UK Health Security Agency

Questionnaire to suppliers for Medical Writing Services for Journal Publication- REF C220588

1. About UKHSA

The UKHSA's mission is to provide health security for the nation by protecting from infectious disease and external hazards. To achieve this, the UKHSA has the following objectives:

PREVENT: take action to mitigate threats to health before they materialize and build the nation's health resilience and security

DETECT: detect and monitor infectious disease and external threats to health

ANALYSE: analyse threats to health and how best to prevent and control with a robust evidence and knowledge base

RESPOND: take action to mitigate threats to health when they materialise

LEAD: lead a system-wide response in partnership with local authorities, NHS, academia and industry inc. building a workforce

The PHCO Team has several responsibilities towards these aims, supporting good health protection and security outcomes, developing new interventions and initiatives, monitoring the effectiveness and safety of existing public health interventions, and building the evidence base to achieve.

2. Purpose of the request

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) seeks an excellent medical writing service to prepare publications for the Public Health Clinical Oversight (PHCO) team. The supplier should be able to competently produce reports for academic publications and for publishing on www.gov.uk.

3. Aims

3.1. **To enhance knowledge dissemination**: The primary aim is to facilitate the effective dissemination of critical public health information and research findings to both academic communities and the general public.

3.2. **To ensure quality and accuracy**: Ensure that all publications meet the highest standards of quality, accuracy, and adherence to ethical guidelines.

3.3. **To support evidence-based decision-making**: Provide comprehensive medical writing services to support evidence-based decision-making within the Public Health Clinical Oversight team.

3.4. **To promote transparency**: To foster transparency and open access by publishing relevant reports on www.gov.uk, making crucial information readily available to the public.

4. Objectives:

4.1. **Identify expert suppliers**: Identify and partner with medical writing service providers who possess a track record of excellence in crafting reports for academic publications and government platforms.

4.2. **Develop clear publication plans**: Collaborate with the selected supplier to develop clear publication plans and schedules for all relevant research and findings.

4.3. **Ensure compliance**: Ensure that all publications meet ethical guidelines, regulatory standards, and legal requirements regarding patient confidentiality and data protection.

4.4. **Engage diverse audiences**: Tailor publications to effectively engage both academic communities and the general public, making health information accessible to a wide audience.

4.5. **Support PHCO objectives**: Align the medical writing services with the objectives of the Public Health Clinical Oversight team, supporting their efforts to monitor, analyse, and respond to public health threats effectively.

4.6. **Timely delivery**: Ensure that drafts and final versions of publications are delivered within specified timeframes to facilitate timely decision-making and information dissemination.

4.7. **Monitor and improve quality**: Continuously monitor the quality of published materials and seek ways to improve the clarity, accuracy, and impact of the content.

4.8. **Public website publication**: Facilitate the seamless publication of reports on www.gov.uk, making them accessible to the public and government stakeholders.

4.9. **Feedback and iteration**: Establish a feedback loop to incorporate reviewer comments and suggestions, ensuring that publications are refined and meet the highest standards.

These aims and objectives align with the purpose statement and are designed to guide the successful execution of the request for medical writing services.

5. Scope of work:

The selected bidder(s) will be expected to:

5.1. Work to synthesise analysis outputs into concise, accurate evaluation reports allowing findings of the analysis to be communicated. The supplier must also be able to take existing reports and analysis along with new research activity and help to develop an appropriate narrative for those findings for those academic outputs, define the structure and flow of reports, as well as maintaining consistency of approach.

5.2. Understand and synthesise complex medical information and data.

5.3. Write, edit and revise medical manuscripts in line with journal standards.

5.4. Possess excellent MS Office skills. Skilled at proofreading documents for grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

5.5. Ensure all content meets ethical guidelines, regulatory standards, and is compliant with laws around patient confidentiality and data protection.

5.6. Work collaboratively with our team of researchers, clinicians, and other stakeholders.

5.7. Provide guidance on submission process to relevant journals.

5.8. Supporting appropriate approvals and sign off processes for analysis and results.

5.9. Understand and comply with UKHSA's format for submitting publications to www.gov.uk.

5.10. Stakeholder collaboration: The successful bidder must collaborate seamlessly with both internal and external stakeholders to achieve the project's objectives effectively.

5.11. Data handling: Datasets will be available in certain instances, while in others, data may require review. Handling and analysing complex medical information and data will be a crucial aspect of this project.

5.12. Target audience: The target audience encompasses the general public, academic communities, and other government departments. The winning bidder must align their work to cater to these diverse audiences.

5.13. Publication process: The selected bidder is expected to actively participate in all publication activities, from inception to submission. This includes addressing reviewer comments and making necessary revisions for successful publication.

Potential Publication Themes:

1. **Testing performance and validation:**
   - Multiplex LFD performance
   - Uber Swabbing
2. **Theoretical approaches to testing**
3. **Service evaluations**:
   - Virology / diagnostics / epidemiology

6. Deliverables and Timelines

The project outputs for the request for medical writing services to prepare publications for the Public Health Clinical Oversight (PHCO) team could include:

6.1. Publication reports: The primary output would be well-crafted publication reports. These reports should be tailored for academic publications and for publication on www.gov.uk. Each report should be comprehensive, well-researched, and adhere to the highest quality standards.

