

# Invitation to Quote

Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of **UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS)**

Subject: **OBI Storage**

Sourcing Reference Number: **DDaT19273**

**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 1.0

**UKSBS**  
*Shared Business Services*

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# Section 1 & 2 – 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.

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>

## 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 Shared Business Services Ltd, Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon, SN2 1FF
3.2.	Buyer name	Ben Osborne
3.3.	Buyer contact details	<a href="mailto:DDaTProcurement@uksbs.co.uk">DDaTProcurement@uksbs.co.uk</a>
3.4.	Maximum value of the Opportunity	£110,000.00 ex VAT
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	Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> November 2019 Contracts Finder
3.7.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Delta eSourcing messaging system	Friday 29 <sup>th</sup> November 2019 14:00
3.8.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Delta eSourcing Portal	Tuesday 03 <sup>rd</sup> December 2019
3.9.	Latest date and time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Delta eSourcing	Monday 09 <sup>th</sup> December 2019 14:00
3.10.	Anticipated date Bidders should be available if written clarifications are required	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> December 2019
3.11.	Anticipated notification date of successful and unsuccessful Bids	Wednesday 08 <sup>th</sup> January 2020
3.12.	Anticipated Contract Award date	Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> January 2020
3.13.	Anticipated Contract Start date	Monday 13 <sup>th</sup> January 2020
3.14.	Anticipated Contract End date	Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup> January 2023
3.15.	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

- **Section 4 – Specification**

## **High performance storage System for Oracle Business Intelligence**

### **1. Background and General Requirement**

UKSBS runs two Oracle EBS systems, ROE and BOE. These use Oracle OBI as their reporting tool. OBI presents a very difficult workload and is highly sensitive to latency. It was intended to run the OBI function on the UKSBS Oracle storage platform which is a modern general purpose all flash array. However, performance was found to be poor and the system was moved to an in-house built ZFS array utilizing Optane disks. Performance was found to be good with this system but a Commercial Off the Shelf (COTS), supportable and Enterprise grade system is required going forward. A proof of concept has been undertaken with a commercial NVMe based ZFS device which also proved positive.

It has therefore been concluded that the extreme low latency offered by ZFS and NVMe is most likely to offer the performance required and so tenders for a COTS device based on these technologies are invited.

The tender is for supply, installation, storage system design (disk/disk pool/volume layout etc, in association with the in-house team), commissioning, performance validation and knowledge transfer to our team. Data transfer will be handled by the in-house team using our own tools.

**Acceptance Testing (Proof of concept):** UK SBS reserves the right, if deemed necessary, to provide the required confidence in the system, to run an Acceptance Testing on the selected system before committing to a purchase. All costs associated to the Acceptance Testing will be at the supplier's expense. However, if the Acceptance Testing is not undertaken by UKSBS or the selected solution has successfully passed the Acceptance Testing all costs as quoted in the Price Schedule including delivery, implementation and commissioning of the equipment will be paid to the Supplier. UK SBS shall have a period of 2 weeks from the date of receipt of the equipment to test the solution supplied under this Contract.

Upon receipt of the equipment UK SBS will test it for compliance with the specifications and in line with the process as described in section 4- Acceptance Testing (Proof of concept) below. Acceptance of the equipment will occur upon the earlier of either:

(a) Supplier's receipt of a notice from UK SBS stating that the equipment has met the Acceptance criteria; or

(b) 21 days, or other mutually agreeable time period, after the date of delivery, unless notice of non-acceptance (including specific reasons for non-acceptance) is provided to the Supplier. Upon successful completion of Acceptance Testing UKSBS will notify the Supplier in writing of the final acceptance.

UK SBS shall have the right to reject the equipment and not enter into the contract with the Supplier if as a result of the Acceptance Testing the solution fails to meet the criteria of the Acceptance Testing.

