

## PIN Specification

### Project Details

Project Name	Recommissioning Energy and Net Zero Behavioural Science Framework
Framework Reference Number:	PS24030

#### 1. Background

UKSBS on behalf of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) will shortly be going out to market to procure the Energy and Net Zero Behavioural Science Framework. This Framework will replace the current Energy and Climate Change Behavioural Science Framework.

The current Framework agreement acts as a mechanism for colleagues working across the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) to commission small-scale behavioural science research in the energy and net zero space at pace. It has proved very useful thus far; since launching in August 2022, we have already commissioned 15 projects through it for a range of teams across DESNZ and we anticipate this high level of interest to continue.

Due to popular demand, the current framework is set to shortly meet its maximum spend and so we are reprocurring to avoid a period without this mechanism in place.

#### 2. Introduction

There are several ways the framework has provided value to the department, most notably by supporting the development and delivery of policies set out in the net zero<sup>1</sup> and heat and buildings strategies<sup>2</sup>. Previous published examples include – planning barriers for hydrogen projects and potential solutions to address them<sup>3</sup> and exploring the effect of energy labels on consumer shopping decisions<sup>4</sup>.

Policy teams who would use the framework focus on a wide range of topics e.g., low carbon heating, energy infrastructure, grant schemes. It is important to maximise approaches to successful delivery and integrate customer perspectives throughout. Behavioural science is integral to achieving policy aims, by providing insight on how we can help people make informed choices and minimise barriers to adopting these choices.

One key challenge is ensuring behavioural science insights are taken into account at the right point within the policy development process. The framework will enable behavioural science evidence to be gathered and disseminated rapidly, maximising impact on policy development. There are also a number of ad hoc behavioural evidence needs that can

<sup>1</sup> DESNZ and BEIS. (2022). Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/net-zero-strategy>

<sup>2</sup> DESNZ and BEIS. (2023). Heat and Buildings Strategy: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heat-and-buildings-strategy>

<sup>3</sup> DESNZ. (2023). Hydrogen projects: planning barriers and solutions. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hydrogen-projects-planning-barriers-and-solutions>

<sup>4</sup> DESNZ. (2023). Exploring the effect of energy labels on consumer shopping decisions. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/exploring-the-effect-of-energy-labels-on-consumer-shopping-decisions>

emerge at short notice, and the existing framework has fulfilled behavioural research needs in many areas, including energy efficiency, clean heat, and renewable energy.

Overall, we anticipate this framework will continue to increase the use of behavioural science within energy and net zero policy, helping to improve their effectiveness and inform the public and businesses' green choices.

### 3. Aims and Objectives

The overarching aim of the framework is to maximise the effectiveness of energy and net zero policy by ensuring that they are informed by behavioural science. DESNZ wish to have access to expertise in applying behavioural science to deliver this.

The framework will be used to commission call-off contracts to improve the implementation and design of planned policies, propose ideas for new initiatives, support with methodological design and fulfil ad hoc behavioural evidence needs. A few examples of projects and policies that could be informed by this work include:

- Supporting the rapid development and implementation of policies (e.g. testing messages, developing and simplifying consumer journeys, identifying moments of change, and stress-testing policy ideas from a behavioural science perspective).
- Households will be faced with choices related to domestic energy efficiency policies which involve intrusive measures as well as more measures per home. Applying behavioural science techniques to ensure consumers feel adequately informed, supported and confident in making these choices will be increasingly important, thereby maximising the effectiveness of policy.
- To reach net zero, there will need to be a low carbon heating transition which will require changes in heating technologies and other associated measures (e.g. radiators, energy efficiency measures). Behavioural science work will help to understand what policies, support, and communication would help inform and support consumers' decisions about these technologies.
- Rapid experiments to test different policy options / messages to understand the behavioural responses and / or behaviour of citizens.
- Specific ad hoc tasks, such as identifying interventions to minimise energy consumption at peak hours. These tasks can be highly diverse and may require the ability to bring in a range of skillsets (e.g. systems thinking).
- In addition, the contractor should be able to provide DESNZ with behavioural insights training if and when required, which will improve our ability to apply behavioural science insights to the policy development process, leading to lasting improvements in DESNZ capability in this area.

The overall outcome of the contract would therefore be greater input of behavioural science into energy and net zero policy formulation, resulting in more effective policies and ultimately ensure the successful delivery of the net zero strategy and other related ambitions.

### 4. Scope

The current Lots are as follows:

#### **Lot 1: Applying innovative behavioural thinking to a policy problem.**

Energy & Net Zero policy often faces new difficult problems which require original perspectives. These might be knotty complex problems and cut across a range of policy areas which would benefit from joined up thinking and taking a wide perspective. It may

also be useful to further understand the behavioural processes or unintended consequences which affect a wide range of green choices.

Projects like this would require thinking innovatively and challenging existing thinking or approaches. This might involve approaches such as: applying behavioural models, evidence and techniques in new ways; drawing from other fields to inform behavioural problems; or bringing new theoretical or methodological perspectives to the issue. Example projects could be drawing on historical or international trends to outline potential behavioural impacts of future events; anticipating any behavioural spill over effects of green choices; and understanding the impact of uncertainty relating to future Net Zero policies on green choices.

We would generally not expect these projects to involve primary research. Ideally, they should bring together a range of experts (e.g. from academia) to work on these problems innovatively and progress our thinking.

