



## FS900269<sup>1</sup> - Social Research Call Off

### Work Package

- All costs quoted should be exclusive of VAT.

<b>Work Package Number:</b> 9
<b>Work Package Title:</b> Provision of Information – consumer baseline survey
<b>Indicative Budget Range:</b> £50-£55,000
<b>Please provide evidence of budget approval</b> (e.g. FS number): FS900541
<b>Deadline for response from Ipsos</b> 10 working days
<b>Supplier Name:</b> Ipsos
<b>Work Package Start Date:</b> 1 November 2024
<b>Work Package End Date:</b> 31 March 2025
<b>Specification of requirements</b> (to be completed between policy/comms and social research)
<p><b>Background:</b></p> <p>The FSA policy team is publishing new best practice guidance on how to provide allergen information to consumers for food businesses who sell loose food. Loose food is food which is not already packaged at the point at which consumers order it (e.g. restaurant/pub meals, take-aways, delis where food isn't already packaged). The new guidance will be published in February 2025.</p> <p>The main change for businesses is that it will now be best practice to have <u>written</u> allergen information available to consumers and to support this with a conversation with consumers about their allergen requirements. The business can choose whether to provide this upfront (i.e. without consumers having to ask for it) or on request by consumers. They can also choose what written format to provide it in (e.g. allergen matrix, on menus, in an information book, on signs placed next to the food). Currently businesses have to provide allergen information, however this can be provided verbally or in writing (<a href="#">Food allergen labelling and information</a>).</p>

<sup>1</sup> N.B. This is the FS code for the call-off, not the project

[requirements technical guidance: Part 2: Guidance for businesses providing non-prepacked food](#)).

The Board has recommended that the new guidance around provision of written information should be legislated. The policy team will be providing the Minister with evidence to inform their decision next year.

We want to quantify current attitudes, behaviours and experiences of consumers with a food hypersensitivity (FHS) – this includes consumers with a food allergy, food intolerance or coeliac disease – to one or more of the 14 regulated allergens, regarding eating out. This is so that we can:

- 1) measure the impact of the guidance (and legislation, if implemented), and
- 2) fill in any gaps in evidence that would be useful for the decision on legislation (e.g. current rates of disclosure, likely impact of written information on disclosure).

We therefore want to commission a survey of consumers with a food hypersensitivity (FHS) to one or more of the 14 regulated allergens, and parents of children with such a FHS. This survey will quantify attitudes, behaviours and experiences of these consumers when eating out.

We have a wealth of qualitative data on the experiences of FHS consumers when they eat out and some quantitative data via F&Y2 and ad-hoc surveys (see below for previous research). However, we do not have comprehensive quantitative data. In addition, we want to be able to repeat questions in the future so we need a methodology that we can easily repeat. We will use insight from the data we already have, and the Theory of Change for the guidance, to inform the questions in the survey.

Previous research (first 3 are core pieces of research we will draw on)

- [Barnett, J et al \(2017\) The preferences of those with food allergies and/ or intolerances when eating out](#)
- [Britain Thinks \(2022\) Provision of Allergen Information in the Out of Home Food Sector](#)
- [F&Y2](#)
- [FSA \(2018\) Young people and food allergies / intolerances](#)
- [Knibb, R \(2023\) Reactions and near misses to food in children and adults with food hypersensitivities](#)

**Objectives:**

- Primary objective: To establish baseline measures to enable an evaluation of new guidance to businesses (selling loose food) on how to communicate allergen information.
- Secondary objective: To fill any gaps in evidence which would be useful to provide to the Minister when they make a decision on legislation.

Main research question: What are the attitudes, behaviours and experiences of FHS consumers related to provision of allergen information when eating out?

