



Invitation to Tender

Review of evidence: Sustainable Management of Agricultural Soils in England

Project code: **INS210-01**

September 2023

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Office for Environmental Protection (The OEP) is a public body that protects and improves the environment by holding government and other public authorities to account. We were legally created in November 2021, under the Environment Act 2021.

Our work covers England and Northern Ireland. We also cover reserved matters across the UK (a matter on which only the UK Parliament in Westminster can make legislation).

We are an independent non-departmental public body, funded by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in England and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) in Northern Ireland, who oversee our use of public money.

However, we pursue our objectives and implement our functions independently and impartially, separately from government. Our judgements are our own, formed independently.

- 1.2 This document sets out the scope and parameters of work which the OEP wishes to commission and describes how tenderers may tender to undertake this work.
- 1.3 For guidance, this tendering opportunity has a budget in the range indicated below (NB. all values include VAT):

£10- £25k	£20k- £35k	£25k- £50k	£50k- £70k	£60k- £80k	£75k- £125k	£100k- £150k	£125k- £200k	£175k- £250k	£200k- £350k	£300k- £500k
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2. Timetable

The target timetable for this process is as follows:

- Deadline for receipt of questions relating to this ITT 23:45, 20 September 2023
- **Deadline for receipt of tender submissions 23:45, 3 October 2023**
- Notification of the OEP's decision 10 October 2023
- Commencement of work 18 October 2023
- Completion of work – finalised report 22 March 2024

We reserve the right to change the timetable if deemed necessary.

3. Objectives

- 3.1 The overarching objective of this commissioned work is to provide a critical appraisal of the current regulatory and governance frameworks and government and non-government schemes supporting the sustainable management of agricultural soils in England.
- 3.2 This objective will be achieved through review and critical appraisal of the following areas, as described further in Section 5:
 - A. Sustainable management practices for soil under different land use scenarios.
 - B. Current regulatory and government schemes implemented in England that impact directly and indirectly on the sustainable management of soil.
 - C. Current non-governmental schemes implemented in England aimed directly or indirectly at the sustainable management of soils and their contribution in principle and in practice to protect soil in England.
 - D. Best practice case studies which can be used as exemplars of regulation and governance supporting the sustainable management of soils.
 - E. Appraisal of strengths and weaknesses in government's current regulatory/governance framework for the sustainable management of soils
- 3.3 The scope of **this work will cover all agricultural soils in England only**, excluding contaminated land.
- 3.4 The outcome of the project will support the OEP's ongoing monitoring and assessment of government's aim in EIP23 to bring 40% of agricultural soils into sustainable management by 2028 and increase this to 60% by 2030. This work may be used by the OEP to advise on matters such as legislation changes, policy changes, consultations and requests for advice that relate to soil.

4. Background

- 4.1 The Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) has the mission to protect and improve the environment by holding government and other public authorities to account. Further information is detailed in our [Strategy](https://www.theoep.org.uk/report/our-strategy-and-enforcement-policy)¹ and [Corporate Plan](https://www.theoep.org.uk/report/our-corporate-plan)².
- 4.2 To achieve our objectives, the OEP has four main functions:
 - We review and report on progress in delivering Environmental Improvement Plans (EIPs), goals, and targets.
 - We monitor and report on the implementation of environmental law.
 - We advise government on proposed changes to environmental law and other matters related to the natural environment
 - We investigate suspected serious failures to comply with environmental law by public authorities and enforce compliance where needed.
- 4.3 The proposed area of study covered by this project will complement our wider scrutiny of EIPs, goals and targets, and will support the development of our annual monitoring reports. Sustainable soil management is essential to achieving

¹ www.theoep.org.uk/report/our-strategy-and-enforcement-policy

² www.theoep.org.uk/report/our-corporate-plan

improvements in the environment and in particular the targets set out in the Environmental Improvement Plan for England. However, due to a lack of data we were unable to assess progress in improving soils in our last assessment³.

