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| Exchange Tower 1Exchange Square London EC14 9GE |
| Tel: 0300 111 3000 |
| Fax: 020 7831 1942 |
| info@housing-ombudsman.org.uk |
| www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk |
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**Request for Quote**

**Housing Ombudsman**

**Casework Assistance Services**

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| Creation date: | October 2018 |
| Contract Reference: | Casework Assistance |

**Housing Ombudsman Service – who we are and what we do**

The Housing Ombudsman Service is set up by law to look at complaints about the housing organisations that are registered with this service. Our service is free, independent and impartial. We resolve disputes involving the tenants and leaseholders of social landlords (housing associations and local authorities) and our voluntary members (private landlords and letting agents who are committed to good service for their tenants).

The role of the Housing Ombudsman is to:

* resolve disputes involving members of the Scheme, including making awards of

compensation or other remedies when appropriate, as well as to

* support effective landlord-tenant dispute resolution by others.

HOS’s vision ‘*Housing Matters: Fairness Matters’* recognises the central importance of housing in people’s lives and HOS’s role in ensuring the fair resolution of disputes. HOS recognises that issues relating to homes can have a huge emotional impact, so HOS ensures that any problems arising are dealt with quickly and efficiently whether by HOS or its registered landlords. HOS operates a busy service and is issuing this request for quotes from suppliers to help us achieve our targets. We are keen to work with a supplier who has **proven** experience of investigating and determining casework complaints on behalf of organisations within a regulatory industry or Ombudsman sector.

**Background to and details of Service requirements**

This request for quote is issued as the HOS has a a short term backlog of housing complaint cases that it needs to reduce by March 2019. In order to do this , HOS requires the supplier to process at **least 15** cases per individual team member per month. HOS advises that cases *on average* can take up to 10 working hours to complete; this includes reading the material and writing up the determination which is the required output for each case investigated.

Determinations are issued in accordance with our discretionary decision making powers by assessing the presenting evidence of the case and by investigating whether landlords actions were fair in all the circumstances. The Housing Ombudsman Scheme and its legal framework govern our practices; please see details of our Scheme included in this bid as a separate attachment.

In order to meet the backlog demand, it is expected that the supplier’s team size will be composed of 5 experienced case investigators with some management oversight from a supervisor. The supplier must be in a position to stand up a suitable team by **at least the end of November 2018**. The supplier will both provide and manage the service for HOS on its own premises.

Along with the quote, the supplier is asked to provide a reference demonstrating where it has successfully provided similar services previously and which is capable of being taken up by the Ombudsman prior to contract award.

In providing your quote please itemise the following including VAT:

* Number of cases you intend to complete in the calendar month
* Size of casework team proposed
* Cost of management overhead (monthly cost)
* Case unit price (monthly cost of team + management overhead /number of cases proposed in a month)

**Terms of bidding**

Bidders will remain responsible for all costs and expenses incurred by them, their staff, and their advisors or by any third party acting under their instructions in connection with this request for quote. This will be regardless of whether such costs arise as a result of any direct or indirect amendments made to this request by HOS at any time. For the avoidance of doubt, HOS shall have no liability whatsoever to respondents for the costs of any amendments, changes, discussions or communications.

By issuing this request for quote HOS is not bound in any way and does not have to accept the lowest or any tender, and reserves the right not to award any contract or to accept the whole or any specified part of the tender.

**Evaluation /Award Criteria**

HOS proposes to award the contract based on cheapest price quoted subject to satisfactory references providing assurance to HOS that the supplier can deliver the service. Where the number of cases and/or size of team differs between suppliers, HOS will determine cheapest price based on the unit price proposed x 15 cases . All submitted costs MUST include VAT.

**Contracting approach**

HOS needs to achieve its KPI target by 31st March 2019 and the HOS intends to let a contract from November 2018 to March 2019 (“initial term”) to help us achieve this. Whilst HOS may require support beyond March ’19 it may do so only on an adhoc basis therefore can provide no guarantee of volumes or other commitment beyond the initial term, this is partly due to uncertainty of projected case volumes for 19/20.

Quality of output is very importance to us and the proposed contractual relationship with the successful supplier will include quality provisions that the supplier will need to meet. Where quality is deemed substandard, the contract may be terminated by HOS. See HOS’s proposed draft contract as an attachment to this notice.

**Training and Guidance**

Post contract award, HOS will work collaboratively with the successful supplier to provide training and investigation guidance on how to determine cases that fall within our formal remit.

**Getting in touch**

If you believe you meet the requirements please provide your quote, company details and your reference as requested above to Rosalind D’Cruz by email rdcruz@housing-ombudsman.org.uk no later than **Monday 5th November 2018 @ 18:00**.

Due to the short tender notice period, suppliers are invited to pose any clarification questions by email to the address above and HOS will respond to annoymised queries by publishing our responses by COP daily on our HOS website ([www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk)) while this tender notice is live. Please note our final responses will published no later than **Monday 5th November @ 12:00 noon.**

Please look out for such updates by searching our website using the following search criteria “*HOS October 2018 tender responses”.* Where no questions have been posed for any particular day, the document will be updated to that effect.

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