

Bidder Pack

Procurement Specific Requirements

Procurement Title: Citizen Science Local Pilots;

Lot 1- Northumbria

**Lot 2- West Midlands**

**Lot 3- Norfolk & Suffolk**

**Lot 4- Wessex**

Procurement Reference Number: C21004

09/2023

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# Section 1: The Invitation

This procurement is being carried out by Defra group Commercial in accordance with the Open Procedure as set out in the Public Contract Regulations 2015 (PCR) on behalf of Natural England.

The Bidder Pack comes in two parts. The first part, The Core Requirements, provides details of the General Requirements, Government Transparency Agenda and Government Priorities. This, **the second part**, **the Procurement Specific Requirements**, provides details of the Specification Requirements, Terms and Conditions of Contract, Evaluation Methodology, Procurement Timetable and Definitions.

The tendering process seeks to determine the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT). The Authority will evaluate the Tenders using the tender evaluation criteria and weightings listed in Section 4, Evaluation Methodology.

## The Opportunity

This opportunity is advertised by Defra group Commercial on behalf of Natural England who is responsible for the Citizen Science Local Pilots.

## Timetable

The timetable below is subject to change from time to time as notified by the Authority. All Tenderers will be informed via the Authority’s eSourcing System.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Activity Ref | Activity Title | Date (Time) |
| 1 | Opportunity Notice published in Find a Tender System and Contracts Finder and Bidder Pack released | 14-SEP-2023 |
| 2 | Deadline for clarification questions | 22-SEP-2023  Time 16:00 |
| 3 | Deadline for Responses | 16-OCT-2023  Time 10:00 |
| 4 | Evaluation of Tender | Start 16-OCT-2023  End 20-OCT-2023 |
| 5 | Contract award notification | 25-OCT-2023 |
| 6 | Mandatory standstill period | Start 26-OCT-2023  End 06-NOV-2023 |
| 7 | Contract award | 07-NOV-2023 |
| 8 | Contract start date | 13-NOV-2023 |

All timescales are set using a 24-hour clock and when referring to “days” it means calendar days unless otherwise specified (for example, working days).

**Variant Tenders**

The Authority shall not accept variant Tenders.

For the avoidance of doubt, if the Authority has reserved a right to waive a requirement in this Bidder Pack and chooses to exercise such discretion, the Tender will not be considered a variant Tender.

**Abnormally Low Tenders** **or Pricing Anomalies**

If the Authority considers your Tender to appear abnormally low, an initial assessment will be undertaken using a comparative analysis of the pricing proposals received from all Tenderers [and the Authority’s valuation of the procurement. If that assessment indicates that your Tender is abnormally low the Authority will request a written explanation of your Tender, or of those parts of your Tender which the Authority considers contribute to your Tender being abnormally low. The Authority reserves the right to reject your Tender if the response does not satisfactorily account for the low level of price or costs proposed.

The assessment of abnormally low tenders will be undertaken strictly in accordance with Regulation 69 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, which outlines how abnormally low tenders must be assessed and the circumstances in which the contracting authority can reject the tender.

**Pricing Anomalies**

If in the opinion of the Authority your Tender contains any pricing anomalies (for example apparent discrepancies between the financial submission and other parts of your response) the Authority may seek clarification. If the clarification response indicates that the pricing anomaly was the result of a clear and obvious error, in the interest of fairness the resulting change will be taken into consideration. If the clarification response results in a change to the initial tendered Commercial Response and price, it will not be taken into account.

# Section 2: The Specification of Requirements

## The Authority’s Priorities

The Authority’s priorities are to secure a healthy natural environment; a sustainable, low-carbon economy; a thriving farming sector and a sustainable, healthy and secure food supply. Further information about the Authority can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england>

**The NCEA (Natural Capital & Ecosystem Assessment) Programme**

The Natural Capital and Ecosystems Assessment (NCEA) programme will transform and innovate the way our evidence-base is captured, analysed and brought together to ensure science meets the needs of policy / decision makers to embed a natural capital approach, allowing us to leave our environment in a better state than we found it.

The NCEA will provide a holistic, accurate and robust set of evidence and data for DEFRA to make informed policy decisions about the state of our natural capital assets in high profile policy areas and lead to better outcomes for the environment. It will also identify innovative and transformative ways of collecting, analysing and distributing the data.

Better data and evidence are required so that government and society can:

* Understand our natural capital, how and why it is changing.
* Tackle pressures on the environment and the drivers of change.
* Take biodiversity and natural capital into account in decision making.
* Target action where it will be most effective.
* Evaluate policies and interventions to improve their effectiveness.

