



Invitation to Quote

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

Subject: Evaluation of the Arts and Humanities Research Council's Doctoral Training Partnership Scheme

Sourcing Reference Number: CR20027

UK Shared Business Services Ltd (UK SBS)
www.uksbs.co.uk

Registered in England and Wales as a limited company. Company Number 6330639.
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Version 2.0

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

Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC)

AHRC funds world-class, independent researchers in a wide range of subjects. Their research provides social and cultural benefits and contributes to the economic success of the UK but also to the culture and welfare of societies around the globe.

<https://ahrc.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 (URKI) – AHRC Polaris House, North Star Avenue, Swindon SN2 1FL
3.2.	Buyer name	Victoria Clewer
3.3.	Buyer contact details	research@uksbs.co.uk
3.4.	Maximum value of the Opportunity	£40,000.00 excluding VAT
3.5.	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	All correspondence shall be submitted within the Messaging Centre of the e-sourcing. Guidance Notes to support the use of Delta eSourcing is available here. 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.

Section 3 - Timescales		
3.6.	Date of Issue of Contract Advert on Contracts Finder	Monday, 24 th February 2020
3.7.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification questions shall be received through Delta eSourcing messaging system	Wednesday, 11 th March 2020 11:00
3.8.	Latest date / time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all Bidders by the Buyer through Delta eSourcing Portal	Monday, 16 th March 2020
3.9.	Latest date and time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Delta eSourcing	Friday, 3 rd April 2020 11:00
3.10.	Clarifications (if required)	Tuesday 14 th April 2020
3.11.	Anticipated notification date of successful and unsuccessful Bids	Monday, 20 th April 2020
3.12.	Anticipated Contract Award date	Monday, 20 th April 2020
3.13.	Anticipated Contract Start date	Friday, 1 st May 2020
3.14.	Anticipated Contract End date	Friday, 26 th February 2021
3.15.	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

Section 4 – Specification

1. Background

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) is part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), funding world-class, independent researchers in a wide range of subjects from history and archaeology to philosophy and languages. We also fund more contemporary research including the design and effectiveness of digital content and the impact of artificial intelligence. Support for the next generation of arts and humanities researchers is a key element of AHRC's strategy and represents a significant investment for the Council. [AHRC supports doctoral students \(https://ahrc.ukri.org/skills/phdstudents/\)](https://ahrc.ukri.org/skills/phdstudents/) through three main mechanisms: Doctoral Training Partnerships (DTPs); Centres for Doctoral Training (CDTs); and Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships (CDPs). This specification invites bidders to undertake an evaluation of the first round of the DTP scheme.

There are 11 DTP awards which will provide funding for five cohorts of doctoral students, commencing between October 2014 and 2018, and undertaking projects across the whole of AHRC's subject domain. The DTP awards are due to end in September 2022 and it is timely to review them at this stage, now all cohorts have been recruited. As well as providing development opportunities for individual students, a key element of the DTPs is the partnership and cohort development activity which is enabled through the awards.

The DTP scheme builds on a previous mechanism of providing block funding for student support: the Block Grant Partnerships (BGP). When the DTP call was issued, it was as 'BGP2' and the call included two types of award (Type A and Type B) which became DTPs and CDTs, respectively. The call specification for the Expression of Interest phase is a public document and can be accessed here <https://ahrc.ukri.org/documents/guides/block-grant-partnerships-2-bgp2-expression-of-interest-guide-for-applicants/>. Information on the full stage is not in the public domain but will be provided to the successful contractor.

The 11 DTPs comprise nine consortia awards, which include a number of universities working together to provide support for students, and two individual awards to Oxford University and Cambridge University, respectively. The primary function of the awards is to support students to undertake high quality doctoral research but DTPs also need to support the student's wider development needs, preparing students for careers within and beyond academia. AHRC's expectations in respect of student development are outlined in the [Research Training Framework \(https://ahrc.ukri.org/skills/rtrframeworks/\)](https://ahrc.ukri.org/skills/rtrframeworks/). Additional funding was included in the awards to enable individual student development activity, termed the 'Student Development Fund'. Additional funding (Cohort Development Fund) was also provided to enable cohort-level activities e.g. to support training opportunities for groups of students and to enable networking.

