



NEST Confidential

Invitation to Tender

TEN-1415-028 NEST - Employer Awareness and Perceptions' Surveys

April 2015

ITT NOTICES AND INSTRUCTIONS

1. The Requirement

- 1.1 This ITT covers NEST's requirement for Employer Awareness and Perceptions' Surveys.
- 1.2 The requirement is further described within the specification at Annex A.
- 1.3 The proposed conditions of contract are referenced at paragraph 7.3.
- 1.4 Please upload and submit your response and any supporting documents via NEST's e-tendering portal at <https://nesttenders.bravosolution.co.uk> by **Wednesday 29th April 2015 at 16:00 hours**.

2. Acknowledgement of Receipt of ITT

- 2.1 The recipient of this ITT is required to acknowledge receipt of the ITT, state whether or not a tender will be submitted and advise who within the tendering organisation will be responsible handling the tender.

3. Use of ITT Documents and Publicity

- 3.1 All documents contained in this ITT are confidential and must be used solely for the purposes of this ITT. The documents can only be passed on to third parties on a strictly "need to know" basis for the purposes of the tenderer preparing and submitting a tender.
- 3.2 Tenderers must not undertake any publicity activity regarding the procurement within any section of the media.

4. Questions Arising

- 4.1 Any questions that the tenderer may wish to pose to NEST during the tendering period must be sent via www.nesttenders.bravosolution.co.uk.
- 4.2 Questions and answers may, at NEST's discretion, be provided to other tenderers (in writing in the form of serially numbered bulletins). However, such information will remain anonymous as to the source when passed on.

5. Conduct

- 5.1 The tenderer must not communicate to any person the tender price (even approximately) before the date of the contract award other than to obtain, in strict confidence, a price for insurance required to submit the tender.
- 5.2 The tenderer must not try to obtain any information about any other person's tender or proposed tender before the date of the contract award.

- 5.3 The tenderer must not make any arrangements with any other person about whether or not they should tender, or about their tender price.
- 5.4 The tenderer must not offer any inducement to any member of NEST's staff for doing or refraining from doing any act in relation to the tender.
- 5.5 If the tenderer engages in any of the activities set out this paragraph or if NEST considers the tenderer's behaviour is in any way unethical NEST reserves the right to disqualify the tenderer from the procurement.

6. Tenderers

- 6.1 This tender opportunity is only open to all Providers.

7. Content of Tenders

- 7.1 The tenderer is required to submit a proposal, describing how they will meet the requirement set out in the specification at Annex A having regard to each of the evaluation criterion set out at Annex E and including the following points in the order set out below:
- 7.2 The tenderer must explicitly state any non-compliance to the specification within the proposal. The tenderer should also make clear where compliance to the specification would lead to disproportionate costs.
- 7.3 The tenderer must indicate unequivocal acceptance of the conditions of the Terms & Conditions as contained in Annex B or explicitly state any non-compliance and proposed amendments. Tenderers should note that the conditions of contract are standard and NEST does not expect any non-compliance unless this is necessary due to the nature of the specification.
- 7.4 The tenderer must nominate a Commercial Representative and/or Contract Manager.
- 7.5 The tenderer must provide quality proposal in accordance with Annex C (tender Response document) and fixed prices for delivering the contract in accordance with the template at Annex D attached as a separate document to this ITT. All prices in all tender documentation must be in pounds sterling.
- 7.6 The tenderer is required to submit a completed and signed Form of Tender in accordance with the template provided. NEST will accept a signed PDF version.
- 7.7 Where a conflict of interest exists or arises or may exist or arise during the procurement process or following contract award the tenderer must inform NEST and submit proposals to avoid such conflicts.
- 7.8 The tenderer is required to submit CV's of those individuals they propose to work on this contract.