**NCEA Citizen Science**

Citizen Science (CS) is one of the cross-cutting tools/approaches for collecting these data, alongside professional survey, and remote earth observation techniques. Citizen Science generated data is already essential to environmental policy, forming the majority of current biodiversity monitoring in the UK. It complements and augments standard scientific approaches. Critically it has the potential to contribute even more significant amounts of useful data in places and of a richness that cannot be achieved by other means. The approach also provides an important means for members of the public to connect with nature and the environment, further develop and deepen their appreciation and understanding of its importance and benefit to us.

NCEA CS partners are Defra, Natural England, JNCC, Forest Research and the Environment Agency

## Scope

Appendix 3 sets out the full Specification of Requirements.

### Division of the Contract into Lots

This procurement is sub-divided into 4 Lots as set out in the Specification of Requirements. Tenderers must make clear which Lot they are bidding for. Each Lot will be evaluated separately in accordance with the details set out in Section 4: Evaluation Methodology.

The Authority intends to award a Contract to the most economically advantageous tender (in accordance with Section 4: Evaluation Methodology) for each Lot.

There are no limits to the number of Lots in which any one Tenderer can be awarded a Contract and if a Tenderer is successful in more than one Lot, the Authority may enter into a single Contract for all Lots awarded to that Tenderer.

## Accessibility

As a public body, any product that is published within the public domain must comply with the accessibility legislation. Please ensure that where the end product is to be published, reference is made to the following requirement which can be found here.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/publishing-accessible-documents>

Anonymised recruitment

* Anonymised recruitment removes the candidate’s personal details from their application. The most common items include name, age, employee number, email address, home address, nationality, and immigration details. This supports diversity in the workforce. It helps to create a more level playing field in the assessment process.
* Where procuring an opportunity that requires the provision of CVs, anonymised recruitment should be the default position.

# Section 3: Terms and Conditions of Contract

The Terms and Conditions of Contract for this procurement are the DgC Short Form Terms and Conditions. The Terms and Conditions are split into Core Terms and Contracting Authority Terms within the Annexes and details of the legal priority are provided in section 5 of the Order Form.

The Authority proposes to enter into Contract(s) until 31st March 2025. A break Clause has been included in the Terms and Conditions to allow the Authority to break the Contract from March 31st “2024 to ensure the funding has been secured for the final year of the Contract.

The anticipated commencement date is 13th November 2023

**Suggested Changes to Conditions of Contract**

Tenderers may raise clarification questions relating to the amendment of contract terms during the clarification period only, as specified in the Timetable, if it can be demonstrated that there is a legal or statutory reason why they cannot be accepted. Where a legal or statutory reason cannot be substantiated the Authority has the right to reject the proposed changed.

Such requests must follow the Clarifications Sought by the Tenderer process set out in the Core Requirements element of this Bidder Pack.

# Section 4: Evaluation Methodology

The overall aim of the evaluation process is to select the Tender that is the most economically advantageous to the Authority, having regard to the Authority’s overall objectives and the criteria set out below.

Evaluation of Tenders comprise of the stages set out in the table below. Each Lot shall be assessed utilising the same assessment criteria. If a tenderer is submitting a bid for more than 1 Lot then they must submit the tender documents separately and against each Lot in the e-sourcing system.