Recruitment of students is devolved to the DTPs, working within AHRC's terms and conditions. Individual studentship awards for full-time students are between three and four years in duration. This means that this review is taking place partway through the DTP awards.

AHRC has already taken a decision to continue the DTP mechanism, with some amendments, and the DTP2 awards commenced in October 2019. It is worth noting that the DTP1 and DTP2 awards are overlapping but this evaluation is only considering DTP1.

The DTP mechanism is common across UKRI, with some variation in the scheme specifications. There is shared UKRI [terms and conditions](https://ahrc.ukri.org/skills/phdstudents/award-holders-terms-and-conditions/) (<https://ahrc.ukri.org/skills/phdstudents/award-holders-terms-and-conditions/>) and guidance for these awards as well as AHRC specific guidance.

The purpose of the evaluation is two-fold: to determine what has been achieved through the scheme as a whole; and to reflect on the process used to achieve the scheme objectives.

The outcome of the review should be a report on the efficacy of the scheme, which highlights strengths and weaknesses, any notable successes, and areas where there is scope for improvement. It should include a set of recommendations to inform AHRC's future support for postgraduate training.

The review should provide an impartial perspective on the scheme and enable AHRC to gain a better understanding of how the DTP model has been implemented to support doctoral students in the arts and humanities. This will enable AHRC to determine the most effective mechanism to support doctoral students in the future.

2. Aims and Objectives of the Project

The Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP) scheme is AHRC's main mechanism for supporting doctoral students. It is a commitment of £164 million, over 11 awards, running from October 2014 to September 2022, by which time we will have supported more than 2,500 students. It is important that AHRC reviews and evaluates the effectiveness of the scheme. The supplier will undertake a robust, evidence-based review of the scheme which will enable AHRC to determine its future support for doctoral students.

The aim of the evaluation is to gain a better understanding of AHRC support for doctoral students through the DTP mechanism and whether the model itself is robust.

The main objective is to review the scheme against the original aims and principles for the scheme. The review should highlight:

- any barriers to the scheme achieving its aims and objectives
- particular achievements of the scheme i.e. where good practice has been displayed or where there is reach beyond the individual awards
- areas that should be continued i.e. highlighting where the model has met or exceeded expectations and there are clear achievements which need to be built on
- and, areas where there is scope for improvement.

The output should be a report which includes clear quantitative and qualitative evidence of what has been achieved through the scheme and evidence-based recommendations to inform future postgraduate provision. It is expected that the evaluation will produce robust

data and analysis of that data, which will be made available to AHRC as part of the reporting process.

The evaluation should consider the DTP scheme, as a whole, and should not be reviewing individual DTP awards. Noting, however, that there will need to be an analysis of the information available on individual DTP awards in order to address the scheme-level questions. The successful contractor should determine what questions need to be asked and what evidence collected, in order to assess the efficacy and success of the scheme. Broadly, the contractor is asked to evaluate to what extent DTP has delivered (or is on course to deliver) its proposed objectives and, to what extent the programme has adhered to the principles on which it was based. The contractor will also be asked to consider the mechanisms used for achieving the objectives, including the process for commissioning the awards.

Wherever possible, the evaluation should be based on quantifiable evidence and bidders should consider what outcomes and outputs from the awards might be measurable. It is recognised that there will need to be a significant qualitative element to the evaluation for example, stakeholder views on the quality of the provision.

There are high-level questions which need to be addressed to determine whether the DTP approach to delivering doctoral training has been successful, how AHRC's support contributes to the skills pipeline, and the unique aspects of the AHRC's and the DTPs' provision. The bidder should refer to the [Delivery Plan](https://ahrc.ukri.org/research/delivery-plan-2019/) <https://ahrc.ukri.org/research/delivery-plan-2019/> for a perspective on AHRC's approach to doctoral training.

