calculated against the latest years accounts submitted, should be a minimum of two times the estimated annual contract value.

5	Group financial information	Pass / Fail	Wider group accounts and commitments to provide guarantees may be taken in to account in the event that the applying organisation does not have sufficient financial standing following the financial assessment.
6	Technical and Professional Ability	Pass / Fail	The decision to Pass / Fail this section is based on an assessment of the information and references provided. Please note: the NMRN reserves the right to take up the references named and further inspection of current contracts may also be made to resolve any questions about technical efficiency, quality, service levels and reliability.
7	Modern Slavery Act 2015	Pass / Fail	The NMRN must be satisfied that you are compliant with the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (if applicable to your organisation)
8.1	Insurance	Pass / Fail	You must confirm that required insurance levels would be in place and certificates provided prior to the contract award.
8.2	Health and Safety	Pass / Fail	<p>You must confirm that you comply with the applicable Health and Safety legislation and identify if the organisation, or its Directors or Executive officer, have been in receipt of enforcement/remedial orders in the last three years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If the organisation or any of its Directors or Executive Officers have been in receipt of enforcement/remedial action orders you must have demonstrated to the NMRN's satisfaction that appropriate remedial action has been taken to prevent future occurrences or breaches. <p>Where you use sub-contractors, you must confirm that processes are in place to check whether any of the above circumstances apply to these other organisations.</p>
8.3	Compliance with equality legislation	Pass / Fail	<p>You must confirm that you comply with all applicable legislation and declare any findings made against your organisation in the last three years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If findings have been made or complaints have been upheld you must have demonstrated to the NMRN's satisfaction that appropriate remedial action has been taken to prevent reoccurrence. <p>Where you use sub-contractors, you must confirm that processes are in place to check whether any of the above circumstances apply to these other organisations.</p>
8.4	Information Security	Pass / Fail	The NMRN must be satisfied that appropriate Information Security arrangements are in place.
8.5	Quality Management	Pass / Fail	The NMRN must be satisfied that appropriate policies and arrangements are in place with regard to your Quality Management arrangements.
8.6	Business Continuity / Disaster Recovery	Pass / Fail	The NMRN must be satisfied that appropriate Business Continuity arrangements are in place.

8.7	Environmental Management	Pass / Fail	<p>You must declare if you have been convicted of breaching environmental legislation, or had any notice served by the environmental regulator or authority (including a local authority) in the last three years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If notices have been served you must have demonstrated to the NMRN's satisfaction that appropriate remedial action has been taken to prevent future occurrences or breaches. <p>Where you use sub-contractors, you must confirm that processes are in place to check whether any of the above circumstances apply to these other organisations.</p>
8.8	Credit Rating	Pass / Fail	<p>You must confirm that you have an Experian rating above 70 and will provide evidence upon request.</p>

Parts 1 and 2: Scoring Principles

Required Data

Required Data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The data provided is for information only and will not be scored / assessed but if the information requested is not provided the bid will be judged to be non-compliant unless there is an acceptable reason for its omission.
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Pass / Fail

Pass	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The information / evidence has been assessed and judged to be acceptable.
Fail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No information / evidence has been provided. The standard of the information / evidence provided is unacceptable. The information / evidence has been assessed and does not comply with the minimum acceptable standard.

Part 3: Technical / Quality Evaluation Criteria

Please respond to all of the sections (as detailed in the Evaluation criteria contained within the ITT documentation).

If you are bidding on behalf of a group (consortium) or you intend to use sub-contractors, you should complete all of the Evaluation questions on behalf of the consortium and/or any sub-contractors.