The Authority will carry out its evaluations of the Technical and Commercial elements according to the criteria, sub-criteria and weightings set out in the table below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation Stage 1** | **Section Reference** | **Evaluation Criteria** | **Question Scoring/Weighting (%)** |
| Selection Stage: Selection Questionnaire (SQ) responses submitted in response to the Contract Notice | **Part 1:** covers the basic information about the supplier (or organisation relied upon to meet the selection criteria in Part 3), such as the contact details, trade memberships, details of parent companies, group bidding and so on and is provided for information only.  **Part 2**: covers a series of self-declarations by the supplier (or organisation relied upon to meet the selection criteria in Part 3) regarding whether or not any of the questionnaire exclusion grounds apply and will be assessed on that basis.  **Part 3**: covers a series of self-declaration questions regarding whether or not the company meets the selection criteria in respect of their financial standing and technical capacity. | Pass/Fail  Pass/Fail  Pass/Fail |
| **Evaluation Stage** **2** | **Section Reference** | **Evaluation Criteria** | **Question Scoring/Weighting (%)** |
| Form of Tender | This stage is not scored but if you do not upload a complete, signed and dated Form of Tender in accordance with the instructions in the eSourcing System/accept the Form of Tender statement in the SQ your Tender will be rejected as non-compliant. | Pass/Fail |
| Note: Every organisation that forms part of your bidding group/consortium, as well as every organisation that is being relied on (including subcontractors being relied on) to meet the selection criteria must complete and submit responses to part 1 and the declarations in part 2  Note: Suppliers that pass Evaluation Stage 1 and 2 will be taken through to Evaluation Stage 3. | | |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Evaluation Stage 3** | **Section Reference** | | **Evaluation Criteria** | **Question Scoring/Weighting (%)** |
| Evaluation Stage: Technical | | This stage will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria set out below. | Scored (70%) |
| Tenderers must achieve a minimum Descriptor of 50 (Moderate) for Technical Criteria E01-E05. Tenderers who fail to achieve the stated Technical Thresholds will not proceed to the Commercial evaluation. | | | | |
| **E01** | **Methodology** | | | Scored (19%) |
| Please provide a detailed methodology, describing the approach you will follow in order to deliver the objectives and outputs detailed in the specification.  Please upload a document with the filename: ‘E01 Your Company Name’ to the additional attachments area in the technical evaluation response envelope. Your response must not exceed a maximum of 6 sides of A4, Arial font size 12. Links to other document will not be considered as part of your response e.g., links to published documents online, etc. | | | | |
| **E02** | **Collaborative Working** | | | Scored (19%) |
| Please set out how you will work collaboratively with stakeholders to deliver the objectives and outputs detailed in the specification.  Your response should include evidence of existing relationships with some local stakeholders, identification of additional stakeholders who will be engaged in the future as part of this project and set out your plan to continue engagement throughout the life of the project.  Your response could include a stakeholder map.  Your response could include examples of previous experience working collaboratively with local stakeholders, how you engaged with stakeholders, secured buy-in and support and what the outcomes of the engagement were.  **Please upload a document with the filename: ‘E02 Your Company Name’ to the additional attachments area in the technical evaluation response envelope. Your response must not exceed a maximum of 6 sides of A4, Arial font size 12. In addition to a stakeholder map if included. Links to other document will not be considered as part of your response e.g., links to published documents online, etc.** | | | | |
| **E03** | | **Project Management** | | Scored (14%) |
| Please set out your project management arrangements appropriate to the scale and duration of the project. Please include any proposed consortium or sub-contracting arrangements.  Please provide a detailed project plan with resource allocation for each task, including Gantt chart.  Please provide a summary of all the risks you have identified that would impact the project, including how you intend to manage these risks and mitigate the impact on the project.  **Please upload a document with the filename: ‘E03 Your Company Name’ to the additional attachments area in the technical evaluation response envelope. Your response must not exceed a maximum of 4 sides of A4, Arial font size 12. Links to other document will not be considered as part of your response e.g., links to published documents online, etc.** | | | | |
| **E04** | | **Staff Resources** | | Scored (8%) |
| Please provide an outline of your proposed staff resourcing for the project, including plans for availability for the duration of the project and your contingency plan to deal with staff absences.  Please provide 1 page pen profiles of the staff you anticipate working on the project if known at this stage. Pen profiles should demonstrate your team member’s expertise and previous experience relevant to the tender requirements.  **Please upload a document with the filename: ‘E04 Your Company Name’ to the additional attachments area in the technical evaluation response envelope. Your response must not exceed a maximum of 3 sides of A4, Arial font size 12. In addition to 1 pen profile per personnel allocated to the project. Links to other document will not be considered as part of your response e.g., links to published documents online, etc.** | | | | |
| **E05** | | **Sustainability** | | Scored (10%) |
| As a delivery partner, the successful contractor is expected to pursue sustainability in their operations, thereby ensuring Natural England is not contracting with a supplier whose operational outputs run contrary to Natural England’s objectives. The successful contractor will need to approach the project with a focus on the entire life cycle of the project.  Describe your organisations approach to sustainability and how this will be managed and adopted throughout the project. The successful contractor is likely to be able to provide a copy of their environmental policy and any environmental accreditation schemes such as ISO 14001 or EMAS which they have been awarded or are working towards.  **Please upload a document with the filename: ‘E05 Your Company Name’ to the additional attachments area in the technical evaluation response envelope. Your response must not exceed a maximum of 3 sides of A4, Arial font size 12. In addition to copies of the organisations environmental policy and any accreditation schemes. Links to other document will not be considered as part of your response e.g. links to published documents online, etc.** | | | | |
| **Evaluation Stage 4** | **Section Reference** | | **Evaluation Criteria** | **Question Scoring/Weighting (%)** |
| Evaluation Stage: Commercial - Pricing Schedule | | Prices will be evaluated in accordance with criteria set out below | Scored (30%) |
| The commercial tender submission will be evaluated on the **total fixed price**, **excluding VAT**. This is the total cost figure excluding VAT which must be entered in the Atamis commercial envelope cost section.  The total fixed price shall be split against the 6 Project Deliverables and by the percentage split in the table below:   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | Deliverable | Final delivery date (end) | Payment from | % of total | | D1 | Quarterly report 1 | 20/12/2023 | 31/12/2023 | 16 | | D2 | Quarterly report 2 | 27/03/2024 | 31/03/2024 | 16 | | D3 | Quarterly report 3 | 26/06/2024 | 30/06/2024 | 16 | | D4 | Quarterly report 4 | 25/09/2024 | 30/09/2024 | 16 | | D5 | Quarterly report 5 | 18/12/2024 | 31/12/2024 | 16 | | D6 | Final report | 12/03/2025 | 15/03/2025 | 20 |   Bidders are required to submit a breakdown of costs against each objective and key personnel using the table in the Draft Terms and Conditions  Bidders may submit a separate pricing proposal outlining pricing efficiencies should you be identified as the successful bidder for more than 1 Lot (the proposed efficiencies will not be included in the Commercial cost calculation). | | | | |
| **Evaluation Stage 5** | **Section Reference** | | **Calculation** | |
| Final score | | The final score is calculated by adding the total quality weighted score with the total commercial weighted score.    The most economically advantageous tender for each lot will be the Tender with the highest final score. | |

