



Invitation to Quote

Invitation to Quote (ITQ) on behalf of of **Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)**

Subject UK SBS Citizen Science and Environmental Monitoring: towards a methodology for evaluating Opportunities, Costs and Benefits, on behalf of UK EOF

Sourcing reference number **CR150061NERC**

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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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 customers improve efficiency, generate savings and modernise.

It is our vision to become the leading provider for our customers 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 customers. This allows our customers 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 its customers, 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 Innovation and Skills (BIS) transition their procurement to UK SBS and Crown Commercial Service (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 Customers, our growth projections anticipate this will rise to £1bn in 2013/14.

Our Customers who have access to our services and Contracts are detailed [here](#).

Our achievements

In 2012/13 the Company grew in turnover from £44.7m to £52.4m, within that growth we:

- Reduced the Research Councils' 'back office' expenditure from £32m to £31.3m
- Saved £33m for the Research Councils in verified procurement savings, being greater than the entire cost of the services we provided to them
- Grew our customers from 7 to 22 (this will likely grow by a further 10 in 2013/14)
- Grew our customer base from 11,000 to 18,000 and will likely expand to 23,000+ in 2013/14

- Achieved an annual spend with SMEs that stands out across Central Government as a leading light at 32% (that's over £104.5M) against the 25% Government target

Our Procurement ambition

Our vision is to be recognised as a centre of excellence and deliver a broad range of procurement services across the public sector; to maintain and grow a procurement service unrivalled in public sector.

Procurement is a market-shaping function. Industry derived benchmarks indicate that UK SBS is already performing at or above “best in class” in at least three key measures (percentage savings, compliant spend, spend under management) and compare well against most other measures.

Over the next five years, it is the function's ambition to lead a cultural change in procurement in the public sector. The natural extension of category management is to bring about a fundamental change in the attitude to supplier relationship management.

Our philosophy sees the supplier as an asset to the business and the route to maximising value from supply. This is not a new concept in procurement generally, but it is not a philosophy which is widely employed in the public sector.

We are ideally positioned to “lead the charge” in the government's initiative to reform procurement in the public sector.

UK SBS Procurement's unique selling points are:

- Focus on the full procurement cycle
- Leaders in category management in common and specialised areas
- Expertise in the delivery of major commercial projects
- That we are leaders in procurement to support research
- Use of cutting edge technologies which are superior to those used generally used across the public sector.
- Use of market leading analytical tools to provide comprehensive Business Intelligence
- Active customer and supplier management

‘UK SBS’ contribution to the Government Procurement Agenda has been impressive. Through innovation and leadership UK SBS has built an attractive portfolio of procurement services from P2P to Strategy Category Management.’

John Collington

Former Government Chief Procurement Officer

Section 2 – About Our Customer

Natural Environment Research Council

NERC is the UK's main agency for funding and managing research, training and knowledge exchange in the environmental sciences.

NERC's work covers the full range of atmospheric, Earth, biological, terrestrial and aquatic science, from the deep oceans to the upper atmosphere and from the poles to the equator.

The organisation coordinates some of the world's most exciting research projects, tackling major issues such as climate change, environmental influences on human health, the genetic make-up of life on Earth, and much more.

Working internationally, NERC have bases at some of the most hostile places on the planet; running a fleet of research ships and aircraft and investing in satellite technology to monitor gradual environmental change on a global scale. NERC provide forewarning of, and solutions to, the key environmental challenges facing society.

Examples of funded research

- Showing the importance of mature tropical forests to the global climate.
- Developing a safer and cleaner way to mine gold by reducing the use of mercury.
- Studying the hole in the ozone layer - discovered by our British Antarctic Survey - and monitoring climate change.
- Playing a major role in the International Census of Marine Life that monitors our oceans.

NERC also runs six organisations of world renown:

- British Antarctic Survey, in Cambridge.
- British Geological Survey, in Nottingham.
- National Oceanography Centre, in Southampton.
- Centre for Ecology & Hydrolog, in Oxfordshire.
- National Centre for Atmospheric Science, in Leeds.
- National Centre for Earth Observation, Swindon.

www.nerc.ac.uk

Section 3 - Working with UK Shared Business Services Ltd.