- 4.4 Enhancing soil management forms a key action under Goal 6 (Using Resources from Nature Sustainably) of the revised EIP for England (2023)⁴. Healthy soils will help to mitigate the impact of climate change while continuing to support a productive food system and resilient ecosystems. **The aim is to bring 40% of agricultural soils into sustainable management by 2028 and increase this to 60% by 2030.** This will be achieved through a number of actions including a new farming scheme aimed at incentivising farmers and land managers to improve soil management.
- 4.5 DEFRA are currently in the process of developing a soils indicator(s) as part of the Outcome Indicator Framework for the EIP⁵.
- 4.6 The House of Commons EFRA Committee is conducting an inquiry into the UK government's role in preventing further soil degradation and restoring soils across England. The EFRA Committee has received written and oral evidence submission from a range of organisations⁶, including Defra⁷.
- 4.7 There has been a significant investment in research and development of soils indicators and monitoring techniques over the past decades. Most recently a report on indicator development has been published by Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)⁸. Going forward the application of these indicators and monitoring techniques will be key to determining whether soils are being managed sustainably to achieve the targets of the England EIP.
- 4.8 When compared to air and water, there is less legislation concerned directly with protecting or improving soil. There are however several relevant legislative provisions that address soil management indirectly. In addition, voluntary agri-environment schemes in England such as Environmental Land Management Schemes; specifically, the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) in England include standards to protect soils. There is also a range of voluntary assurance schemes, industry schemes, partnership schemes and emerging Nature Markets available in England with specific soil management objectives to protect and improve soil management.

5. Requirements and Services

Project inception

- 5.1 Attend a project inception meeting to confirm the scope, project requirements, delivery approach, methodologies to be used for stakeholder engagement, document review and analysis and deliverables. We will also share an explanation of our wider work activities for context. We can hold this meeting at our office in Worcester or in Belfast, or by video conference, if in-person meeting is not possible.

³ www.theoep.org.uk/report/progress-improving-natural-environment-england-20212022

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-improvement-plan

⁵ <https://oifdata.defra.gov.uk/>

⁶ <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/7139/soil-health/publications/written-evidence/>

⁷ <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/7139/soil-health/>

⁸ <https://hub.jncc.gov.uk/assets/71cece04-eef3-4d34-b118-33ddad50912c>

- 5.2 There is a requirement to engage with key stakeholders in the delivery of this work, including but not limited to, DEFRA, Natural England, and the Environment Agency. A final list of stakeholders will be agreed at the inception meeting.
- 5.3 Produce minutes setting out the key outcomes, conclusions and action points within three working days. Attend subsequent regular weekly progress meetings with the OEP delivery team. Provide an updated action log within 3 working days of all meetings.

A: Sustainable management practices for agricultural soils under different land use scenarios

- 5.4 What are the key drivers of and pressures upon sustainable soil management, and the future trajectory for sustainable soil management considering proposed land use and climate change?

The review will investigate the pressures and drivers on sustainable soil management and their relative impact on different soils in England. The review will also consider future predictions/foresight of sustainable soil management if the current pressures are not mitigated. This will include an assessment of the potential impact of climate change on sustainable soil management and mitigation strategies and the adaptations required to maintain sustainable soils.

- 5.5 What constitutes sustainable management of soils under different land use scenarios?

Bringing soils under sustainable management is a key part of the soil target in the EIP23. The review should examine what the current best practice is in the sustainable management of soils under different land use scenarios. Where evidence exists to demonstrate that practices have a positive impact on sustainable soil management, then this should be presented. The review should also identify examples in England where sustainable management practices are currently being implemented and the challenges to scale these practices up across England.

- 5.6 How can the soils target of the EIP23 be achieved?

The EIP23 sets out ambitious targets to bring 40% of agricultural soils into sustainable management by 2028 and increase this to 60% by 2030. The review should examine how this can be achieved and whether government current plans will deliver on the EIP23 target. In particular, we are interested in how the Sustainable Farm Incentive scheme actions for soils will contribute to the delivery of the EIP target.