As noted above, there is a second round of the DTP scheme (DTP2). AHRC is not asking for a review of DTP2 as it has only just commenced. The DTP1 award holders may make reference to the scheme and it will be important for the successful contractor to gain an understanding of the two schemes and how they relate to each other.

The contractor will work closely with AHRC and a steering group (established by AHRC) to determine the questions which will need to be addressed in the review and the information and data needed in order to answer these questions. The review must be led by the contractor but, AHRC will require regular updates to ensure that the review is on track and the steering group will provide advice at key points through the process. As required, AHRC will also provide clarification and advice e.g. on particular aspects of the scheme, data or process.

The contractor will have an initial meeting (May 2020) with the steering group to set parameters, a meeting in October 2020 to review the interim report and a meeting in January 2021 to review the draft final report. In addition, the contractor will need to update AHRC on a regular basis, the timetable for which will be agreed at inception.

Bidders should describe the approach and methodology to be employed in the evaluation. The bid should state what evidence, information and data will need to be collected, the method(s) to be used for collecting it, and the methodology for analysis. AHRC has information available as part of its ongoing engagement with the award holders on which the successful contractor may wish to draw. This includes: annual reports from the award holders; student data (e.g. university, subject being studied); student surveys; and impact data. Bidders should specify any information or approaches beyond this and indicate how this information will be obtained. AHRC will not be in a position to provide non-AHRC data

or information, nor will we undertake additional evidence gathering from award holders or students and this will need to be factored in to the contractors work allocation. It is anticipated that the supplier will wish to engage with the DTP award holders and the students and this may extend to DTP partner organisations, alumni and employers.

The main output should be a final report for AHRC staff, the findings must be evidence-based and refer back to the original specification for the scheme but, should go beyond it, to quantify outcomes from the scheme. Contractors are also asked to consider the evaluation from the perspective of how the landscape would have looked without AHRC funding. In addition, the review should address:

- How can we demonstrate that the award holder strategies for supporting doctoral students have been successful?
- What is the added value of the DTP award mechanism i.e. what has been achieved beyond providing funding for individual students?
- What is the added value of a consortia approach, as opposed to block funding to individual institutions?
- What approaches employed by the DTPs have been particularly successful and what has worked less well?
- Could the award holders have gone further in delivering the objectives? If so, in what way?
- Is AHRC funding adding value to the arts and humanities doctoral landscape? If so, in what way?
- Have the awards had any influence beyond support for individual students? If so, what has been achieved?
- Have the awards had an impact beyond the cohort of AHRC-funded students e.g. through wider adoption of the DTPs' method of working?
- Whether a different approach to the delivery mechanism or process would have enabled AHRC to better achieve the scheme objectives?

AHRC has a particular interest in the ways in which approaches to equality, diversity and inclusion form part of the DTP awards, both in terms of student recruitment and mechanisms for student support during their doctoral study. As an example, we would be interested to understand how well widening participation is being enabled through the awards.

The successful contractor will need to formulate the best way to answer these questions and identify any other questions that need to be considered to assess the success of the scheme. This approach will form a key part of the assessment of the bid.

Wherever possible, quantitative information should be included e.g. to demonstrate the impact of the approaches that have been taken within the scheme.

The report should also include a clear set of recommendations, outlining the approach which the findings suggest that AHRC should take to supporting postgraduates in the future.

It is anticipated that the review will provide a novel analysis of existing data and generate a range of new data, all of which would be delivered to AHRC as part of the reporting.

3. Suggested Methodology

Whilst there are 11 DTP awards, all of these are collaborative and the contractor may want to engage representatives of the academic and non-academic partners separately.

The DTP awards have a Director and Manager and may include other staff e.g. training lead, and the contractor may want to engage with these separately.

The contractor may want to consider comparator populations e.g. other arts and humanities students or other Councils' DTPs – this activity will vary in scale depending on the population selected.

Total number of Participants (experimental design) - 11 DTPs (noting 9 are consortia). About 2,500 students supported.