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	Customer Name and address	Natural Environment Research Council Polaris House, North Star Avenue Swindon, SN2 1EU
3.2	Buyer name	Kerry Hammond
3.3	Buyer contact details	[Research@uksbs.co.uk
3.4	Estimated value of the Opportunity	£27,000-£33,000.00
3.5	Process for the submission of clarifications and Bids	All correspondence shall be submitted within the Emptoris e-sourcing tool. Guidance Notes to support the use of Emptoris 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 and location of original Advert	05/08/2015 Location - Contracts Finder
3.7	Latest date/time ITQ clarification questions should be received through Emptoris messaging system	14/08/2015 14.00
3.8	Latest date/time ITQ clarification answers should be sent to all potential Bidders by the Buyer through Emptoris	19/08/2015 14.00
3.9	Latest date/time ITQ Bid shall be submitted through Emptoris	01/09/2015 11.00
3.10	Anticipated rejection of unsuccessful Bids date	07/09/2015 17.00
3.11	Anticipated Award date	07/09/2015
3.12	Anticipated Contract Start date	08/09/2015
3.13	Anticipated Contract End date	March 2016
3.14	Bid Validity Period	60 Days

Section 4 – Specification

Background and Rationale

The UK Environmental Observation Framework (UKEOF) is a partnership of mainly government organisations involved in collecting, managing and using environmental data and information. Some of the partner organisations have a long track record of supporting citizen science to collect important data for a variety of purposes; others have started to use citizen science to some extent, or are considering doing so. The partnership has an active Citizen Science Working Group which has published guidance on the topic¹.

The UKEOF Citizen Science Working Group has identified a need to better understand the potential for citizen scientists to become more involved in environmental monitoring programmes, and how to identify and calculate the costs and benefits of them doing so. This study originates from a Defra Strategic Network Evidence Group event, which tasked the Citizen Science Working Group with investigating the potential of involving volunteers in a wider range of monitoring activities and assessing any financial efficiency.

The UK has a long history of volunteer monitoring in the environment which has tended to focus on schemes that supplement existing monitoring effort. More recently, as monitoring agencies face significant financial pressures, there has been an increasing interest in volunteer involvement across a wider range of monitoring activities, allowing employed staff to be deployed more flexibly, and citizens to participate in stewarding key aspects of their local environment.

Volunteer involvement can incur significant costs through design, IT support, recruiting, training and engaging with volunteers, and analysing data. However, in some cases, such engagement may be the most cost-effective option and provide an increased contribution to UK monitoring. For example, in 2007, a £7 million government investment into volunteer monitoring generated data estimated to contribute time in-kind worth £20 million². Additionally, volunteer activity associated with an indicator species project in France is estimated to have an annual worth of up to €4 million³.

However, despite evidence that volunteer monitoring can represent good value for money, presenting a financial case to secure necessary resources to support, recruit and engage volunteers remains difficult.

Desired Outcomes

This short study will assist the UK's environmental protection, monitoring and conservation agencies to make decisions which will help them to monitor various environmental parameters using the best mix of approaches involving staff, contractors and volunteers in the most effective, efficient and economical way. The study will build understanding about how to identify and measure the costs and benefits of monitoring activities using volunteers, explain the main principles involved, and aim to demystify the issues in a way which will be of practical use to UKEOF partners and others.

¹ <http://www.ukeof.org.uk/our-work/citizen-science>

² Mackechnie et al, 2011, *J Environ Monit*, 13, 2687-91.

³ Levrel et al, 2010, *Ecol Econ*, 69, 1580-6.

Using a recommended consistent and objective rationale, the agencies will be better able to identify and assess the financial case for volunteers to participate in monitoring programmes. They will understand in principle what types of cost and value, to their own business and to wider society, apply to using volunteers and will know how to quantify those aspects which will be core to their own decision-making. The resulting decisions about monitoring will be transparent, made on the broadest, best available and most relevant evidence; and budgets for monitoring will be spent to best effect.

Scope

The principal customers for this research are the UK's environmental protection, monitoring and conservation agencies. Other interested stakeholders may include: organisations contracted to carry out government monitoring or conducting their own environmental monitoring, such as businesses or non-government organisations; providers of complementary datasets, e.g. satellite, population, land use or other geographic data; policymakers; informed citizens; users of data.