B: Current regulatory framework and government schemes in England that relate to the sustainable management of soils

- 5.7 Outline and review the legislative measures in England and assess their effectiveness in improving the sustainable management of soils in England. These should include, but not be limited to:

- Reduction and Prevention of Agricultural Diffuse Pollution (England) Regulations 2018/151, also known as The Farming Rules for Water
- The Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations
- The Sludge (Use in Agriculture) Regulations 1989

- Cross Compliance
- 5.8 The review should identify and outline any potential impact the REUL Act may have on any legislation relevant to the sustainable management of soils in England.
- 5.9 This work does not require a legal analysis of legislation, case law, policy, guidance etc., although we appreciate the outputs are likely to include discussion of relevant legal cases and issues. Rather, we are asking the Supplier to analyse how the legal framework and associated case law, policy, guidance, etc. has affected (both positively and negatively) the sustainable management of soils in England.
- 5.10 Outline and review the Primary Soils Strategies/Schemes in England and their effectiveness in the sustainable management of soils. These should include, but not be limited to:
- 2009 Soil Strategy for England
 - Codes of Good Agricultural Practice
 - UK Forestry Standard
 - Agri-Environment Schemes
 - Catchment Sensitive Farming
 - Championing the farmed environment.
- 5.11 From the evidence collated, the review will evaluate whether the regulatory and non-regulatory government schemes adequately contribute to the sustainable management of soils in England. The review will identify where gaps in the current regulatory and non-regulatory schemes exist that impact on the sustainable management of soils.

C: Current non-government schemes in England that relate to the sustainable management of soils

- 5.12 Outline and review voluntary industry schemes such as: Red Tactor, retailer schemes, and partnership schemes that are implemented in England that impact on the sustainable management of soils.
- Are there any conflicts or trade-offs between these schemes that negatively impact on the sustainable management of soils?
- 5.13 Outline and review emerging Nature Markets that impact on the management and improvement of sustainable soils such as: carbon credits, and the Biodiversity Net Gain markets. Outline and evaluate potential trade-offs with the implementation of the Nature Markets.
- 5.14 From the evidence collated, the review will evaluate whether the non-government schemes, in combination with the current regulatory framework and government schemes, adequately contribute to the sustainable management of soils in England.

D: Review of Best Practice Case Studies

- 5.15 Identify and agree with the OEP a minimum of four best practice case studies which can be used as exemplars for regulatory and governance frameworks supporting sustainable soil management and which cover a range of soil types. Examples can also be taken from elsewhere in the UK or Europe where appropriate, although they must have features that make them comparable to the England context.
- 5.16 Review each case study, and for each:
- Describe the natural and socio-economic characteristics of the landscape in which the case study is set.
 - Review the drivers, pressures, functions, ecosystem services, indicators and monitoring and status of the soils in the case study.
 - Outline the extent to which the regulatory and governance framework and voluntary initiatives support the sustainable management of soil.
 - Outline the extent to which the case study operates in accordance with principles of good governance (e.g. based on effective public participation, transparency, predictability, accountability, etc). We are also interested in how well (or not) the processes work for the parties involved: government, regulators, developers, businesses (including farmers), communities and others.
 - Detail the evidence that shows that sustainable management of soils in these case studies have resulted in improved soil management.
- 5.17 For each case study outside England the review will also
- outline the reasons for selecting the jurisdictions used for case study
 - the extent to which the aspects in the case study might be applicable and transferable to England.
- 5.18 If appropriate these reviews should include engagement with experts and/or stakeholders associated with the case study to gain a better understanding of how the work has delivered sustainable soil management.
- 5.19 While the identification of proposed case studies in tenders is welcome, the final selection of the four case studies will be done in collaboration with the OEP at the start of the project.

E: Appraisal of strengths and weaknesses in government's current plans and regulatory/governance framework for the sustainable management of soils

- 5.20 Using the evidence collected in Tasks A-D answer the following questions:
(The final list of questions will be agreed with the OEP during the implementation of the project)
- Are there conflicts between the different government and non-government scheme/initiatives in terms of sustainable soil management?
 - What changes need to occur in regulation and governance structures in England, if soil is to be sustainably managed?

- What are the mechanisms required for any regulation/policy/delivery frameworks to be successful in terms of the uptake of sustainable soil management practices in England?
 - How will future pressures impact on the regulatory and governance framework for the sustainable management of soil in England?
- 5.21 The supplier shall use the evidence collected in tasks A-D, any other pertinent sources of evidence, as well as their own knowledge and experience to produce their recommendations for improving the current regulatory/governance framework for the sustainable management of soils in England. Consideration should be given to the relative significance of these recommendations and highlight areas where there is no overall consensus from stakeholders on the evidence gathered.
- 5.22 The OEP may use the supplier's recommendations to make its own recommendations to government in statutory reports we produce and lay before Parliament. This means the supplier will need to understand and consider the current policy landscape in England and the likelihood of government acting upon the recommendations. Any recommendations should be made in the context of the OEP's principal objective, as set by the Environment Act 2021, to contribute to environmental protection and the improvement of the natural environment.