8. Security and Identity Checks

8.1 During the procurement process, NEST may undertake security and/or identity checks on personnel requiring unescorted access to NEST's premises or IT network. The tenderer must be prepared to provide on request to NEST:

8.1.1 references covering the previous three years for individuals detailed in the tender requiring unescorted access to NEST's premises or IT network; or

8.1.2 Where an individual has been employed by the tenderer for less than three years, contact details for the individual's previous employer (to enable references to be obtained).

Note: individuals must be prepared to provide documentary evidence substantiating their identity and nationality and to sign a criminal declaration form on request by NEST.

9. Due Diligence

9.1 While reasonable care has been taken in preparing the information in this ITT and any supporting documents, the information within the documents does not purport to be exhaustive nor has it been independently verified.

9.2 Neither NEST, nor its representatives, employees, agents or advisors:

9.2.1 makes any representation or warranty (express or implied) as to the accuracy, reasonableness or completeness of the ITT and supporting documents; or

9.2.2 accepts any responsibility for the adequacy, accuracy or completeness of the information contained in the ITT and supporting documents nor shall any of them be liable for any loss or damage (other than in respect of fraudulent misrepresentation) arising as a result of reliance on such information or any subsequent communication.

9.3 It is the tenderer's sole responsibility to undertake such investigations and take such advice (including professional advice) as it considers appropriate in order to make decisions regarding the content of its tenders and in order to verify any information provided to it during the procurement process and to query any ambiguity, whether actual or potential.

10. Format of Tenders

10.1 Tenders must be legible and in English. Any amendments to the tender prior to submission must be initialled. Correction fluid must not be used.

10.2 Tenders must be compatible with Office 2003.

11. Standards

- 11.1 Where the specification refers to an International, European or British standard, the tenderer may offer an equivalent standard, provided that the standard offered contains equivalent guarantees of safety, suitability and fitness for purpose to the standard referred to in the specification.

12. Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (“TUPE”)

- 12.1 The tenderer’s attention is drawn to the above regulations. As a successful tenderer may be a potential transferee for the purposes of TUPE, the tenderer should ensure legal advice is sought as to whether TUPE applies to the proposed contract, and if so, to reflect the financial implications of such a transfer in the tender. If TUPE is deemed to apply then the financial implications are a matter for the tenderer and the incumbent contractor, not NEST.

13. Tender Return and Validity

- 13.1 The table below sets out the indicative timetable which this procurement is intended to follow. Please note that this may be subject to change during the process. Suppliers will be advised as to any change in dates.

ACTIVITY	DATE/TIMELINE
Contract Finder Notice Issued	Wednesday 15 th April 2015
Invitation to Tender Issued	Wednesday 15 th April 2015
Deadline for tender queries/clarifications	Monday 20 th April 2015, 15:00
Anticipated response to tender clarifications	Wednesday 22 nd April 2015, 17:00
Deadline for Receipt of Tenders	Wednesday 29 th April 2015, 16:00
Tender outcome communicated	w/e Friday 8 th May 2015
Contract issued & executed	w/c Monday 18 th May 2015
Contract commencement and kick off meeting	w/c Monday 18 th May 2015

- 13.2 Tenders must be submitted via www.nesttenders.bravosolution.co.uk
- 13.3 NEST will safeguard all tenders received and open them once the closing date and time has passed.
- 13.4 It is the tenderer’s responsibility to ensure that the tender arrives no later than the time and date stated above (unless the time and/or date are subsequently amended in writing by NEST). Late tenders may be rejected by NEST.
- 13.5 The tender must be based upon the conditions and specification(s) set out in the ITT and must contain all the information requested otherwise it may be rejected on the basis of being unsuitable and non-compliant.
- 13.6 By submitting a tender, the tenderer agrees that the tender remains valid for acceptance for a period of 90 days from the tender closing date.