Broadly, the types of citizen science covered by this study should involve members of the public volunteering to collect environmental measurements, observations or samples, but can encompass other aspects, such as data analysis. The study should cover existing biological (including monitoring change in species populations and distributions), chemical, hydrometric or other physical monitoring as well as likely future evidence needs – a useful table of environmental pressures for monitoring and their suitability for citizen science is available on page 33 of *A Strategic Framework to Support the Implementation of Citizen Science for Environmental Monitoring*⁴ (a document produced by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and funded by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency). The research should focus on larger activities with an ongoing requirement. A wide spectrum of citizen engagement should be considered, from expert, skilled volunteers carrying out specialised surveys to interested amateurs who engage in mass participation events at UK, national, regional and local scales.

In comparing the costs and benefits of data collected by traditional monitoring methods with the alternatives, it will be necessary to compare the scope, quality and value of the data collected against the monitoring needs of the agencies and of the wider user community. The study should consider if this can be addressed in a broad-brush, 'rule of thumb' manner (e.g. 'high', 'medium' and 'low' fit to the agencies' priorities), rather than by precise metrics.

Appendix 1 contains a list of questions which may help contractors frame the study, and assist monitoring agencies to make decisions and plan any changes around using volunteers for environmental monitoring.

The successful contractor must demonstrate experience and expertise in government appraisal and inter-disciplinary methods encompassing social, economic and environmental techniques, specifically cost benefit analyses. The contractor should also have a broad understanding of the role of citizen scientists in studying and monitoring the UK's environment and of wider environmental monitoring activities.

The total cost is expected to be in the range of £27,000 - £33,000 (excl. VAT).

This project should not duplicate work already carried out by UKEOF and published on our website, although of course those materials may provide signposts to existing projects and methods and other useful information. For example, *A Strategic Framework to Support the Implementation of Citizen*

⁴ http://www.ceh.ac.uk/sites/default/files/hp1114final_5_complete.pdf

Science for Environmental Monitoring (see footnote 4) is likely to provide useful precursor information around incorporating citizen science into environmental monitoring.

Objectives

1. Briefly assess and summarise volunteer engagement in existing monitoring programmes led by the UK's environmental protection, monitoring and conservation agencies to understand the current state of play (liaise with the UKEOF Citizen Science Working Group where necessary), and assess the potential future role of such engagement in meeting agencies' changing needs and aspirations looking ahead.
2. Review current methodologies for valuing the contribution of citizen science financially to environmental monitoring, considering varying types of engagement (e.g. data collection, identification and analysis) and identifying the inputs and outputs considered, as well as the current gaps in knowledge.
3. Recommend a simple method for the UK's environmental protection, monitoring and conservation agencies to help quantify the financial value (based on cost benefit analysis) of options for citizen science involvement in their monitoring programmes.
4. Develop simple high-level criteria with which agencies can assess proposals for volunteer involvement in monitoring programme (e.g. 'high', 'medium' and 'low' fit to the agencies' priorities).
5. Assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of using volunteers in a small number of realistic scenarios (scenarios to be agreed with the Project Steering Group).
6. Make an overall assessment of the potential for increased citizen science contributions to the current environmental monitoring schemes and likely future monitoring needs.
7. Make a brief assessment of the significance of remaining gaps in our knowledge, and what further work would be needed to fill priority areas.

The review of current methodologies for item 2 above can include relevant methods from comparable sectors if they add a useful perspective. The recommended method (item 3 above) should consider both inputs (time and money spent) and outputs (resulting survey data or analysis) of the scheme; non-financial benefits (e.g. well-being, education) should be identified separately and be consistent with Green Book principles⁵.

Outputs

- Brief (c.20 page excluding appendices) review of existing volunteer engagement in agency-led monitoring activities and discussion of potential opportunities for increased involvement, with consideration of the likely future role for such engagement to meet agencies' changing needs.
- Method for estimating the financial case for greater volunteer involvement in environmental monitoring, with inclusion where possible of the associated wider non-financial benefits. This should be supported by a review of current evaluation methods, a rationale for the recommendations with simple high-level criteria to assess changing engagement, assessment of a small number of agreed scenarios and likely future agency needs, and a note of the knowledge gaps identified.
- Two page headline document setting out the key messages from the study with clear signposting to detailed information on recommendations.
- Draft content for the UKEOF website (text and any relevant graphics/images), including links to detailed reports and other sources of information.