6.2. Draft manuscripts: The supplier should provide initial drafts of each assigned manuscript within the specified timeframe. These drafts serve as the foundation for the final publications.

6.3. Final manuscripts: The final output would be polished, fully revised manuscripts ready for submission to academic journals or for publication on www.gov.uk. These manuscripts should meet all formatting, ethical, and regulatory requirements.

6.4. Publication schedules: The project may also include publication schedules outlining when each report or manuscript is expected to be completed and submitted. These schedules are essential for project management and coordination.

6.5. Progress reports: Regular progress reports on a bi-weekly or monthly basis should be provided by the supplier. These reports keep stakeholders informed about the status of each publication and any challenges or revisions needed.

6.6. Evidence of compliance: Documentation demonstrating that all content meets ethical guidelines, regulatory standards, and legal requirements regarding patient confidentiality and data protection is another critical output.

6.7. Reviewer comments and revisions: The supplier should provide documentation of how they address reviewer comments and incorporate revisions into the manuscripts. This demonstrates the iterative process of refining publications.

6.8. Stakeholder engagement reports: Reports or summaries of stakeholder engagement activities, including interactions with PHCO team members, researchers, clinicians, and other stakeholders, should be part of the project outputs.

6.9. Publication process guidance: Documentation or guidance on the submission process for relevant journals, including any approvals and sign-off processes, should be provided to support the PHCO team in getting publications accepted.

6.10. Archived records: A well-organized archive of all project-related documents, including drafts, revisions, feedback, and correspondence, should be maintained for reference and record-keeping.

These project outputs are designed to ensure the successful preparation and dissemination of high-quality publications that align with the objectives and purpose of the request. They also help in project management, quality assurance, and accountability throughout the process.

7. The successful bidder will be expected to deliver within the following specified timelines:

7.1. An initial draft of each assigned manuscript within [6] weeks of receiving the assignment.

7.2. Final drafts ready for submission within [12] weeks of receiving feedback on the initial draft.

7.3. Complete medical manuscripts in line with journal standards.

7.4. Regular progress reports on a [bi-weekly/monthly] basis.

8. Our responsibilities

In addition, a PHCO staff will assist in all phases of project management, from defining scope, producing project plans and project delivery to time and quality standards, this will include but is not limited to:

8.1. Building effective working relationships with suppliers

8.2. Monitoring progress and offering guidance and support where needed

8.3. Interacting with senior stakeholders both within PHCO and the broader UKHSA organisation as well as NHS and other external organisations where necessary

8.4. Supporting appropriate approvals and sign off processes for analysis and results

8.5. Be capable of working under tight deadlines and adapting to changes in project requirements.

8.6. Evidence of succinctly writing and communicating results of scientific

8.7. Evaluations, technical analyses and/ or research papers

8.8. Experience with producing outputs/material in the appropriate formats for submission

8.9. Experience in stakeholder management including preparing summary reporting packs.

9. Evaluation Criteria:

PART ONE: TECHNICAL QUESTIONS (60%)

Q2.1 (14%) What experience and qualifications of the bidders and your team, can be evidenced in order to demonstrate how the requirements can be delivered?

Q2.2 (14%) Please provide evidence on the quality and relevance of prior published works.

UK Health Security Agency

Q2.3 (14%) How do you achieve cost-effectiveness of the proposed solution?

Q2.4 (14%) Please demonstrate your understanding of the project requirements and provide an example of previous work, similar to the themes mentioned in section 5.

Q2.5 (14%) Please confirm capacity and the maximum number of reports that can be conducted in a 3 month contract period. Estimated contract start date: w/c 18th December 2023.

PART TWO: PRICE (30%)

Overall cost for the delivery of the user requirements and your responses to the questions in your proposal and costings should include the following option:

Q3.1 Cost per report or day rate- if preferred

PART THREE: Social Value (10%)

Q4.1 (5%) Please describe what measures are in place to work towards a real living wage for your staff and supply chain.

Q4.2 (5%) Please describe the Social Value initiative that you propose to implement during the contract life cycle and how are these going to be measured and reported.

10. Tender Evaluation Methodology

Descriptor	Score
Completely fails to meet the standard. Response significantly deficient/ no response.	0 – not eligible for consideration
Significantly fails to meet the standard. Inadequate detail provided/ questions not answered/ answers not directly relevant to the question.	20 - Inadequate
Fails the standard in most aspects but meets some. Limited information. Inadequate/ only partially addresses the question	40 - Limited
Meets the standard in most aspects but fails in some areas. Acceptable level of detail, accuracy and relevance.	60 - Acceptable
Meets the standard required Comprehensive response in terms of detail and relevance to the question.	80 - Good

Exceeds the required standard. Response answers the question with precision and relevance. Includes improvement through innovation and/or added value	100 - Excellent

Timelines for the Competition

Launch of procurement - 08th November 2023

Clarification period starts - 09th November 2023

Clarification questions submission deadline - 20th November 2023

Deadline for publication of responses to Clarification questions – 21st November 2023

Bid Submission Deadline – 10am 23rd November 2023

Commencement of Evaluation Process – 23rd November 2023

Proposed Award Date of Contract – by 12th December 2023

Expected execution (signature) date for Contract(s) – 19th December 2023

Expected commencement date for Contract – 2nd January 2024