Subsidiary questions:

- How frequently are FHS consumers having reactions and near misses when eating out due to being served food that doesn't meet their dietary needs?
- What are FHS consumers' information-seeking behaviours and preferences when eating out?
- What is their experience of verbal and written allergen information (accessibility, satisfaction, confidence) when eating out?
- How frequently do consumers with FHS disclose this to businesses, and what are the barriers and enablers of disclosure?

**Methodology:**

The research will target adults with food allergy (FA), food intolerance (FI) or coeliac disease or with a child with FA or FI or coeliac disease to one of the 14 regulated allergens who seek to avoid foods containing these allergens. Fieldwork will need to take place no later than January 2025, before the publication of the new best practice guidance.

We intend to collect data via a 20-minute online survey – we envisage that this will be a quantitative survey, but would welcome Ipsos' view on the inclusion of limited free text responses, and any cost implications. We intend to use the following recruitment methods:

- Re-contacts from Food & You2 participants Waves 7-9 who have FHS, or who shop for someone with FHS and have children under 16 in the household. (We anticipate ~500 survey completes, ~300 adults with FHS and ~200 parents of children with FHS)
- A boost via the Ipsos online Access Panel targeting adults age 16-24 with FHS, aiming for a total of 100 survey completes from this subgroup

The overall sample size should be sufficient to enable analysis by subgroups listed in the 'Analysis and review' section. A boost is included in the methodology specifically to ensure that we recruit sufficient adults aged 16-24 years, as our 2018 research found that disclosure of allergen information is a particular problem for this demographic.

We want to use these surveys as the basis for recruitment as they employ random probability sampling and will give us nationally representative findings. In past research, we have used social media and food allergy/intolerance organisations to recruit participants. However, we would prefer not to this as it undermines the representativeness of the sample - both demographically and, we hypothesise, attitudinally and behaviourally.

Participants will complete a screening questionnaire to establish (a) that the individual experiences an adverse reaction to at least one of the 14 regulated allergens, or has a child who does; and (b) that they avoid foods containing the allergen.

The questionnaire is currently in development. Some questions (concerning disclosure of allergies when eating out) were cog tested in July 2024, when we were considering their inclusion in the next wave of Food & You 2.

As this is a baseline survey, we would like to retain the option to recontact participants in the future with a follow up survey (~12-18 months later), following publication of the best practice guidance.

*Ethical considerations*

- We will only recontact Food&You2 participants to take part in this study who have given permission for recontact.
- Taking into account the length of the survey, participants will be incentivised to compensate for their time.
- Participants will be made fully aware of what the study entails and give their consent to participate. Participation will be voluntary.
- Data will be stored in compliance with data protection laws.
- The contractor will provide a helpline/email support channels to participants.
- A limitation of this approach -an online survey- will mean some participants are digitally excluded.

**Research process – please include:**

*Who from the FSA will be working on the project, and their roles/responsibilities (e.g., review, sign-off, project management)?*

- [REDACTED] Social Science – Grade 7 overseeing the project [REDACTED] will review and sign off the work package, questionnaire, and any key deliverables (data tables and report).
- [REDACTED] Social Science – SEO project lead. Responsible for project management on the FSA side and the key point of contact for Ipsos. [REDACTED] will review and sign off all stages of the project and will develop the questionnaire with Ipsos.
- [REDACTED] Senior Policy Adviser – Food Hypersensitivity. Involved in signing off the work package and key deliverables.

*For each part of the project, what is FSA's role and what is Ipsos' role?*

The FSA will be responsible for:

- **Project inception:** Development of the research objectives, research questions, Theory of Change and key metrics.
- **Questionnaire development:** Development of the draft questionnaire for review by Ipsos.
- **Stakeholder engagement** at all stages of the project, including organising peer review of draft research materials and dissemination of findings.
- **Review & sign off** of the questionnaire and final outputs.

Ipsos will be responsible for:

- **Survey set up** including questionnaire, screener, and materials development, scripting and checking as well as Access Panel questionnaire and script checking.
- **Fieldwork** including invites, reminders and monitoring/ management of F&Y2 recontact survey and completion of ~115 Access Panel surveys.
- **Incentive payment** to recontact F&Y2 survey completes.