14. Evaluation

- 14.1 NEST will award the contract(s) on the basis of the tender(s) that is/are most economically advantageous to NEST.
- 14.2 Proposals will be scored in accordance with the scoring methodology in Annex E. The score will then be multiplied by the weighting and an overall score calculated for each tender.
- 14.3 Certain criteria may have a minimum threshold that must be met by tenderers. If a single threshold is not met for one criterion then the response will be automatically unsuccessful and will not be considered in the final evaluation. ***Not Applicable to this proposed engagement.***
- 14.4 The scoring criteria are set out at Annex E.
- 14.5 NEST may request a presentation/tender clarification session by the top scoring tenderer on its proposal and reserves the right to consider the presentation or interview as part of the evaluation process.
- 14.6 Marketing and sales brochures will **not** be evaluated unless the tenderer makes a direct reference to a specific part of said documentation as providing evidence for a point made in the tender. Then such documentation shall only be considered to the extent of the reference made.

15. Acceptance of Tender and Notification of Award

- 15.1 NEST reserves the right to amend, add to or withdraw all, or any part of this ITT at any time during the procurement.
- 15.2 NEST shall not be under any obligation to accept the lowest price tender or any tender and reserves the right to accept such portion or portions as it may decide (unless the tenderer includes a formal statement to the contrary in the tender). NEST also reserves the right to award more than one contract to fulfil the requirement.
- 15.3 The tenderer will be notified of the outcome of the tender submission at the earliest possible time and will be afforded the opportunity of a written debrief.
- 15.4 Where the procurement process is subject to EU public procurement directives, a minimum standstill period of 10 calendar days will apply between communicating the award decision electronically to tenderers and awarding the contract. ***Not Applicable***
- 15.5 Nothing in the documentation provided by NEST to the tenderer during this procurement or any communication between the tenderer and NEST or NEST's representatives, employees, agents or advisors shall be taken as constituting an offer to contract or a contract. No tender will be deemed to have been formally accepted until the successful tenderer has received a formal contract award letter from NEST.

16. Tender Costs

- 16.1 Tenderers must obtain for themselves at their own responsibility and expense all information necessary for the preparation of tenders. NEST is not liable for any costs incurred by the tenderer as a result of the tendering procedure. Any work undertaken by the tenderer prior to the award of contract is a matter solely for the tenderer's own commercial judgement.

17. Access to Information

- 17.1 Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("FOIA") and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 ("EIR") NEST is obliged (subject to the application of any relevant exemptions) to disclose information in response to requests for information. The tenderer should be aware that NEST could receive requests for any information relating to this procurement.
- 17.2 In respect of any information submitted by a tenderer that it considers being commercially sensitive the tenderer should:
- 17.2.1 clearly identify such information as commercially sensitive;
 - 17.2.2 explain the potential implications of disclosure of such information; and
 - 17.2.3 provide an estimate of the period of time which the tenderer believes that such information will remain commercial sensitive.
- 17.3 Tenderers should note that even where information is identified as commercially sensitive, NEST may be required to disclose such information under the FOIA or the EIR.
- 17.4 Where a tenderer receives a request for information under the FOIA or the EIR during the procurement, this should immediately be passed to NEST and the tenderer should not attempt to answer the request without consulting NEST.

18. Transparency

- 18.1 Tenderers should be aware that in accordance with the Government's transparency agenda, NEST may publish the resultant contract (except any information which is exempt from disclosure in accordance with the provisions of the FOIA or EIR)

19. Contract Award

- 19.1 Following the contract award, NEST is required to publish at least the following information on Contract Finder (this information is only required for below EU threshold procurements):
- i. the full company name of the winning tenderer;
 - ii. the date on which the contract was entered into;
 - iii. the total value of the contract in pounds sterling; and
 - iv. an indication of whether the contractor is a Small or Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) or a Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE)

Annex A - Specification

1. Background

Context

The National Employment Savings Trust (NEST) was established to ensure that all employers and their workers had access to a high quality/low cost pension scheme they could use in order to comply with pension legislation now typically described as ‘auto enrolment’. In October 2012, following extensive research into the needs of our target market, NEST launched a sophisticated online pension product with innovative investment and communications, tailored for the needs of employers and a new generation of pension savers.