## **2. System Requirements**

### **2.1 Minimum Requirements**

- The system must be able to present NFS v3 and D-NFS via 8x10GB Ethernet/SFP+ and Fibre channel;
- The system must be able to present at least 200 NFS volumes.
- It must be possible to increase the size of volumes without interrupting service.
- It must be possible to increase the number of 10G ports.
- The system must be able to make near instantaneous space efficient snapshots on which test Oracle environments could be built and run both as writable snapshots or by splitting into new volumes;
- For security reasons, we require to retain failed drives unless the data on them can be encrypted without adversely impacting performance.
- Please state the usable storage of the system. A minimum of 30TB is required, accounting for any free space required by the system and savings from compression. Likely compression rates should be justified.
- The solution offered must be secured to OFFICIAL SENSITIVE level.
- Security is very important to us and we must be able to control what data is sent to the support service. Please describe the granularity of data control
- Manufacturer's support must be available for a minimum of 5 years from the date of purchase.

### **2.2 Compatibility requirements**

- OBI is a very latency sensitive system and the storage will need to be able to provide data at very low latency (sub 1ms) and high throughput (7.5 **Gigabytes** per second across the storage system, assuming 8x 10GB links) on OBI loads.
- OBI is an Oracle proprietary system which presents a difficult load.

### **2.3 Management Features**

The solution must be easy to manager, features which we would expect to see include:

- Quality of Service features which can be used to guarantee performance on critical volumes;
- Scalability of the system to allow for future requirements;
- Multiple sysadmin users and a range of access levels (e.g. admin/superuser/user etc).
- Comprehensive monitoring, management and alerting tools on the system;
- High reliability at the component level (generally with non-service interrupting replacement).
- 3 Year Support services with relevant escalation procedures for enterprise systems. This is expected to be at least 24/7/365 4h response.

## **3. Installation and Knowledge Transfer**

The winning supplier will be responsible for supply, installation, storage system design (disk/disk pool/volume layout etc, in association with the in-house team), commissioning,

performance validation and knowledge transfer to our team. Data transfer is out of scope of this requirement as it will be handled by the in-house team using our own tools.

The in-house storage team will need to be able to configure and support the system on a day to day basis, therefore the winning supplier will need to provide an adequate level of training and knowledge transfer for up to four engineers.

The supplier shall deliver the equipment directly to UK SBS on site at Polaris House, Swindon by their nominated installation & commissioning engineer. The deadline for the delivery and installation should be complete by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020 at the latest.

Installation & Commissioning:

The supplier will be expected to install and commission the equipment during office hours, Monday to Friday 09:00 – 17:00. Dates will be agreed between UK SBS and the winning Supplier after contract award.

#### **4. Acceptance Testing (Proof of concept)**

This will take the form of a 2-week on-site trial of the tendered equipment starting from the installation and commissioning date of the equipment. The supplier shall deliver the equipment directly to UK SBS on site at Polaris House, Swindon by their nominated installation & commissioning engineer. Any damage or defects shall be noted and agreed as the condition at time of accepted receipt. The installation engineer shall unpack the equipment, inspect it for damage, connect it to a designated power supply and make all necessary data connections and demonstrate it working. Any damage or defects shall be noted and agreed as the condition at time of Accepted Receipt. UK SBS shall safely retain and store the packaging for re-use at the end of the evaluation test period in case the equipment has failed the test and needs to be returned to the supplier.

Automated tests (OBI 30 user simulations plus SLOB) will be used alongside user experience testing to determine whether the equipment meets the performance metrics set out in section 2.2 above and provides adequate user experience. OBI constructs queries on the fly and performance can vary between runs so that it is not possible to give exact metrics. Therefore, over multiple runs, the system will be expected to complete our real-world tests at least as quickly as our in house developed zfs system. It must also be able to run the tests on two such environments, simultaneously, on one controller at comparable speeds.