- **Data Processing** and production of SPSS file (includes preparation and checks of F&Y2 recontact datafile together with separate checks for Access Panel datafile and then merging with recontact survey data).
- **Production of data tables** combining F&Y2 recontact and Access Panel survey data (a specification for these will be discussed when the project is commissioned)
- **Production of written report** based on combined F&Y2 recontact & Access Panel survey data

*Will this need to be peer reviewed?*

We would like academic support throughout the delivery of this project, via expertise from member/s of our ACSS. Committee members will be asked for their feedback on the research questions and methodological approach, and Professor [REDACTED] will peer review the project Theory of Change, questionnaire development and final report.

**Analysis and review:**

We would like Ipsos to include sub-group analysis (dependent on sample size achieved) for the following groups:

- England/Wales/Northern Ireland
- age group of adults with FHS (16-24/25-44/over 45 TBC.)
- adult FHS consumers / children with FHS (reported on by parents)
- food intolerance / food allergy / coeliac disease / multiple conditions
- severity of reaction (mild/moderate/severe)
- type of food business (chain/independent)
- frequency of eating out or buying takeaway food (at least once a week/ at least once a month/ less than once a month/ never)
- TBC. frequency of buying food that is not prepackaged from a retailer (at least once a week/ at least once a month/ less than once a month/ never) – to discuss

**Stakeholder involvement:**

The FSA Food Hypersensitivity Policy Team are the primary stakeholders for this research. Aimee will be involved in review and sign-off of the work package and key deliverables.

Social Science / Analytics Unit are also key stakeholders for this research, in particular Social Science colleagues who work on Consumer Monitoring and Food Hypersensitivities. This includes the Food and You 2 team (Social Science and Stats), Consumer Insights tracker team and other relevant Social Science colleagues who may be interested.

There may also be interest from other Government departments, particularly DHSC, from allergy/intolerance organisations, in particular the Owen's Law campaign, and from stakeholders who respond to our consultation on best practice guidance (live throughout October/November 2024) which may also include food businesses and consumers with FHS. There may be wider interest from academics who work in this area. The findings of this research will be made available to stakeholders via publication on the FSA website.

**Outputs and key deliverables–** (NB. all outputs must be in line with FSA brand guidelines and meet FSA accessibility requirements)

The following outputs will be required:

- Data tables (combined recontact and Access Panel survey data)
- Written report (based on combined recontact & Access Panel survey data)

### **Dissemination**

The final report will be published on the FSA's website, and the FSA will be responsible for developing a communication and dissemination plan with the comms team to ensure the report is shared with the relevant stakeholders identified above. Ipsos will not be required to support dissemination.

**Timescale milestones –** Using the template below as a guide, please outline any deadlines for this project, noting the reason for any hard deadlines (e.g. board meetings, which cannot be moved).

Please include any deadlines that occur after the project is complete (for example, known presentations, meetings or briefings that will use the findings).

Please also include a wash up meeting for feedback on the project.

Project timelines should account for annual leave/bank holidays, and enough time for relevant stakeholders to review/comment/sign off materials.

<b>Project Milestone</b>	<b>Due date</b>	<b>Notes (please include who is responsible for each deadline, and any annual leave)</b>
Work package completed and uploaded for response	4 October 2024	FSA
ACSS Gateway feedback	17 October 2024	FSA, with peer review from ACSS
Response from Ipsos	18 October 2024	Ipsos
Review & amendments	25 October 2024	FSA
Completion of draft questionnaire	15 November 2024	FSA, with peer review from Julie Barnett
Formal commissioning	15 November 2024	FSA
Survey set up	6 December 2024	Ipsos (FSA to sign off on final script)
Fieldwork	31 January 2025	Ipsos. Extra time allowed to exclude Christmas period. Fieldwork period cannot exceed this date.
Data processing	28 February 2025	Ipsos
Production of data tables and written report	21 March 2025	Ipsos