Reporting Requirements

- 5.23 Collate the findings into a formal report(s). The report must:
- a) Include full details of document reviews, data analysis, quality assurance and the methods used for any stakeholder engagement undertaken. In addition to a full reference list, you must provide information on the sources/databases utilised for document sources, keywords you searched under and the criteria by which you selected documents for inclusion in the review.
 - b) Include a non-technical summary as well as technical documents for findings and recommendations of the review work above.
 - c) Fully document and reference all supporting information as the project will rely strongly on published evidence and data.
 - d) Be provided initially in draft form on a timescale to enable the OEP to undertake sufficient review, and for comments and amendments to be agreed with the supplier for finalising the report.
 - e) Be produced in the OEP's report template (Microsoft Word) and branding, which will be provided to the supplier.
 - f) Be of suitable content, format and standard for publication on the OEP's website. It must provide good accessibility, with appropriate use of tables and graphics.
 - g) Be accurate and quality checked.
- 5.24 The OEP welcomes and encourages the publication of suitable material by the contractor in a peer reviewed journal and will consider additional resourcing to do this. Any raw data collected for the project will be retained by the OEP.

Project and team management

- 5.25 Use appropriate project management techniques to ensure that all activities are undertaken on time, on budget and to a high standard of quality; manage budget and risks robustly; and resolve issues promptly.
- 5.26 If any services or elements of the delivery are subcontracted:
- Agree each subcontractor with us in advance.
 - Manage the subcontractor's activity and performance as if they were part of your own team.
- 5.27 Provide a single point of contact of appropriate seniority with whom we will liaise on all day-to-day matters throughout the duration of the contract.
- 5.28 Maintain an oversight of all work and propose opportunities for improved coordination and efficiency where possible to reduce overall costs and improve value for money.
- 5.29 Provide regular progress reporting and attend project progress meetings as required. Every one or two weeks is proposed.

Minimising environmental impacts

- 5.30 We expect you to:
- Minimise environmental impacts wherever possible in the way you undertake this project.
 - Have an environmental management system in place that is at least equivalent to the standards required by ISO 14001.

6. Tendering procedure

Tender submissions

- 6.1 This procurement is being undertaken by an open procedure, i.e. any interested company can submit a tender.
- 6.2 The process the OEP uses to select its suppliers is a competitive one. You should keep your tender focussed on the specific requirements and objectives of the work, and we recommend that you also consider the assessment criteria.

- 6.3 Tenders will only be accepted by email attachment to procurement@theoep.org.uk

In the email subject line state:

INS210-01 Review of Soils – Tender submission – YOUR COMPANY NAME

Tenders submitted by any other route, including postal, will not be accepted.

- 6.4 To constitute a compliant tender it is essential that all required information and documentation is fully completed, in the correct format, and your tender is received in our email inbox by the deadline date and time. It is your responsibility to ensure your tender arrives with us before the deadline date and time. We will not accept any tenders that arrive late.

Ensure you allow sufficient time before the deadline to submit your tender and for it to reach us.

- 6.5 Details not provided or not fully completed may constitute an admission of unsuitability/inability to fulfil requirements and may result in the tender being rejected at the OEP's absolute discretion.
- 6.6 We accept tenders from individuals, companies and from consortiums. Should you decide to tender as part of a consortium you will need to identify one member of the consortium (the "Lead Contractor") to act as the contracting party. All other consortium members will be sub-contractors to the Lead Contractor
- 6.7 Your tender and all accompanying documents are to be in English.
- 6.8 All tenders will be treated on a confidential basis by the OEP and its advisers, subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations.
- 6.9 All tenders must remain valid for a minimum period of 90 days following the deadline for receipt.
- 6.10 Information in this ITT is offered in good faith for the guidance of interested parties, but no warranty or representation is given as to the accuracy or completeness of any of it. The OEP and its advisors shall not be liable for any error, misstatement or omission. No aspect of this procedure shall constitute a contract or part of a contract. Tenderers participate in this process on the strict understanding that the procedure may be altered or that the OEP may not proceed for any reason. The OEP reserves the right not to follow up this ITT in any way and in particular not to enter into any contractual arrangement with any of the tenderers. The OEP does not bind itself to enter into negotiations or proceed with or accept any tender. Any decision to tender is at the sole discretion of the tenderer and the OEP excludes all liability in respect of any tendering costs incurred.
- 6.11 To be considered for assessment, suppliers must have sufficient and suitable insurance covers in place at the time of tendering or must include (as part of the tender submission) a commitment to take out such cover in the event of being appointed.