Where the procurement is divided into lots the Authority will evaluate each lot separately and will award a Contract for a lot to the Tenderer(s) which submits the most economically advantageous tender which will be the highest scoring Tender(s) for that lot. The evaluation process and weightings for each lot will be assessed using the same evaluation criteria as above.

**Selection Questionnaire - Financial standing**

The Authority will review the economic information provided as part of the Selection Questionnaire response to evaluate a Tenderer’s economic and financial standing. The Authority’s evaluation will be based on all the information reviewed and will not be determined by a single indicator. If, based on its assessment of the information provided in a Response, the Authority decides that a Tenderer does not meet the Authority’s required level of economic standing, the Authority may:

* ask for additional information, including information relating to the Tenderer’s parent company, if applicable; and/or
* require a parent company guarantee, performance bond or other security.

If the Authority decides that a parent company guarantee, performance bond or other security is required, the Authority will reject a Response if the Tenderer is unable to offer a commitment to make such provision. In addition to the information provided in a Response, the Authority may, at its discretion, consult Dun & Bradstreet reports and other credit rating or equivalent reports depending on where a Tenderer is located.

The Authority’s assessment of economic and financial standing will consider financial strength and risk of business failure. Financial strength is based on tangible net worth and is rated on a scale of 5A (strongest) to H (weakest) obtained from Dun & Bradstreet. There are also classifications for negative net worth and net worth undetermined (insufficient information). Financial strength will be assessed relative to the estimated annual contract value.

The Authority will also consider annual turnover. For this procurement, the Authority expects the contractor to have an annual turnover for each of its last two financial years of at least 10% of the contract value.

In the case of a joint venture or a consortium bid, the annual turnover is calculated by combining the turnover of the relevant organisations in each of the last two financial years. In addition, the annual turnover of at least one of those organisations is expected to be 10% of the contract value.

Risk of Business Failure is rated on a scale of 1 (minimal) to 4 (significant) obtained from Dun & Bradstreet. There is also a classification of insufficient information. The Authority regards a score of 4 as indicating inadequate economic and financial standing for this procurement. The Authority will also calculate and evaluate the Tenderer’s:

* operating performance: growth or reductions in sales, gross profit, operating profit, profit before tax and earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, amortisation, exceptional items and profit/loss on sale of businesses;
* liquidity: net current assets, movements in cash flow from operations, working capital and quick ratios, and average collection and payments periods; and
* financial structure: gearing ratios and interest cover.

**Evaluation of Responses**

Evaluation of Responses will be undertaken by a panel appointed by the Authority. Each panel member will first undertake an independent evaluation of the Responses applying the relevant evaluation criteria for each question. Then, a moderation meeting will be held at which the evaluation panel will reach a consensus on the marking of each question.

During the consensus meeting, the decision may be taken that a Response will not be carried forward to the next evaluation stage if the consensus view is that the Tenderer has failed to meet any minimum or mandatory requirements, and/or provided a non-compliant response.