Official

Review & sign off of deliverables	28 March 2025	FSA	





















































## Annex 1 – Financial Template

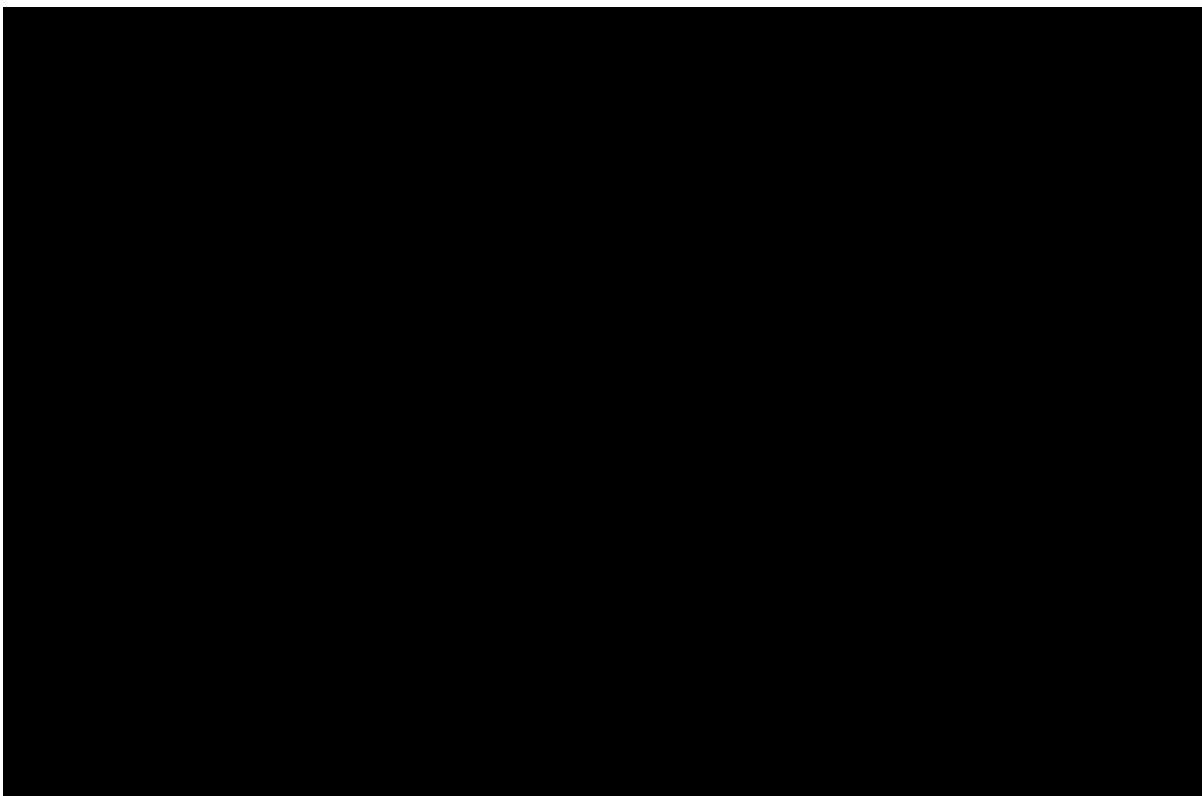
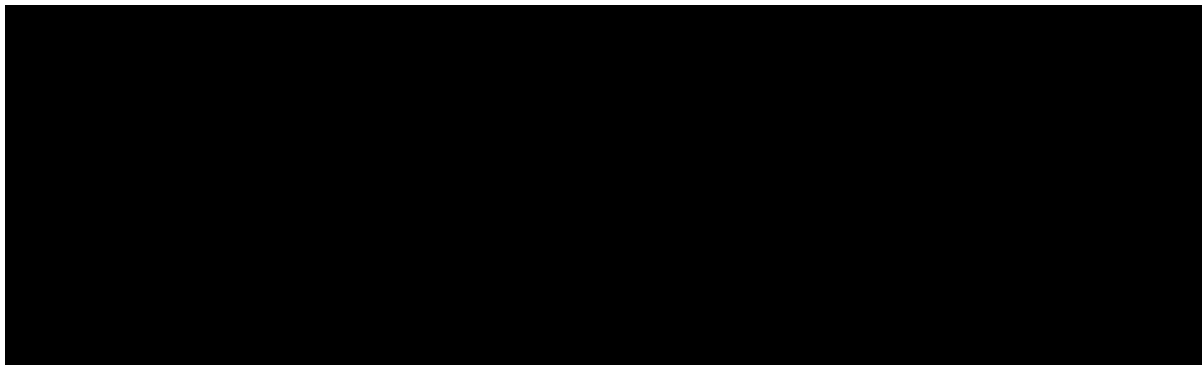
*FSA to add agreed financial template here before sending to Ipsos for signature*