To date, NEST has played a significant role in helping employers to comply with the reforms. We have experienced very rapid growth in customer volumes and positive results in customer satisfaction research from both employers and members. As of the end of March 2015, we have over 2 million members with over 13,000 employers using the scheme.

The new pension duties have been ‘staged’ with the largest employers affected first; so far approximately 45,000 employers have begun the process of auto enrolment. However over the next 3 years, as small and micro employers begin to be affected; over 1 million employers will need to comply with the reforms. Ultimately many more employers will need to comply in each individual staging month than the total number of employers that have complied so far.

We now face the challenge of supporting many of these employers to use NEST. Many are likely to have limited resource and pension’s knowledge. The pensions market has also evolved since the introduction of auto enrolment with new entrants into the market and we expect there to be increased competition for small and micro employers. Whilst NEST has a legal duty to accept any employer that wishes to use it, it of course is keen to encourage as many ‘profitable’ firms to choose it as possible, and it is therefore important that NEST is not just seen as a ‘safe harbour’ but is also viewed as a positive choice.

To help meet the challenges posed by the sheer volume of employers, their limited knowledge and market competition, NEST is embarking on a significant programme of marketing activity. To help with monitoring the impact of this marketing activity NEST wants to conduct bi-annual surveys with small and micro employers, monitoring a small number of key metrics.

2. Research Objectives

The overall objective for this work is to monitor employers’ awareness, perceptions and intentions with regards to NEST.

We would like to conduct two (2) surveys covering the following topics:

Awareness

- Measure and track employers' and advisers' awareness of NEST, both prompted and unprompted. As a necessary precursor we may also need to measure awareness of the reforms and whether or not they have already staged.

Perceptions

- Measure and track employers' perceptions of NEST: overall and of specific product proposition features/brand attributes.

Intentions

- Build an understanding of how likely employers are to use NEST.

Communications/media activity

- Measure and track awareness of monitor NEST marketing activity.

The first survey will provide a benchmark for current awareness and perceptions, the second conducted later in the year, will help NEST to assess the impact of its marketing activity.

3. Approach and Sample Scope

a) Approach

In the past NEST has conducted quite detailed, awareness and perception tracking research, exploring employers understanding and intentions in significant detail. Our intention with these new surveys is not replicate this previous research, but rather to focus on a much more limited number of key metric questions.

Our expectation is that the survey could be short in length, hopefully taking no more than 5-10 minutes to complete in total. We are happy for the survey to be conducted over the phone or online. There may, however, be some benefits of using an online approach when it comes to testing awareness of NEST marketing activity, because if necessary we could include example imagery.

We are open to tenderers proposing to either establishing an ad hoc survey for NEST or making use of existing employer panels and omnibus surveys. We are also open to suggestions about the most appropriate sample size, although our current thinking is that we would like to conduct a survey of at least 1,000 employers to enable us to confidently analyse responses by a number of different factors such as:

- Employer size
- Length of time till staging date
- Sector
- Region

b) Sample Scope

Clearly setting the definition for which employers are considered ‘in scope’ for this research is very important.

Employers

To date employers have been allocated a staging date, by which they must comply with the auto enrolment legalisation, based on their largest PAYE scheme. This changes post June 2015. Between June 2015 and April 2017 employers will be allocated a staging date based on their PAYE reference number rather than the size of their PAYE scheme. Their largest PAYE scheme will have fewer than 30 workers. There are two months in 2015 (August and October) that will still be based on the size of their largest PAYE scheme (40-49 in August and 30-39 in October). Those employers staging between May 2017 and February 2018 will be new businesses created since April 2012.

This approach to allocating employers a staging month means it is not possible to create a definitive sample frame of employers yet to stage; only the pension’s regulator who informs employers of their staging date and is informed once they have complied, would be able to do this.