Criteria		Area Weighting
QUALITY		Overall Weighting: 60%
1	Criteria 1 Understanding of brief and proposed methodology	20%
2	Criteria 2 Experience in sector and understanding of market place	10%
3	Criteria 3 Demonstrable experience of delivering similar projects to budget and timeline	10%
4	Criteria 4 Accessibility and ease of use of proposed reporting mechanisms	5%
5	Criteria 5 Proposed team experience offering breadth and depth	5%
PRICE		Overall Weighting: 40%
6	Price	40%
TOTAL		100%

Additional Information

- 1.11. The NMRN expressly reserves the right to require a Potential tenderer to provide additional information supplementing or clarifying any of the information provided in response to the requests set out in this questionnaire. The NMRN may seek independent financial and market advice to validate information declared, or to assist in the evaluation.
- 1.12. Failure to provide the required information, make a satisfactory response to any question, or supply documentation referred to in responses, within the timescale given, may mean that your organisation will not be considered further.
- 1.13. Bids will be deemed to be non-compliant, and will not be considered further, where they do not achieve a "Pass" in one or more of the sections included in this selection questionnaire.

Section 2

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Question	Answer
When will the tender be released?	The tender documents will be released on 2 nd December 2022
How long will I have to put together my tender?	<p>Tenderers will have 45 days to develop and submit their tenders.</p> <p><i>The tender period has added a 10-day period to account for the 'Christmas Shutdown' of potentially the NMRN and other potential suppliers between 24th December 2022 and 3rd January 2023.</i></p> <p>The deadline for tender returns is Monday 16th December 2022 at 12pm (Midday) UK Time.</p>
What will I be required to complete for the tender?	<p>The tender documents to be completed by the tenderers will consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard Selection Questionnaire (SSQ) Tenderer Response Pack (if responding to an Open ITT) Invitation to Tender Tenderer Response Pack Form of Tender Declaration <p>Each of these documents will explain the required information to be included by tenderers and further information can be found within the ITT document that will be published at the time of tender release.</p>
Why do I have to fill in questions about my company?	<p>Parts 1 and 2 of the Open ITT are the mandatory Selection Questionnaire sections which are required under law (Public Contracts Regulations 2015) and enables suppliers to make a self-declaration on their own behalf in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Their organisation and proposed bidding model Grounds for exclusion from procurement procedures Financial standing and technical capability
What if I have questions during the tender period?	<p>Clarification questions can be raised with the NMRN directly during the tender process through the tenders@nmrn.org.uk email.</p> <p>Only questions raised through this method will be answered by the NMRN during the tender period.</p> <p>However, on receipt of any clarification questions NMRN will publish the response to all tenderers to ensure a fair spread of relevant information and no advantage to a provider asking the question.</p>
Where will I be able to access the tender documents?	<p>All of the tender documents will be made available through the MyTenders e-procurement tool, advertised on the Contracts Finder and/or Find a Tender website(s).</p> <p>Contracts Finder: Contracts Finder - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p> <p>Find a Tender: Find high value contracts in the public sector - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>

Question	Answer
What if I miss the deadline? Can I ask for an extension?	<p>In certain situations, an extension can be requested to a tender period, however, the threshold for this being permitted is very high.</p> <p>If you miss the deadline through your own fault, (such as lack of planning regarding annual leave of staff), the tender period will not be extended. Extensions will only be given in exceptional circumstances normally affecting more than one supplier.</p> <p>All tenderers are therefore encouraged to complete and upload their tender responses well in advance of the deadline to ensure no last minute issues.</p>
How will my bid be assessed and scored?	<p>All bids are assessed and scored by a dedicated evaluation panel assigned to the project.</p> <p>The evaluation criteria for every scored question is outlined clearly within the relevant document and scored questions can be found within both the Standard Selection Questionnaire Tenderer Response Pack and the Invitation to Tender Response Pack.</p> <p>The scoring methodology used by tenderers is included throughout the tender documents.</p> <p>Each evaluator will score the questions. This is then collated, and a moderation meeting is held which discusses each tenderers response to the question and a final score is agreed in every instance.</p>
How will you tell me whether I have been successful or not?	<p>All tenderers will receive a letter from the NMRN confirming the outcome of their bid.</p> <p>This will be issued directly to all tenderers and will detail scores awarded in response to the assessed questions, and the reasoning behind them.</p>
I have never completed a tender before – is there further assistance available to me?	<p>Where you require further assistance with tendering please contact the NMRN with the issues being experienced.</p> <p>Where the question is related directly to the procurement process and may be of interest to all tenderers or confer an unfair advantage, it will be shared on the clarification log.</p>