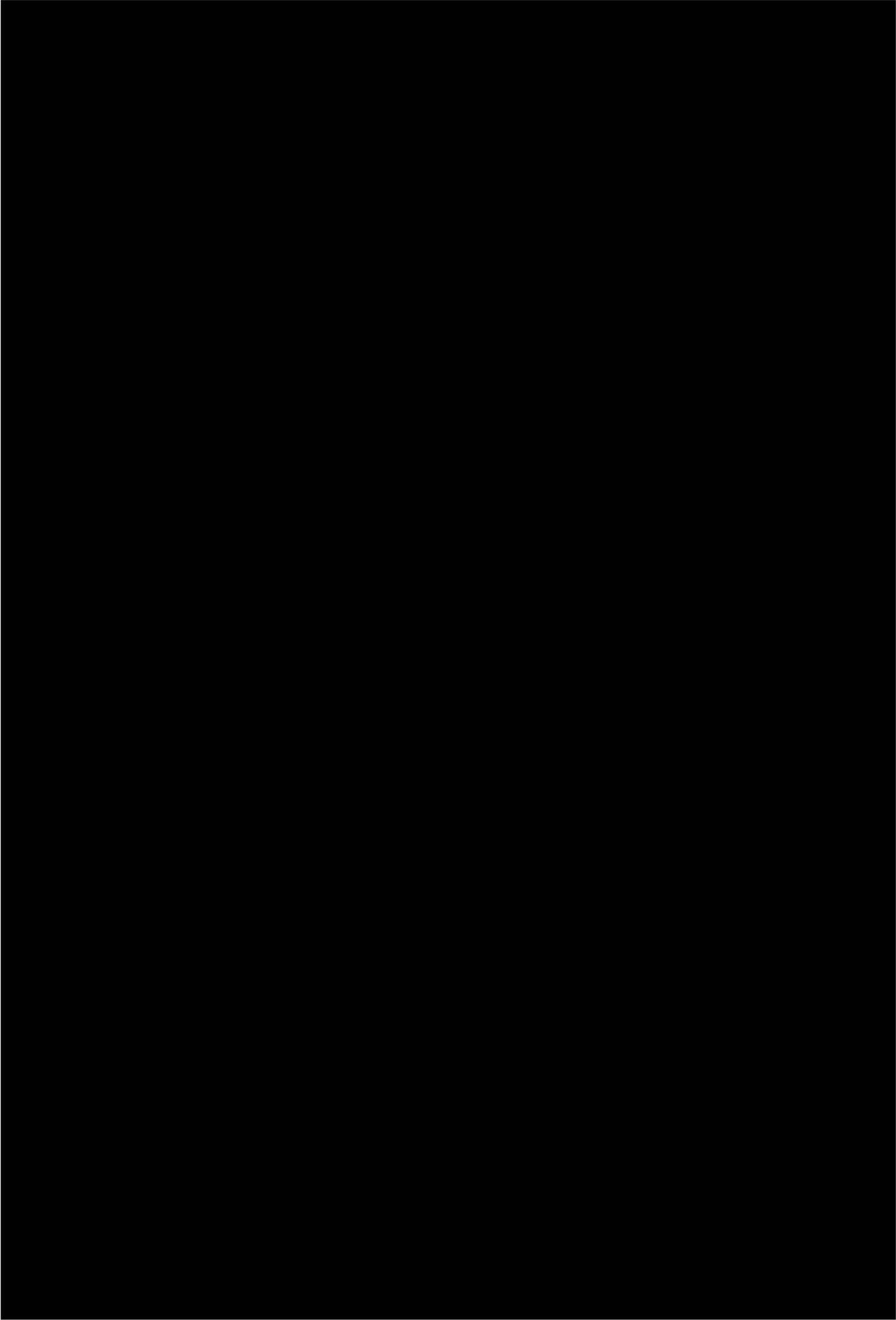
<b>Application form for a project with the Food Standards Agency Financials Template</b>
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Tender Reference	FS900541
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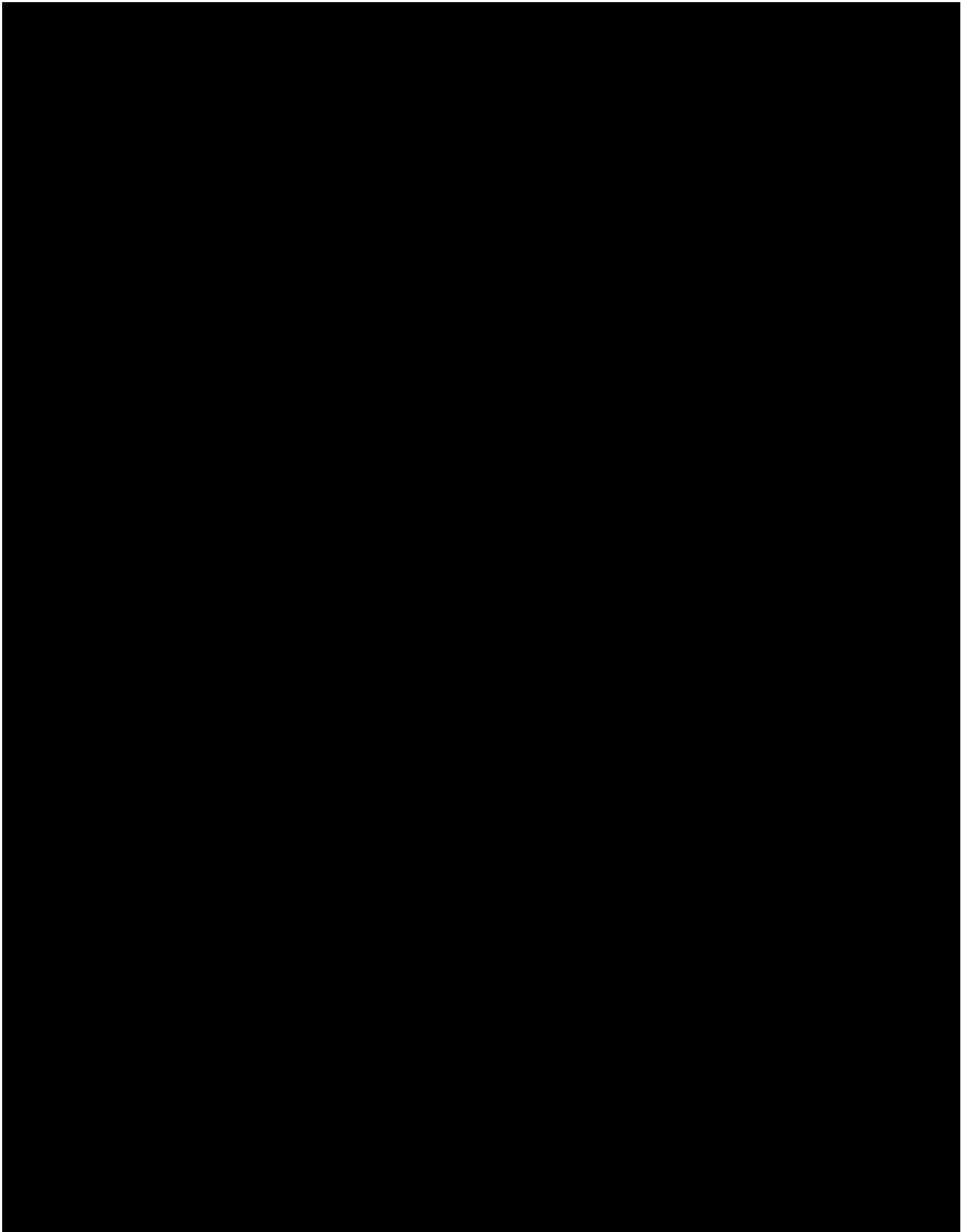
