



Companies House

Request for Information

Digital delivery partner for assistance with refactoring existing platform authentication layer code and ForgeRock Identity Cloud integration

Ref: CH-1056 Digital Delivery Partner

Date of Publication: 29th July 2022

Response Deadline: 19th August 2022

Dear Supplier,

We would like to notify you of an upcoming requirement, and by doing so we are keen to understand where the market stands in terms of our requirement below.

This Request for Information (RFI) seeks information relating to the procurement of **Delivery Partner Services** by Companies House.

We would like to invite you to answer the questionnaire provided in this document by noon 19th August 2022.

Please send any questions and responses to:

cmace@companieshouse.gov.uk and ndibb@companieshouse.gov.uk

Please note the following general conditions:

- This RFI will help us to refine the requirements.
- Information contained within this document is confidential and must not be revealed to any third party without prior written consent from us.
- No down-selection of Potential Providers will take place as a consequence of any responses or interactions relating to this RFI.
- We expect that all responses to this RFI will be provided by Potential Providers in good faith to the best of their ability in the light of information available at the time of their response.
- No information provided by a Potential Provider in response to this RFI will be carried forward, used or acknowledged in any way for the purpose of evaluating the Potential Provider, in any subsequent formal procurement process.
- Any and all costs associated with the production of such a response to a RFI must be borne by the Supplier. We will not contribute in any way to meeting production costs of any response.

BACKGROUND TO THE AUTHORITY

Companies House (CH) has three main functions:

To enable UK companies to file and keep their official records up to date as required under legislation. CH receives over 18 million transactions per year, mostly digital but using legacy systems that in some cases are no longer fit for purpose and are reaching or have exceeded end of life. CH's work also includes dealing with a significant number of paper filings.

To make this information publicly available – which is where CH plays a key role in the wider UK economy, with over 12 billion searches of CH data last year. This data contributes £1-3 billion per annum to the UK economy, informing business decisions, mergers, acquisitions, and international trade. Given existing legacy systems there are significant limitations in terms of what CH can do in this space to enhance data sharing and maximise use of this data. CH's transformation will enable significant increases in the use and validity of their data – evidence shows this will substantially increase its value and utilisation.

To prevent and tackle economic crime – Recent years have seen huge increases in CH's role in supporting law enforcement and other partners, from local police forces and trading standards to the National Economic Crime Centre, NCA and others. Referrals and casework investigations were in excess of 10,000 last year alone, with feedback provided by partners indicating that CH's contributions were critical in identifying and prosecuting perpetrators. CH plays a critical role in the wider economic crime eco-system, but data sharing functionality is currently limited and new legislation is required to facilitate a more proactive role for CH in this arena.

BACKGROUND TO THE REQUIREMENT

Companies House (CH) is undertaking a transformation programme which includes transforming our digital services. As part of this work CH are introducing an Identity Access Management system (IDAM) using ForgeRock Identity Cloud and integrating it into our existing services. This has been done successfully on part of the digital estate, but issues have been identified on CHS (Companies House Service) – a cloud-based microservice platform on which our search services and some filing services are hosted.

The CHS platform is collection of Java and Node webapp and API services and is the basis of our architectural and technical strategy for all customer-facing services in future.

The platform currently uses a bespoke, non-standard authentication approach. While based around OAuth 2.0, the current implementation is no longer fit-for-purpose, prevents integration with IDAM and does not form part of our strategic technology stack.

As such we are embarking on a project to re-engineer the CHS authentication layer. We require an approach based on the OAuth 2.0 protocol with the OpenID Connect identity layer, integrated tightly with the ForgeRock Identity Cloud (FRIC). FRIC is already in place and is integrated with some existing services – this activity will bring CHS in line with our IDAM strategy.

This work is related to new legislative activity. These legislative changes will require CH to make many changes to what we do and how we do it. Most relevant to this work however is the requirement to verify identities of company directors and others associated with companies. As such it is critical that CH have a fit-for-purpose IDAM solution in place. Having this work completed will also allow CH to give CHS customers new user accounts with Multi Factor Authentication (MFA). It is essential that the new authentication service in CHS is fit for that purpose and that knowledge transfer has been carried out effectively to our internal teams to enable ongoing development and support. This work forms a critical path for the wider CH transformation and legislative change.

DELIVERY TIMESCALES

The anticipated contract duration will be 32 weeks, beginning January 2023. This work is required to support the wider reforms of CH and its powers under the Economic Crime Bill which is expected to receive Royal assent in March 2023 giving CH and 6-month period in which to implement the necessary changes no later than September 2023. This legislation will see the biggest change to the role of CH since its creation in 1844

TENDER TIMESCALES

We are anticipating launching the opportunity to market w/c 12th September.

DELIVERY SCOPE

The scope of the Delivery Partner is the provision of specialist capability as either:

- Delivery teams
- Bespoke packages of work
- Resource augmentation (potentially)

We have identified areas of work that we would look to work with a delivery partner on across the CHS platform (below):

- Re-engineering non-standard authentication layer. Code to be refactored includes Perl, Golang, Java and Node.
- ForgeRock Identity Cloud integration. This includes: modelling non-standard API keys; SDK integration; and integration with custom React-based user interface workflows.
- Integration with individual CHS customer-facing services
- Data migration and reconciliation
- Knowledge management, transfer and hand over to CH IT support services

We envisage that the successful partner will work alongside internal CH technical staff who are UK based, and mostly working in a hybrid arrangement.