Outputs will be published on the UKEOF website.

Project Milestones

The project is expected to start in September 2015 and will be completed by the end of March 2016. Contractors bidding for this work should propose a detailed timetable with milestones for deliverables; see the suggested outline timetable below.

Weeks 1-3

- Project start-up meeting between contractors and PSG (Project Steering Group).
- Liaise with environmental monitoring agencies to inform knowledge of existing monitoring programmes and their volunteer engagement.

By end of week 12

- Interim report submitted to PSG, covering progress so far and including proposed scenarios (for item 5 above).

Weeks 13-14

- Project meeting (likely teleconference) between contractors and PSG to review progress and agree scenarios.

By end of week 21

- Final drafts of all outputs submitted to PSG.
- Project meeting (likely teleconference) between contractors and PSG to discuss final outputs.

By end of week 25

- PSG return comments on draft final outputs.

By end of week 28

- Final outputs delivered

Monthly progress updates will be emailed to the UKEOF Project Officer. The contractor will alert the UKEOF Project Officer immediately of any significant risks.

Appendix 1

Questions

The following questions may help the contractor frame the study and assist the UK's environmental protection, monitoring and conservation agencies to make decisions and plan any changes around using volunteers for environmental monitoring.

- What precedents exist of using volunteers for environmental monitoring?
- What methods exist to quantify the benefits and costs of voluntary effort in this or comparable sectors?
- What are the strengths, weaknesses and applicability of these methods, for environmental monitoring?
- What are the different ways that a counterfactual can be defined?⁶

⁶ These four questions are aimed at helping decision-makers understand the true added value of citizen science in different contexts. Guidance is also needed on how to value the time spent by volunteers collecting the data and the value of the data to the agency whilst avoiding double counting, so that they can be properly compared to the costs of agency-based data collection.

- What are the key characteristics of the counterfactual which should be established for cost benefit analysis?
- What are the most appropriate counterfactuals to consider in assessing existing projects?
- In what scenarios should volunteer time be regarded as a cost and in what contexts should it be regarded as a benefit?

- What criteria should be used to identify promising areas for volunteer monitoring, and why?

- What types of benefit and cost should be considered by agencies, for volunteers and for society?
- Which of these factors are essential to quantify, in order for agencies to make operational decisions about working with volunteers?
- What evidence or data would be needed to quantify these essential benefits and costs?
- How and where can these data be accessed?
- What are the implications of choosing not to, or being unable to, quantify the other potential benefits and costs identified?

- What are the most promising areas for the agencies to explore in looking for opportunities to involve volunteers and why?
- In proposing changes to monitoring to involve volunteers, which scenarios or combinations are most likely to happen and therefore relevant to assess in terms of costs and benefits?

- What gaps remain in our knowledge to value volunteer engagement and how significant are they?

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, the Customer and any specific external stakeholders UK SBS deem required. After evaluation the 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	FOI1.1	Freedom of Information Exemptions
Commercial	AW1.1	Form of Bid
Commercial	AW1.3	Certificate of Bona Fide Bid
Commercial	AW3.1	Validation check
Commercial	AW4.1	Contract Terms
Price	AW5.5	E Invoicing
Price	AW5.6	Implementation of E-Invoicing
Quality	AW6.1	Compliance to the Specification

Scoring criteria			
Evaluation Justification Statement			
In consideration of this particular requirement UK SBS has decided to evaluate Potential Providers by adopting the weightings/scoring mechanism detailed within this ITQ. UK SBS 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	AW6.2	Understanding The Requirements	20.07%
Quality	AW6.3	Proposed methodology & Objectives	40.05%
Quality	AW6.4	Project Management & Contingencies	10.08%
Quality	AW6.5	Project Team	14.85%
Quality	AW6.7	Risk Assessment	4.95%

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: Score/Total Points available multiplied by 20 ($60/100 \times 20 = 12$)

Where an evaluation criterion is worth 10% then the 0-100 score achieved will be multiplied by 10.