Total number of Interviews (survey) -11 DTPs. Students (including alumni) ~ 2,500 but likely that contractor will approach a subset

Total number of Interviews (qualitative) - 11 DTPs + subset of students

Total number of Focus Groups - 1 or 2 (if required)

Total number of Case Studies - 10

The contractor will need to determine the approach to addressing the questions but we are keen for quantitative information e.g. on the impact of the awards, to be included wherever possible. AHRC holds student data and quantitative and qualitative information is provided in the annual reports but it is anticipated that further engagement will be required with the DTPs and possibly students and alumni to gain a more complete picture of impact. We have contact details for DTP award holders and current students, though contractors may wish to contact students through the DTPs.

Two cohorts of students will have finished by the time of the evaluation and the third cohort are due to finish 30 September 2020. It is anticipated that the contractor will wish to engage doctoral graduates (alumni) as well as current students. It will be easier to engage current students than alumni and the contractor may wish to bear this in mind in planning the timing of activities.

The contractor will need to decide which groups of people to engage but, might consider including: DTP award holders (Directors); DTP team e.g. managers; DTP partners – these might be formal and informal and include both academic and non-academic organisations; students; alumni; supervisors; employers; non-AHRC-funded students; other Councils' DTPs.

The evaluation should consider only the DTP awards and is a review of the scheme, as a whole, not of individual DTP awards. It should not cover the other AHRC postgraduate schemes: CDTs and CDPs, and nor should it include any support provided for Master's students. It also excludes any additional opportunities which might be available to students e.g. the International Placement Scheme. Information on these areas can be provided for context, if required. We will provide information on the National Productivity

Investment Fund which was additional support for the some of the DTPs and is likely to be raised by award holders.

The evaluation should be led by the contractor working closely with AHRC staff. The AHRC will be able to provide background information on the scheme, awards, studentships and data required for the review. AHRC will not be in a position to supply non-AHRC information e.g. on the wider arts and humanities doctoral population.

The supplier must adhere to [UKRI's Privacy Notice](#) and include this in all correspondence with the individuals with whom they engage. They must also confirm that they are 'working towards' GDPR compliance. It will be necessary to sign a non-disclosure agreement as the review will potentially include personal, sensitive and commercial information.

The contractor should manage the evaluation and include a clear timeline for the activities as part of the bid. This must include regular review points with AHRC staff. In addition, AHRC will be setting up a steering group to provide advice to the suppliers on the evaluation and the supplier will report to the group at least three times during the period.

The evaluation will commence on 1 May 2020 and the final report must have been approved by AHRC by 28 February 2021. An interim report which formally presents initial findings will be required by 30 September 2020 and we will set a break point to enable an assessment of progress.

4. Deliverables

The project must commence on 1 May 2020 with an Inception Plan agreed within two weeks. Frequency of contact with AHRC should be indicated in the bid but, should include a weekly update.

AHRC will be able to provide some initial data and information on the process, scheme, students, award holder reports and outputs. This will be available at the start of the project once a Data Sharing Agreement has been signed. If additional information is required from AHRC, at least one week's notice should be provided.

An interim report will be required by 30 September 2020 and we will set a break point to enable an assessment of progress. The final report must have been approved and delivered to AHRC, with the accompanying presentation, questionnaire (if used), data and data analysis, by 28 February 2021.

The supplier will have an initial meeting (May 2020) with the steering group to set parameters, a meeting in October 2020 to review the interim report and a meeting in January 2021 to review the draft final report.

The outputs will be:

- a quality-assured final report,
- PowerPoint slides summarising the key findings
- questionnaire (if used)
- data gathered as part of the contract and the analysis of that data.

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	SEL2.12	General Data protection Regulations (GDPR)
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
Commercial	AW6.3	Non-Disclosure Agreement
Price	AW5.1	Maximum Budget
Price	AW5.4	E Invoicing
Price	AW5.5	Implementation of E-Invoicing
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification
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	10%
Quality	PROJ1.1	Approach	30%
Quality	PROJ1.2	Staff to Deliver	15%
Quality	PROJ1.3	Understanding the Delivery	25%
Quality	PROJ1.4	Project Plan and Timescales	20%

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 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 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 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 2nd 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](#)