6.12 We reserve the right to reject tenders from suppliers where there are circumstances which in our reasonable opinion could impact upon the Supplier's ability to deliver the services required. Such circumstances could include:

- A financial report or other financial information about a tenderer suggesting it is at risk of insolvency;
- A tenderer is subject to relevant legal proceedings;
- A tenderer has a conflict of interest for which there is no feasible remedy.

We would initially seek to clarify the circumstances with the tenderer.

6.13 We reserve the right to reject any tender if any information provided is found to be false, misleading, incomplete or inaccurate.

Enquiries about this ITT

6.14 If you wish to submit questions relating to this ITT please do so by email to procurement@theoep.org.uk

In the email subject line state:

INS209-01 Review of Soils – ITT query – YOUR COMPANY NAME

Questions submitted in any other way will not receive a response.

6.15 Responses and the nature of the questions will be shared with all tenderers (unless we decide there is a specific reason not to) without disclosing the name of the tenderer who raised the question.

At our discretion, questions/requests for clarification on any element of this ITT or the procurement process submitted after the deadline stated in paragraph 2 will not be responded to.

Tender assessment and award of contract

6.16 All tenders will be assessed against the assessment criteria set out in section 8 of this ITT.

6.17 All tenderers will receive written notification of our decision.

6.18 Any contract entered into as a result of this procurement process shall be in accordance with the OEP's standard contract terms available at www.theoep.org.uk/suppliers. We will not negotiate on these terms or accept any additional terms so by submitting a tender you are accepting that our standard contract terms will apply to any contract awarded to you.

6.19 Following award we will issue to the successful tenderer a contract. Once signed by both parties we will issue a purchase order to instruct the commencement of the work. The successful tenderer shall not undertake any work on this contract unless and until instructed by the purchase order.

6.20 We reserve the right to extend the contract to include additional work within or closely related to the original scope. If additional work is required the specification and price will be agreed between us and the Supplier, the work will then be contracted by us issuing a variation to the contract and/or a variation to the purchase order or a separate purchase order(s) prior to that work commencing.

- 6.21 We also reserve the right to direct award further contracts to the successful tenderer (the Supplier) for additional services related to the subject of this project. If further contracts are required the specification and price for each will be agreed between us and the Supplier, the work will then be contracted by us issuing a contract and purchase order to instruct the work; the OEP Standard Contract Terms will apply, and we may require additional specific terms where necessary for the contract services.
- 6.22 If the successful tenderer operates through an 'intermediary' (e.g. a personal service company or a partnership) and has conditions of liability as defined at [HMRC ESM10003](#), or is a sole trader, we will undertake a determination of IR35 applicability or employment status for tax using the HMRC CEST tool. If our determination concludes that IR35 applies or the contract is employment for tax purposes, we may require an alternative contracting method so that the required tax and National Insurance Contributions can be deducted from our contract payments.
- 6.23 Tenderers taking part in this process acknowledge and accept that we may publish contract information about the winning tender (including the contract value and the name and contact details of the winning tenderer) on the OEP website and any mandatory registers (e.g. Contracts Finder and Find a Tender Service as applicable) or elsewhere, as required of Contracting Authorities by legislation, government, our funders, or in line with recognised industry good practice.

7. Please provide the following in your tender

- 7.1 Your tender shall comprise the following elements:

- A written proposal
- Quotation
- Supporting documents:
 - Quality management policy
- Tenderer information and declaration

Details about each of these are given in the sections below.

- 7.2 Ensure that you provide ALL of the information and documents requested.

