

Prior Information Notice



Prior Information Notice on behalf of UK Research and Innovation
Subject: UK SBS PR18152 Offshore Scientific Drilling and Coring
and Ice Management and Fleet Provision
Sourcing Reference Number: UK SBS PR18152

Purpose of Prior Information Notice

This Prior Information Notice is being issued to make the market aware of a pending tender exercise and to welcome feedback on our chosen Lot structure with regards to this procurement exercise.

If you believe this is of interest to you and your organisation, please register an Expression of Interest and provide any feedback you may have by sending an email to the following email address: majorprojects@uksbs.co.uk. Your email should include the reference "UK SBS PR18152" and you should include your company name and contact details of relevant representatives.

For the avoidance of doubt, this notice is not a Call for Competition; a Contract Notice will be issued as a call for competition. Not registering an interest shall not prevent any supplier participating in a future procurement, nor is it intended that any information supplied shall place any supplier at an advantage in a potential procurement process. UKRI reserves the position not to award a contract.

Background

In 2004 the IODP undertook a high Arctic scientific drilling/coring campaign, Expedition 302 'ACEX' <http://www.ecord.org/expedition302/>, to study the history of the Arctic. This utilised a drilling system built onto the icebreaker vessel 'Vidar Viking', with icebreakers 'Oden' and the 'Sovetskiy Soyuz' as ice protection vessels coupled with ice management expertise. This expedition expanded the knowledge of managing a drillship in near 10/10th ice coverage and to date is one of the few continuously coring expeditions to an ice covered high latitude environment.

In 2021 the IODP will undertake a similar drilling/coring expedition to the high Arctic, Expedition 377: Arctic Ocean Paleoceanography (ArcOP), <http://www.ecord.org/expedition377>, again using a drillship.

It is anticipated that the 2021 ArcOP expedition will also incorporate 2-3 ice breakers in addition to the drilling platform to assist in managing the ice conditions.

The main differences of this expedition compared with ACEX are:

- location, the drill sites are further south
- water depths and penetration are both deeper, requiring a longer drill string and consequently a longer time on site to core the holes.

The dates, which are fixed, for the expedition are: Depart northern Norway 1st September 2021 on passage to work area. Depart work area, mid Oct October 2021, on passage to demobilisation port. The dates for mobilisation and demobilisation are dictated by the above dates. These dates predict 34 days on site. The location for mobilisation and demobilisation has not been determined and will be decided with the successful SUPPLIER, during the contracting stage.

The overall goal of ArcOP is the recovery of a complete stratigraphic sedimentary record on the southern Lomonosov Ridge to meet the highest priority paleoceanographic objective: the continuous long-term Cenozoic climate history of the central Arctic Ocean. Furthermore, sedimentation rates two to four times higher than those of ACEX are expected to permit higher-resolution studies of Arctic climate change.

The Contracting Authority intend to run this procurement following the open procedure with two lots as described below:

Lot 1: Offshore Scientific Drilling and Coring Specification

This contract is for a scientific drilling and coring capability to operate in the high Arctic during the annual minimum ice cover period. This contract is for a drilling capability and ideally a drilling platform.

Scientific coring is often different from most commercial coring operations in the requirement for continuous, high quality (undisturbed and very high percentage) and efficient/productive core recovery. The quality of the science depends on the quality of the core and the speed to obtain this core. The borehole sites and coring operation will be dictated by the ice conditions and priorities at the time of the expedition, with multiple operational plans that could be followed.

The minimum objectives are to continuously core two boreholes. The 1st borehole to 900m below the seabed (WD 815m) and the 2nd borehole to 40m below the seabed, (WD 875m). This will require the drillship to continuously stay on station for a minimum of 30 days, (1st borehole).

This scientific coring differs from oil and gas drilling in that the boreholes will not be drilling into or near hydrocarbon resources. This reduces any environment impact and improves the safety of the drilling operation over oil and gas drilling.

Lot 2: Ice Management and Fleet Provision

This Lot is for an integrated ice and fleet management package that will allow the drillship to stay on station. The ice and fleet management can be broken into three components that must co-ordinate and work closely together. These three components are:

1. Ice and weather forecasting
2. Icebreaker fleet management
3. Icebreaker vessels (maximum of 3)

The requirement will cover the provision of the following to provide a complete and integrated system of ice and fleet management.

- Provide an ice and fleet management service, 24 hour/day for the duration of the expedition.
- Ice management plan.
- Operating procedures.
- HSE assessment and procedures.
- Understand the needs of a drilling campaign and the limitations of a drilling platform and drilling operation.
- All equipment and software required.
- All data required.
- All Icebreaker capability (except 'Oden' and drillship (Optional)) up to 3 ships.
- All personnel required.
- All ancillary services.
- Be an adviser to the client on all ice management related matters.
- Use the icebreakers, if required, to assist the drilling platform to transit to and from the work area.
- Attend project meetings and actively participate in the planning and execution of this expedition.

- Insurance.
- Maintain relationship with the drilling company when known.

Although this Lot does not cover the provision of the drilling service, it includes the option to provide the drilling platform as an additional icebreaker vessel.

Lot Structure and Anticipated Procurement Strategy

Both Lots will have a non-mandatory option to provide a drilling platform.

Organisations interested in Lot 1 will need to provide a bid and full costs for the offshore scientific drilling and coring without the drilling platform and where possible provide an option, which may or may not be taken by the Contracting Authority, for a drilling platform.

Organisations interested in Lot 2 will need to provide a bid and full costs for the Ice Management and Fleet Provision without the drilling platform and where possible provide an option, which may or may not be taken by the Contracting Authority, for a drilling platform.

Lot 1 and Lot 2 will be evaluated based on the advertised evaluation criteria and the winning Organisation for each lot will be established. This will result in one of three scenarios:

1. Both successful organisations propose an optional drilling platform. In this scenario, advertised evaluation criteria will be used to select and award the most economically advantageous option for the Contracting Authority.
2. One of the successful organisations propose a drilling platform as an option and therefore this option will be selected and awarded.
3. Neither successful organisations propose a drilling platform. In this scenario the requirement is not met and the procurement will be unable to be concluded.

It is highly preferable for bidders to provide an option for the drilling platform to avoid the third scenario above.

This approach should ensure the Contracting Authority can consider all available options whilst ensuring the most economically advantageous tender is chosen.

The Contracting Authority request that Organisations who express an interest also provide feedback on the above proposed approach which will enable the Contracting Authority to test the strategy and finalise procurement plans and requirements prior to launch. The Contracting Authority are anticipating launching the procurement and call for competition on the **10th January 2020**, therefore any feedback will need to be submitted prior to this date in order to enable the Contracting Authority to consider this feedback in the planning of the procurement.

Budget

The estimated budget for the entire requirement is \$10,000,000 USD to \$16,000,000 USD. This budget is inclusive of the offshore scientific drilling and coring, the ice management and fleet provision, and the drilling platform as well as fuel which is anticipated to be a large proportion of the budget.