**Scoring Criteria**

The following scoring criteria is to be used when evaluating responses to Stage 3 Technical Questionnaire. A Tenderer’s response will be assessed against the detailed criteria provided for each question E01-E05 and be assigned a Descriptor and score from the table below:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Descriptor** | **Score** | **Definition** |
| Very good | 100 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the Bidder Pack. There are no weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority complete confidence that all the requirements will be met to a high standard. |
| Good | 70 | Addresses all the Authority’s requirements with all the relevant supporting information set out in the Bidder Pack. The response contains minor weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that all the requirements will be met to a good standard. |
| Moderate | 50 | Addresses most of the requirements with most of the relevant supporting information set out in the Bidder Pack. The response contains moderate weaknesses and therefore the tender response gives the Authority confidence that most of the requirements will be met to a suitable standard. |
| Weak | 20 | Substantially addresses the requirements but not all and provides supporting information that is of limited or no relevance or a methodology containing significant weaknesses and therefore raises concerns for the Authority that the requirements may not all be met. |
| Unacceptable | 0 | No response or provides a response that gives the Authority no confidence that the requirement will be met. |

**Calculation Method**

For both elements, providing the bidder has met any mandatory criteria and minimum quality thresholds, the total weighted scores are calculated as follows:

**Technical (WT)**

Bidder’s Total Technical Score

Highest Technical Score

X 100 = X

then

X

100

X [Weighting]

**Commercial (WC)**

Bidder’s Total Commercial Score

Lowest Commercial Score

X

100

then

X [Weighting]

X 100 = X

The Total Score (weighted) is then calculated by adding the Total Weighted Technical Score to the Total Weighted Commercial Score: **WT+ WC**.

# Section 5: Appendices

## Definitions

Unless the context otherwise requires, the following words and expressions used within the Bidder Pack (except for Section 3: Terms and Conditions of Contract) shall have the following meanings to be interpreted in the singular or plural as the context requires.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **TERM** | **MEANING** |
| **“Authority”** | Natural England |
| **“Bidder Pack”** | this invitation to tender and all related documents published by the Authority and made available to Tenderers. |
| **“Contract”** | the contract (set out in Appendix B) to be entered into by the Authority and the successful Tenderer. |
| **“EIR”** | the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (as amended) together with any guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or any Government Department in relation to those Regulations. |
| **“eSourcing system”** | eSourcing system is the eSourcing system used by the Authority for conducting this procurement, which can be found at http://defra.eSourcing systemsolution.co.uk |
| **“FOIA”** | the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (as amended) and any subordinate legislation made under that Act together with any guidance and/or codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner or any Government Department in relation to that legislation. |
| **“Form of Tender”** | means the form contained in Annex 2 to the Procurement Specific section of the Bidder Pack which must be signed, scanned and uploaded into the Authority’s eSourcing System by the Tenderer to indicate that it understands the Tender and accepts the various terms and conditions and other requirements of participating in the exercise. |
| **“Information”** | means the information contained in the Bidder Pack or sent with it, and any information which has been made available to the Tenderer by the Authority, its employees, agents or advisers in connection with the procurement. |
| **“Involved Person”** | means any person who is either working for, or acting on behalf of, the Authority in connection with this procurement and/or the Contract including, without limitation, any officer, employee, advisor, agent, member, partner or consultant”. |
| **“Pricing Schedule”** | the form accessed via eSourcing system in which Tenderers are required to submit their pricing information as part of a Tender. |
| **“Regulations”** | the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. |
| **“Relevant Body** | means any other organisation, body or government department that is working with or acting on behalf of the Authority in connection with this procurement and/or the Contract including, without limitation, its officers, employees, advisors, agents, members, partners or consultants. |
| **“Response”** | means the information submitted in response to the Bidder Pack via the online response forms on eSourcing system including the Tenderer’s formal Tender. |
| **“Specification of Requirements”** | the Authority’s requirements set out in Section 2 of the Bidder Pack Procurement Specific Requirements. |
| **“Tender”** | the formal offer to provide the goods or services descibed in section 1.1 of part 1 of the Bidder Pack and comprising the responses to the questions in eSourcing system and the Pricing Schedule. |
| **“Tenderer”** | anyone responding to the Bidder Pack and, where the context requires, includes a potential tenderer. |
| **“Timetable”** | the procurement timetable set out in Section 1 of the Bidder Pack Procurement Specific Requirements. |

## Form of Tender

The Form of Tender document is located on the Authority’s eSourcing system.

It is to be printed, signed, scanned and uploaded into the Authority’s eSourcing System as instructed within the eSourcing system.

## Specification

Located on the Authority’s eSourcing system within the Supplier Documentation section.

## Conditions of Contract

Located on the Authority’s eSourcing system within the Supplier Documentation section.

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