- Documents must be separate not as a single combined document.
- Provide your *Tender Quotation* in Microsoft Excel format and all other documents in PDF format.
- You are not required to submit any other information than that requested. Any information that is not specifically requested will be disregarded.

Written proposal

- 7.3 Your written proposal should be limited to no more than **20** x A4 sides at minimum 10pt font (excl. cover page, index, executive summary and appendices). You should keep your responses focussed on the requirements and specific objectives, and we recommend you also consider the assessment criteria.

- 7.4 The assessment panel may not assess beyond the stated maximum number of sides, so if your submission exceeds that number, this may result in your tender being deemed non-compliant.
- 7.5 Do not provide information by linking to websites or external sources as the assessors will not refer to these.
- 7.6 Include the following in your written proposal:
- (1) Briefly describe your organisation.** You may wish to highlight relevant services you provide and outline how you are differentiated from other organisations.
 - (2) Demonstrate your understanding of the project,** what we are trying to achieve and why.
 - (3) Describe the project team that would manage and deliver the work.**
 - a) Identify your proposed key personnel and provide a short pen portrait for each.
As an appendix provide concise professional CVs. Do not include personal information (e.g. contact details, age, nationality etc).
 - b) Demonstrate their relevant experience and expertise, supported by examples of previous similar work they have undertaken, including:
 - An understanding of the sustainable management of soils.
 - An understanding of policies, regulations and measures related to the sustainable management of soils.
 - Legislative, policy and implementation analysis more broadly.
 - Case Study analysis.
 - Providing analysis to organisations similar to the OEP.
 Where you cite examples, it would be useful to include comment on how you would translate your experience of these to our project.
 - c) Identify your proposed team structure and the allocation of roles and responsibilities within the project. Identify any subcontractors.
 - (4) Explain your approach for delivering the work.** Separately address:
 - a) Your approach for undertaking each of the areas of study:
 - A:** Review of the sustainable management of agricultural soils under different land use scenarios
 - B:** Outline and review of the current regulatory framework and government schemes in England in relation to the sustainable management of soils
 - C:** Outline and review of the current non-government schemes in England in relation to the sustainable management of soils
 - D:** Review of Best Practice Case Studies
 - E:** Appraisal of strengths and weaknesses in government's current regulatory/governance framework for the sustainable management of soil

b) The outputs you would deliver.

(5) Explain your approach for project management. Include:

- Ensuring delivery on time and to budget.
- Quality management.
- Risk management.
- Team and subcontractor management.

(6) A project schedule of work, showing tasks and timescales.

(7) Briefly describe your approach for minimising and managing environmental impacts associated with this project.

(8) Identify any conflicts of interest which might arise if you were selected to undertake the work and, if such a conflict were to arise, an indication of how this conflict would be addressed. This is particularly important for this project considering that certain research organisations have been used by government in the work areas being assessed.

7.7 With regards to delivering the work, the OEP's approach to working with contractors is hands-on. Therefore, sufficient time must be included in the project to engage the OEP through regular progress meetings, technical meetings and review, and project refinement. This will be an important component of the project.

7.8 Do not state your quotation or day rates in your written proposal.

Quotation & rates schedule

7.9 You must provide your pricing by completing the template *Tender Quotation*

Tenders not using this template or which have reformatted or modified the template may be deemed non-compliant and may not be assessed. However, you may add additional lines to the tables if there are insufficient for your number of tasks or roles being proposed.

7.10 All price values must be stated **both exclusive and inclusive of VAT**, and the applicable VAT amount shown.

7.11 Provide your **quotation** by completing the template worksheet *Quotation*.

- Enter a full breakdown of your fixed price quotation showing your price for each activity/task and deliverable. This should include mobilisation and project management. If expenses (travel etc) are not included in your task costs then include an estimate as a separate cost item.

(NB: Quotations using a payment model other than fixed price will not be accepted.)

7.12 Summarise your **proposed team** by completing the template worksheet *Personnel Involvement and Rates*.

- Enter the role titles and names of the individuals you are proposing for this project, and your estimate for the percentage of the total time each role/individual will be involved in delivering this project.
- This will assist the assessors with understanding how your project team is structured and the likely allocation of resources into the project.