Tender Title	Provision of Information – consumer baseline survey
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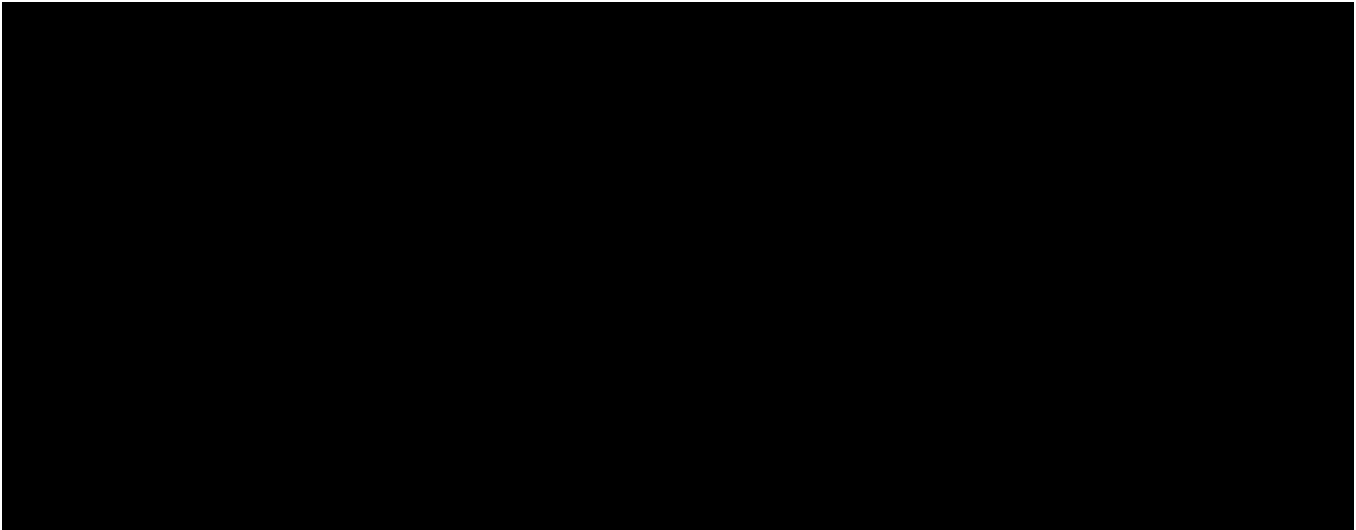
Full legal organisation name	Ipsos (Market Research) Ltd
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Summary of Payments					
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
	Financial Year (Update as applicable in YYYY-YY format)	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
	Total Amount	£ 52,075.00	£ -	£ -	£ -