One approach to defining the sample would be to simply conclude that any employer who has yet to stage would be in scope. However, whilst we know that not all employers staging post June 2015 will employ fewer than 50 workers, the overwhelming majority will. It therefore might be more sensible to also use a proxy of employer size, and focus our research just on a small (5-49) and micro (1-4) employers. This will result in us missing some employers yet to stage with more than 50 workers, but screening for them in the wider employer population is likely to be prohibitively expensive.

Our survey sample should also be broadly reflective of the small and micro employer sector and regional distribution. Ideally we would like cross tabulations supplied to us which include top level SIC code classifications and regional breakdowns of results.

Survey respondent

It is important that we identify and speak to individuals who are at least significantly, if not entirely, responsible for making decisions about the organisation’s pension provision and how to comply with the pension reforms. In the smallest organisations this is likely to be the owner of the business, but it may also be someone responsible for payroll, finances, HR or more general office management functions.

Questionnaire content

The exact questionnaire design and content will be agreed following appointment, below provides an indication of the question topics we expect to cover. The topics highlighted in bold will be key metrics important to track. We would not expect the questions to change over the two (2) surveys except possibly for any questions we ask about awareness of NEST marketing activity.

Potential question topics

1. Awareness of reforms
2. Current pension provision
3. Have they already staged (screening question to filter out those that have already staged)
4. Knowledge of staging date (assess certainty). Report results broken down by:
 - Those staging in 0-6 months
 - Those staging in 7-12 months
 - Those staging in 12+ months
 - Don't know staging date
5. Level of consideration of pension scheme (i.e. not begun, begun but not finalised, finalising choice, confirmed choice)
6. **Awareness of NEST.**
 - a. **Unprompted** i.e. which pension providers are they aware they could use for Automatic Enrolment (AE)?
 - b. **Prompted** i.e. have they heard of NEST
7. For those aware of NEST: additional question to find out where they have heard about NEST (dependent on marketing activity this may be asked in a more or less specific way).
8. **Likelihood to use NEST** (question to be phrased differently dependent on stage of consideration to try and pick up both whether they are likely/confirmed NEST users and whether it is in the final consideration set)
9. **Brand perceptions**
 - a. **Overall perception of NEST**
 - b. **NEST will be straight forward and hassle free to use**
 - c. **It will be easy to administer online without asking for help**
 - d. **Is a good quality pension scheme**

4. Deliverables

The successful agency should develop a final questionnaire in consultation with NEST research team, and agree the cross tabulation requirements.

At the completion of the fieldwork we are not looking for agencies to conduct detailed analysis of the survey results or supply a report. All we would require is a set of cross tabulations (preferably in excel, with significance testing highlighted) and a SPSS file.

5. Working Together

NEST is an evidence-based organisation and research underpins much of what we do. Our funding arrangements mean that we must get best value from any work we commission via an external party. As such, we get very involved in all of our commissioned research from design through to delivery and reporting. Our in-house research team has extensive experience and will bring this to bear throughout. The successful agency should see themselves as a research partner and the NEST research team as an extension of the project team. We expect to work together collaboratively and as peers.

6. Timeline

Following project kick-off w/c 18th May 2015 we would expect to be able to finalise the questionnaire within a week and for the first survey to be conducted and results reported by early June 2015. Fieldwork for the second survey is estimated to take place at some stage between November 2015 and February 2016.

Agencies are advised to outline how long they envisage each project element will take to deliver. It would be useful to have outline dates in the proposal submitted. A full timetable will be required on appointment after discussion. The contract will be for the duration of the activities as referenced in this tender.

7. Security

NEST reserves the right to undertake further security checks during the evaluation process.

8. Additional Information / Research Links

Here are some links below that could be useful as background reading to help prepare your proposal.