- Your proposed team should be described in full in your written bid.
- Also enter your day rate for each person. We require this information for reference if we consider extending the contract to include additional related work. If your tender is successful the individuals and day rates you have submitted in the Rates Schedule will form part of the contract and will apply to any further quotation we request for a contract variation.

7.13 Provide an **invoicing schedule** by completing the template worksheet *Invoicing Schedule*.

- Propose what the payment milestones would be and when. These must be linked to defined deliverables (e.g., "Completion of X").
- We cannot accept invoice milestones defined by percentage split (e.g., 20%, 40%, 40%) unless the percentages are close to the value of the milestone deliverables.
- We cannot accept milestones that make payments up front (e.g. X% on contract signing) – milestones must be in arrears for deliverables successfully completed.

Tenderer information and declaration

7.14 Use the OEP Tenderer Information and Declaration template.

7.15 Fully complete all sections of the template.

7.16 The declaration must be confirmed by a person in your organisation with appropriate and sufficient authority (e.g. a Director or Bid Manager).

Supporting documents

7.17 Provide your quality management policy. This will support your description (in your written proposal) of approaches you will use to ensure quality of deliverables.

8. Assessment criteria

- 8.1 We must be satisfied that each potential Supplier has the appropriate capabilities and resources available to undertake the work to our requirements and provide the necessary services.
- 8.2 Your tender will be assessed using the assessment criteria below. We may use information from any part of your tender when assessing any criterion.

Criteria • <i>Sub-criteria</i>	% weighting	Maximum possible score
Your understanding of the project, what we are trying to achieve and why	10%	70
Your project team that would manage and deliver the work	25%	175
• <i>Their relevant experience and expertise</i>	15%	105
• <i>Effective team structure and allocation of roles and responsibilities</i>	10%	70
Approach and methodology (including allocation of time and resources) that will most effectively deliver the objectives, requirements and value to the OEP	40%	280
• A: <i>Review of the sustainable management of agricultural soils under different land use scenarios</i>	5%	35
• B: <i>Outline and review of the current regulatory framework and government schemes in England in relation to the sustainable management of soils</i>	5%	35
• C: <i>Outline and review of the current non-government schemes in England in relation to the sustainable management of soils</i>	5%	35
• D: <i>Review of Best Practice Case Studies</i>	5%	35
• E: <i>Appraisal of strengths and weaknesses in government's current regulatory/governance framework for the sustainable management of soil</i>	10%	70
• <i>The outputs you would deliver</i>	5%	35
• <i>Project and team management that ensures delivery on time, on budget and to a high quality</i>	5%	35
Working methods that minimise and manage environmental impacts in the project effectively	5%	35
Price	20%	140
	100%	700

- 8.3 Price will each be assessed relative to the lowest compliant tender using the formula:

Lowest compliant tender price / tender price x maximum score available.

All other criteria will be assessed by being marked in the range 0 – 7, with 0 being non-compliant and 7 being Excellent.

- 8.4 Scoring guide for assessment criteria

7: Excellent	The response demonstrates a complete understanding of the work requirements and meets them in full
6: Very good	The response is relevant and very good. It is well detailed, demonstrates a very good understanding of the work and provides robust details on how the requirements will be fulfilled.
5: Good	The response demonstrates a good understanding of the work and aligns well with the requirements and there are no concerns.
4: Acceptable	The response demonstrates an acceptable understanding of the work and aligns sufficiently with the requirements and although it may raise some queries, there are no notable concerns
3: Poor	The response is partially relevant but generally poor. It addresses some elements of the work requirements but contains insufficient detail or explanation to demonstrate how the requirements will be fulfilled. Tender may be rejected
2: Very poor	The response demonstrates very limited understanding of the work and/or has a very poor alignment with the requirements and/or raises strong concerns. Tender may be rejected
1: Unacceptable	The response fails to demonstrate any real understanding of the work and/or does not align with the requirements and/or raises very strong concerns. Tender may be rejected
0: Non-compliant	The response provides insufficient information such that it is not possible to make an assessment of the suppliers' understanding of the work or demonstration of meeting the requirements. Tender may be rejected

- 8.5 During assessment of tenders we may request further information or evidence from the tenderers, or from other sources, to support statements made or to conduct sufficient due diligence.