This is not an exhaustive list or committed list of works, and a fuller delivery plan will be provided at ITT stage.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Procurement Lead: Claire Mace cmace@companieshouse.gov.uk

Project Manager: Nicholas Dibb ndibb@companieshouse.gov.uk

INFORMATION REQUESTED

Please could you respond to the following questions:

Question	Response
Please confirm whether you would be interested in bidding for this work in any upcoming tender? Please could you briefly explain which factors you considered when making your decision.	
Our preferred route to market is the Digital Specialists and Programmes, Crown Commercial Service framework. In your opinion, is this the best vehicle to procure our requirements? Do you for see any limitations from using this framework?	
Are there any skill shortages that we should be aware of that may hinder the delivery of this contract?	
Based on your experience, what key information is required at ITT stage to ensure the supplier can provide the most accurate response, both in terms of quality and price? How much notice and information would be required to mobilise for delivery and onboard?	
Based on your experience, what are the top risks you would identify and what mitigations would need to put in place? Particularly referencing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working within UK government departments or agencies • speed of mobilisation • ways of working • knowledge transfer 	
Based on your experience, are the implementation timescales realistic given the delivery scope?	
Typically, what management and governance structure would you put in place to deliver this contract (including level of reporting and frequency), both chargeable and non-chargeable? How would you manage conflict resolution from issue to resolution?	

1. COSTS

- 1.1 The Authority will not reimburse any costs incurred in connection with the preparation and / or submission of the supplier RFI response.

2. NOTICE TO SUPPLIERS

- 2.1 This RFI and any related documents referred to have been prepared by the Authority for the pre-market test to gather information.
- 2.2 Whilst prepared in good faith, the RFI documents are intended only as a preliminary background explanation of the Authority's activities and plans. Therefore it isn't intended to form the basis of any decision on whether to enter into any contractual relationship with the Authority.
- 2.3 The RFI documents do not purport to be all inclusive or to contain all of the information that a supplier may require.
- 2.4 Nothing in the RFI documents is, or should be, relied upon as a promise or a representation as to the Authority's ultimate decisions in relation to the RFI.
- 2.5 The publication of the RFI documents in no way commits the Authority to award any contract.

3. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 3.1 Subject to the exceptions referred to in paragraph 8.2, the contents of the RFI are being made available by the authority on the conditions that the supplier:
 - 3.1.1 Treats the RFI as confidential at all times, unless the information is already in the public domain;
 - 3.1.2 Does not disclose, copy, reproduce, distribute or pass any of the Information to any other person at any time or allow any of these things to happen, except where, and to the extent that, the Information has been publicised in accordance with paragraph 9 Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA);
 - 3.1.3 Only uses the Information for the purposes of preparing a response (or deciding whether to respond); and
 - 3.1.4 Does not undertake any promotional or similar activity related to this RFI within any section of the media.
- 3.2 The supplier may disclose, distribute or pass any of the Information to its members of its Group of Economic Operators (if acting as a Lead Contact), Sub-Contractors, advisers or to any other person provided that:
 - 3.2.1 This is done for the sole purpose of enabling the supplier to submit its response and the person receiving the information undertakes in writing (such written undertaking to be made available to the Authority on the Authority's request) to keep the information confidential.
 - 3.2.2 It obtains the Authority's prior written consent in relation to such disclosure, distribution or passing of Information; or
 - 3.2.3 The disclosure is made for the sole purpose of obtaining legal advice from external lawyers in relation to this RFI;

3.2.4 The supplier is legally required to make such a disclosure; or

3.2.5 The information has been published in accordance with paragraph 9 Freedom of Information (FOIA).

3.3 The Authority may disclose information submitted by suppliers during this RFI to its officers, employees, agents or advisers or other government departments who are stakeholders in this RFI.

4. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000 (FOIA)

4.1 In accordance with the obligations and duties placed upon public authorities by the FOIA and the EIR (Environmental Information Regulations 2004) and in accordance with any Government Code of Practice on the discharge of public authorities' functions under the FOIA all information submitted to the Authority may be disclosed under a request for information made pursuant to the FOIA and the EIR.

4.2 Suppliers should note that the information disclosed pursuant to a FOI or EIR request may include, but is not limited to, the disclosure of its RFI response (including any attachments or embedded documents).

4.3 If the supplier considers any part of its response or any other information it submits to be confidential or commercially sensitive, the supplier should:

4.3.1 Clearly identify such information as confidential or commercially sensitive.

4.3.2 Explain the potential implications of disclosure of such information taking into account and specifically addressing the public interest test as set out in the FOIA; and

4.3.3 Provide an estimate of the period of time during which it believes that such information will remain confidential or commercially sensitive.

4.4 If the supplier identifies that part of its response or other information it submits is confidential or commercially sensitive, the Authority in its sole discretion will consider whether or not to withhold such information from publication. Suppliers should note that, even where information is identified as confidential or commercially sensitive, the Authority may be required to disclose such information in accordance with the FOIA or the EIR.

The Authority is required to form an independent judgement of whether the supplier information **referred** to in paragraph 9.4 is exempt from disclosure under the FOIA or the EIR and whether the public interest favours disclosure or not. The Authority cannot guarantee that any information indicated as being confidential or commercially sensitive by the supplier will be withheld from publication.

4.5 If the supplier receives a request for information under the FOIA or the EIR during and in relation to this RFI, it should be immediately referred to the Authority.