In the instance that the equipment has failed the Acceptance Test, UK SBS will not purchase the equipment and the equipment will be returned to the Supplier. The Supplier's installation engineer shall return to site at Polaris House, Swindon to collect the equipment at a pre-arranged date prior to the end of the evaluation test period. The engineer will inspect the equipment for damage and record its working condition prior to disconnecting it from designated power supply and removing all data connections. The engineer will re-pack the equipment in the original packaging and agree and record the condition and working order of the equipment with UK SBS as it was at the time of Accepted Return.

UK SBS shall not be liable for any damage caused to packaging or equipment by the Supplier's nominated engineers during the set-up & commissioning or de-commissioning.

For the avoidance of doubt, any damage to the product or to the specialist packaging incurred during delivery or return is accepted by Supplier and UK SBS shall not be liable for any damage incurred outside of the receipt and return date from the test location Polaris House, Swindon.

**Please note variant bids will not be accepted.**

**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.

## 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.

The evaluation and if required team may comprise staff from UK SBS and the Contracting Authority and any specific external stakeholders the Contracting Authority deems required. After evaluation and if required moderation scores will be finalised by performing a calculation to identify (at question level) the mean average of all evaluators (Example – a question is scored by three evaluators and judged as scoring 5, 5 and 6. These scores will be added together and divided by the number of evaluators to produce the final score of 5.33 ( $5+5+6 = 16 \div 3 = 5.33$ ))

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	FOI1.2	Freedom of Information Act Exemptions
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	Bid price does not exceed maximum value of opportunity
Quality	AW6.2	Variable Bids
-	-	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

### Evaluation Justification Statement

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	20%
Quality	AW6.1	Minimum Requirements	15%
Quality	AW6.2	Compatibility Requirements	55%
Quality	AW6.3	Management Requirements	5%
Quality	AW6.4	Installation and Knowledge Transfer	5%

## Evaluation of criteria

### Non-Price elements

**All non-price element questions will be judged using the scoring method which is detailed in each question.**

Each question will be judged on a score from 0 to 100 detailed in each question, 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 50 from the available 100 points this will equate to 10% by using the following calculation:

$$\text{Score} = \{\text{weighting percentage}\} \times \{\text{bidder's score}\} = 20\% \times 50 = 10\%$$

All questions will be scored based on the above mechanism. Please be aware that there may be multiple evaluators. If so, their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score as follows:

#### Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 75

Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 75

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 50

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 50

Your final score will  $(75+75+50+50) \div 4 = 62.50$

**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 x 50 = 40)

The lowest score possible is 0 even if the price submitted is more than 100% greater than the lowest price.

## Evaluation process

The evaluation process will feature some, if not all, the following phases

Stage	Summary of activity
Receipt and Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ITQ logged upon opening in alignment with UK SBS's procurement procedures.</li> <li>Any ITQ Bid received after the closing date will be rejected unless circumstances attributed to the Contracting Authority or the e-sourcing tool beyond the bidder control are responsible for late submission.</li> </ul>
Compliance check	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check all Mandatory requirements are acceptable to the Contracting Authority.</li> <li>Unacceptable Bids maybe subject to clarification by the Contracting Authority or rejection of the Bid.</li> </ul>
Scoring of the Bid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation team will independently score the Bid and provide a commentary of their scoring justification against the Selection criteria.</li> </ul>
Clarifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Evaluation team may require written clarification to Bids</li> </ul>
Re - scoring of the Bid and Clarifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following Clarification responses, the Evaluation team reserve the right to independently re-score the Bid and Clarifications and provide a commentary of their re-scoring justification against the Selection criteria.</li> </ul>
Moderation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There shall be moderation meeting(s) between the evaluators to agree clarification questions</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To agree final scoring for each Bid and relative rankings of the Bids.</li></ul>
Validation of unsuccessful Bidders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To confirm contents of the letters to provide details of scoring</li></ul>

## **Section 6 – Evaluation questionnaire**

Bidders should note that the evaluation questionnaire is located within the **e-sourcing questionnaire**.

**Guidance on completion of the questionnaire 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](#)