### **Lot 2: Understanding end users and developing behavioural solutions.**

Policy areas in early stages of development might need to further understand their policy context to develop policy proposals, which could require behavioural support.

This is likely to require translating problems into behavioural terms, conducting primary and/or secondary research and applying behavioural analysis to the findings (e.g. barriers analysis, consumer journey mapping, solution generation). For instance, DESNZ has carried out projects identifying planning barriers for hydrogen projects and potential solutions to address them, and another project analysing the barriers to households and businesses installing solar photovoltaic panels (PV).

Primary research could take the form of qualitative research, for example interviews, online forums, focus groups, cognitive interviews, ethno-lite research (e.g. diaries) and user testing. It may include a deliberative element. Primary research may also require survey-based research. Suppliers should be able to use sampling methods such as random probability sampling or quota samples where necessary, as well as have access to appropriate samples (e.g. different tenure types, people who are digitally excluded).

We would expect these projects to draw on the findings to present a range of behavioural solutions to the issues raised to help inform the design and delivery of policy.

### **Lot 3: Testing the impact of policy proposals.**

Policy areas in later stages of development might need to test policy proposals or behavioural interventions to identify their potential impact at scale. This could involve projects such as trialling different communication and implementation techniques or experiments to test the impact of different policy ideas against each other.

This will likely require experimental methods or qualitative / user testing if experimental methods are inappropriate. Experimental research might involve randomised controlled trials and/or quasi-experimental methods, although they may have to be conducted online given the rapid nature of the framework. Suppliers should be able to use random probability samples and/or quota samples as necessary. This could also involve providing expert behavioural review of policy proposals or providing expert advice such as developing methodologies to support testing of behavioural interventions.

Note that we may decide to revise the Lots on the new framework.

## **5. Requirement**

For each call-off project, the following elements are typically required:

#### Deliverables

Outputs produced through individual commissions will vary on a project-by-project basis. These may include reports (typically 30 pages, excluding the annex), training materials, presentation materials, policy recommendation summaries and other products.

#### Data outputs

DESNZ may wish to request the underlying data for research outputs, particularly quantitative research (e.g. tables and crosstabs for surveys). The contractor is required to be able to provide this at request.

#### Quality assurance

DESNZ may wish to request quality assurance logs for major research outputs. The contractor is required to be able to provide this at request.

#### Publication

Some of the outputs produced via this contract may be published publicly (for example we may request that they are published on gov.uk or the successful suppliers website). Therefore, the supplier should be prepared to produce publication standard work. Whether project outputs will be published will be decided on a project-by-project basis.

#### Commissioning of individual projects

Within DESNZ, there will be a common process which all projects will undergo to act as quality assurance before requests to provide a proposal for work are submitted to the successful suppliers. This involves two broad stages:

##### *Pre-commissioning stage:*

- 1) Several internal approvals prior to commissioning via the framework.

##### *Commissioning stage:*

- 2) All applications from internal clients (e.g. policy) are submitted to the Social and Behavioural Energy Research team, which manages the contract. Members of the team will carry out an assessment of the application.
- 3) Following feedback, the application is then sent to a sub-committee of senior analysts who will assess project applications and ensure the project is suitable before they can be approved.
- 4) Once approved, the brief will be sent to the successful suppliers (the exact process is to be determined).

## **6. New Framework Format, Timescales and Budget**

We are currently estimating that the procurement for the new Framework will launch in March 2024.

When this is launched it will be advertised through the Find a Tender and Contracts Finder websites and the Jaggaer eSourcing portal will be utilised as the tendering platform for bidders to register and submit their bid response.

The new Framework is expected to run from June 2024 until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026 at the earliest. However, DESNZ will require a break clause within the contract, placed at the end of June 2025 and June 2026.

As part of the Framework Management, we may request the successful supplier(s) to carry out an annual review (or 'stocktaking' report) of their work at the end of each financial year to ensure that the supplier(s) are providing DESNZ with high quality, value for money outputs. This report or review would be used as the basis for continuing with the contract through to the next year.

The successful supplier(s) will need to be GDPR compliant and will be required to evidence this as part of their bid submission.

We will also expect that the supplier(s) have cyber essentials (and can evidence this) and ideally will have tools / use organisations that are ISO/IEC 27001 compliant.

The Framework will have a maximum value cap of £1,800,000 across the duration of the term. **It should be noted that there is no commitment to spend any amount of money using this call-off contract.** DESNZ may commission behavioural science work outside of this call-off contract.

#### **Current and Future Framework Format**

Currently the Energy and Climate Change Behavioural Science Framework operates on a taxi-rank framework model with 3 ranked suppliers on each lot.

When a project is identified, this is offered to the first placed supplier, should they decline this is then offered to the second placed supplier and if they also decline this then moves to the third placed supplier. If all three suppliers decline, the project either does not go ahead or we advertise this formally to the open market.

As part of pre-market engagement, we are currently reviewing how well this has worked to date, to inform our decision on if this is the same format that we would utilise in the new Framework.

### **7. Pre-Market Engagement Feedback**

To support our pre-market engagement, we would welcome any questions you may have around the Framework and the work we will be commissioning under it. In addition, if you have any feedback on the format or the lotting structure, this would also be welcomed.

Any questions or feedback can be emailed to [ProfessionalServices@UKSBS.co.uk](mailto:ProfessionalServices@UKSBS.co.uk)