NEST

NEST Insight 2015:

<https://www.nestpensions.org.uk/schemeweb/NestWeb/includes/public/docs/nest-insight-2015.pdf.pdf>

NEST Public website:

<http://www.nestpensions.org.uk/schemeweb/NestWeb/public/home/contents/homepage.html>

The Pensions Regulator

Declaration of compliance report:

<http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/docs/automatic-enrolment-monthly-registration-report.pdf>

Employer automatic enrolment research, Autumn 2014:

<http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/docs/employer-automatic-enrolment-research-autumn-2014.pdf>

Employer staging forecast, 2014:

<http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/docs/automatic-enrolment-employer-staging-forecast.pdf>

Annex B - Conditions of Contract



03 Annex B
Conditions of Contract

Annex C - Tender Response Document

NEST requires tenderers to complete the **attached tender response document** for the technical/quality proposal.

Annex D - Price Schedule

NEST requires tenderers to complete the **attached price schedule**. Please note that these prices must be fixed for the duration of the contract, including any possible extension periods.

- Tenderers should outline the costs of survey set-up, fieldwork and cross tabulations/SPSS file separately.

Please include all costs, which NEST would be liable for under this requirement if your approach was taken. You should also highlight any added value/cost saving NEST would achieve.

Notes

All fees shall be exclusive of VAT (however inclusive of all expenses).

Annex E - Evaluation Criteria

Suppliers will be awarded on the basis of the tenders that are the most economically advantageous to NEST based on a range of evaluation criteria. These evaluation criteria are as follows:

Technical/Quality - 60% & Cost/Commercial - 40%

Annex E - Evaluation Criteria breakdown

Quality	Q1. Please outline your organisations methodology and approach to delivering our requirements; including how your organisation will ensure a robust, representative survey and ensure consistency between the two (2) waves. (Please also include an indicative timeline/project plan).	30%
	Q2. Please detail the resources that will work on this proposed project and the key project management approach to deliver our requirements.	10%
	Q3. Please outline relevant experience in B2B tracking research and on studies that you think have similar challenges to this one - what were the challenges, and how did you address them?	10%
	Q4. Please briefly outline how your organisation would add value to this proposed assignment, in any ways over and above the requirements explicitly outlined in this brief.	10%
Cost	<p>Cost/Pricing (as per matrix provided - see Annex D) The commercial criteria will be scored as follows:</p> <p>The Total Cost will be calculated for each supplier and the lowest Total Cost will achieve the maximum score available. All other scores will then be calculated by reference to the lowest Total Cost using the following below: $100 - (\text{Tenderers Total Cost} - \text{Lowest Total Cost} / \text{Tenderers Total Cost}) * 100 = \text{Percentage Multiplier}$</p>	40%

Bidders may be required (at their own cost) to:

- attend meetings with NEST to present, explain or amplify details of their tender submissions
- provide any other information reasonably required by NEST to enable a detailed evaluation of their tender.
- attend meetings with NEST to present, explain or amplify details of their tender submissions
- provide any other information reasonably required by NEST to enable a detailed evaluation of their tender.

Scoring System	Score
Does not satisfy any part of the requirement. Does not comply with and/or insufficient information provided to demonstrate that the bidder has the ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource and quality measures required to provide the services, with little or no evidence to support the response.	0
Satisfies only minor aspects of the requirement. Or can carry out some or all of the required services but not to a sufficient standard. Strong concerns over relevant ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource, and quality measures required to provide the services.	1
Satisfies part of the requirement only, not the full requirement. Or can carry out all required services but not to a sufficient standard. Minor Concerns over relevant ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource, and quality measures required to provide the services.	2
Satisfies the requirement. Supplier has the relevant ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource and quality measures required to provide the services to the required standard.	3
Satisfies the requirement, with minor additional benefits. Supplier has the relevant ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource and quality measures required to provide the services, but the supplier has also provided relevant innovative methodology, or relevant added value services which will directly enhance the service required, giving minor additional benefit to NEST.	4
Satisfies the requirement, with major additional benefits. Supplier has the relevant ability, understanding, experience, skills, resource and quality measures required to provide the services, but the supplier has also provided relevant innovative methodology, or relevant added value services which will directly enhance the service required, giving major additional benefit to NEST.	5