Example if a Bidder scores 60 from the available 100 points this will equate to 6% by using the following calculation: Score/Total Points available multiplied by 10 ($60/100 \times 10 = 6$)

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 the final score returned may be different as there may be multiple evaluators and their individual scores will be averaged (mean) to determine your final score.

Example

Evaluator 1 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 2 scored your bid as 60

Evaluator 3 scored your bid as 50

Evaluator 4 scored your bid as 50

Your final score will $(60+60+50+50) \div 4 = 55$

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: $\text{Score/Total Points} \times 50$ ($80/100 \times 50 = 40$)

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.
- 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 Emptoris messaging system to raise any clarifications to our ITQ. You should note that typically 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 your customer is and what they want – a generic answer does not necessarily meet every customer'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 and concise 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 check and recheck your Bid before dispatch.

What makes a good bid – some simple do not's ☹️

DO NOT

- 7.12 Do not cut and paste from a previous document and forget to change the previous details such as the previous buyer's name.
- 7.13 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.
- 7.14 Do not share the Procurement documents, they are confidential and should not be shared with anyone without the Buyers written permission.
- 7.15 Do not seek to influence the procurement process by requesting meetings or contacting UK SBS or the Customer to discuss your Bid. If your Bid requires clarification the Buyer will contact you.
- 7.16 Do not contact any UK SBS staff or Customer staff without the Buyers written permission or we may reject your Bid.
- 7.17 Do not collude to fix or adjust the price or withdraw your Bid with another Party as we will reject your Bid.
- 7.18 Do not offer UK SBS or Customer staff any inducement or we will reject your Bid.
- 7.19 Do not seek changes to the Bid after responses have been submitted and the deadline for Bids to be submitted has passed.
- 7.20 Do not cross reference answers to external websites or other parts of your Bid, the cross references and website links will not be considered.
- 7.21 Do not exceed word counts, the additional words will not be considered.
- 7.22 Do not make your Bid conditional on acceptance of your own Terms of Contract, as your Bid will be rejected.

Some additional guidance notes

- 7.23 All enquiries with respect to access to the e-sourcing tool and problems with functionality within the tool may be submitted to Crown Commercial Service (previously Government Procurement Service), Telephone 0345 010 3503.
- 7.24 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.
- 7.25 Question numbering is not sequential and all questions which require submission are included in the Section 6 Evaluation Questionnaire.
- 7.26 Any Contract offered may not guarantee any volume of work or any exclusivity of supply.
- 7.27 We do not guarantee to award any Contract as a result of this procurement
- 7.28 All documents issued or received in relation to this procurement shall be the property of UK SBS.
- 7.29 We can amend any part of the procurement documents at any time prior to the latest date / time Bids shall be submitted through Emptoris.
- 7.30 If you are a Consortium you must provide details of the Consortiums structure.
- 7.31 Bidders will be expected to comply with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.32 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
- 7.33 Your bid will be valid **60** days or your Bid will be rejected.
- 7.34 Bidders may only amend the Contract terms if you can demonstrate there is a legal or statutory reason why you cannot accept them. If you request changes to the Contract and UK SBS fail to accept your legal or statutory reason is reasonably justified we may reject your Bid.
- 7.35 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.
- 7.36 If you fail mandatory pass / fail criteria we will reject your Bid.
- 7.37 Bidders are required to use IE8, IE9, Chrome or Firefox in order to access the functionality of the Emptoris e-sourcing tool.

- 7.38 Bidders should note that if they are successful with their proposal UK SBS 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 UK SBS may decline to proceed with the award of the Contract to the successful Bidder.
- 7.39 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 Emptoris.
- 7.40 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, UK SBS 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 UK SBS 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.

- 7.41 From 2nd April 2014 the Government is introducing its new Government Security Classifications (GSC) classification scheme 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 from 2nd April 2014. The link below to the Gov.uk website provides information on the new GSC:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-security-classifications>

UK SBS 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

- [Emptoris Training Guide](#)
- [Emptoris e-sourcing tool](#)
- [Contracts Finder](#)

- [Tenders Electronic Daily](#)
- [Equalities Act introduction](#)
- [Bribery Act introduction](#)
- [Freedom of information Act](#)